



“Suicide is Painless” – NOT. The Lived Experiences of the Bereaved Survivor

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Credits/References:

- Information specific to suicide grief is taken from Jack Jordan's ADEC presentation given Feb. 17, 2010
- And from his book: *After Suicide Loss: Coping with your Grief* (written by Bob Baugher and Jack Jordan, 6th ed. 2010)
- And *Grief after Suicide: Understanding the Consequences and Caring for the Survivors* (Ed. By John Jordan and John McIntosh, 2011)
- "Why We Need to Talk about Suicide" by Paul Farmer found here: http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/paul-farmer/stephen-fry-suicide-we-need-to-talk-about-it_b_3396611.html
- Doka, K. (Ed.). (2002). *Disenfranchised grief: New directions, challenges, and strategies for practice.*
- Canadian Stats from: www.suicideprevention.ca/about-suicide/

We live in a world where loss is inescapable.

Dale Larson, Ph. D.



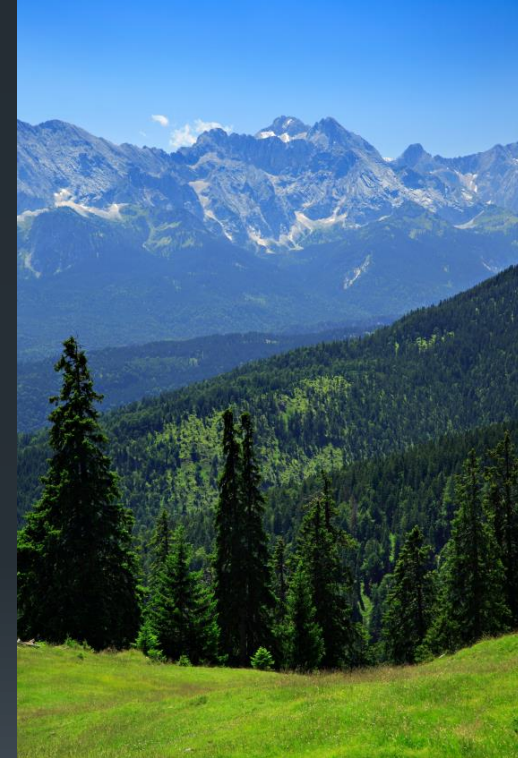
Normal Grief

- Normal reaction to any perceived loss
- No clear cut stages
- Highly individualized
- Anything within one year considered normal

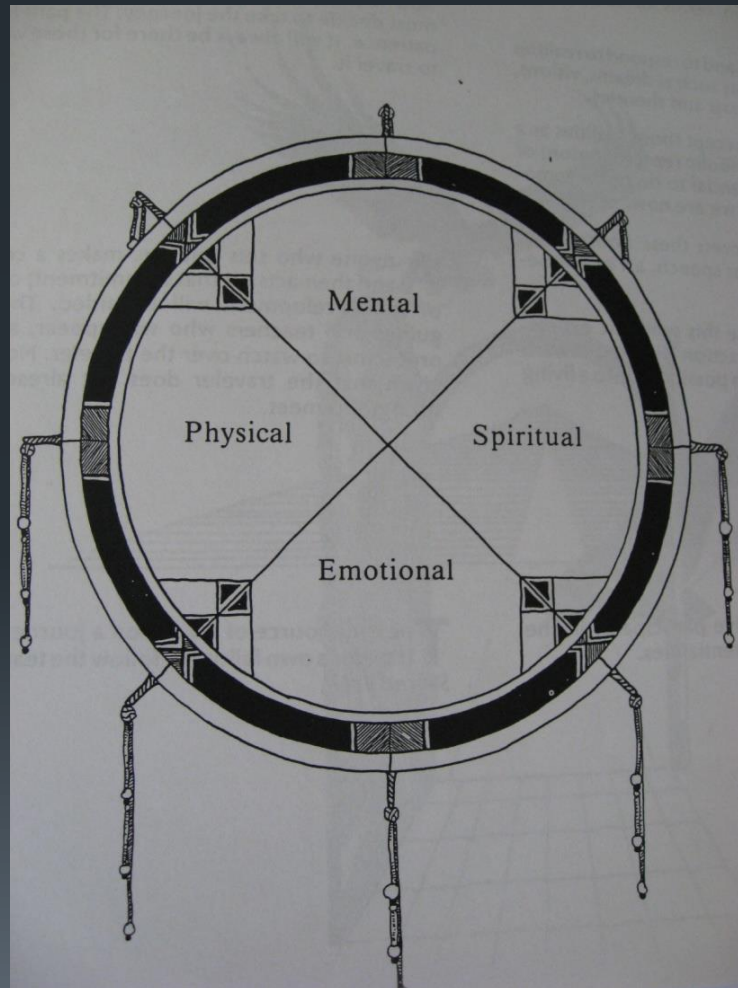


Moving through Grief

- Shock/Numbness
- Time of Disorganization
- Process of Reorganization



Manifestations of Grief



Factors Influencing the Grief and Mourning Process

(Rando)

- The Nature of the Relationship
- Characteristics of the Death
- Social Variables
 - perceived support system, cultural beliefs
- Characteristics of Mourner (Personality)
 - bereavement overload
- Physiological Factors
 - substance abuse

Is Grief after a Suicide Different?



Disenfranchised Grief




“Survivors are not accorded a ‘right to grieve’”


Doka, 2002, p. 5


Suicide Epidemiology


taken from www.suicideprevention.ca/about-suicide


- Worldwide, every year, almost 1 million people die from suicide. (One death every 40 seconds)
- These figures do not include suicide attempts which are up to 20 times more frequent than completed suicide
- Four out of five who die by suicide have made at least one previous attempt
- 2009 – suicide accounted for 3890 deaths (2989 males and 901 females)

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- Suicide occurs across all age, economic, social and ethnic boundaries
 - Males die by suicide more than 3 X as often as females BUT 3 X more women attempt suicide
 - In Canada, suicide is one of the top ten leading causes of death, with rates increasing over the past 60 years

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- Mental disorders (particularly depression and alcohol use disorders) are a major risk factor in North America
 - Suicide is complex with psychological, social, biological, cultural and environmental factors involved
 - Prevention plays a key role – but, the question remains (and is often the discussion at our support group) – are there some suicide deaths that are inevitable and unpreventable?

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- Increasing frequency among the young
 - World-wide, it is now one of the top five leading causes of death among young people aged 15-34 years of both sexes
 - In 2005, suicide was the second leading cause of death among individuals aged 15-34 years, second only to accidents/unintentional injuries

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- Suicide rates are five to seven times higher for First nations and Inuit than for non-Aboriginal youth
 - Inuit youth suicide rate is 11 times the national average
 - Not all Aboriginal communities are affected by suicide to the same extent. Varies from region to region. Generally accepted the rates for native suicide are underestimated in general as they're only collected among Aboriginal people with treaty status, and does not capture data from non-status or Metis people.

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- Saskatchewan stats: 2005 – 115 people died by suicide at an age-standardized rate of 11.5 per 100,000 population
 - The rate was nearly 4 times higher in males than in females (17.1 vs. 6.0 per 100,000) after adjusting for age
 - Six provinces/territories with higher rates than SK
 - Nunavut is highest in Canada at 51.2 per 100,000 population (3-6 times higher than the rate in other provinces/territories)

Who is a Suicide Survivor?

Jordan and McIntosh (2011) p. 7

“A suicide survivor is someone who experiences a high level of self-perceived psychological, physical, and/or social distress for a considerable length of time as a result of the suicide of another person.”

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF SUICIDE ON SURVIVORS?

Jordan and McIntosh (2011)

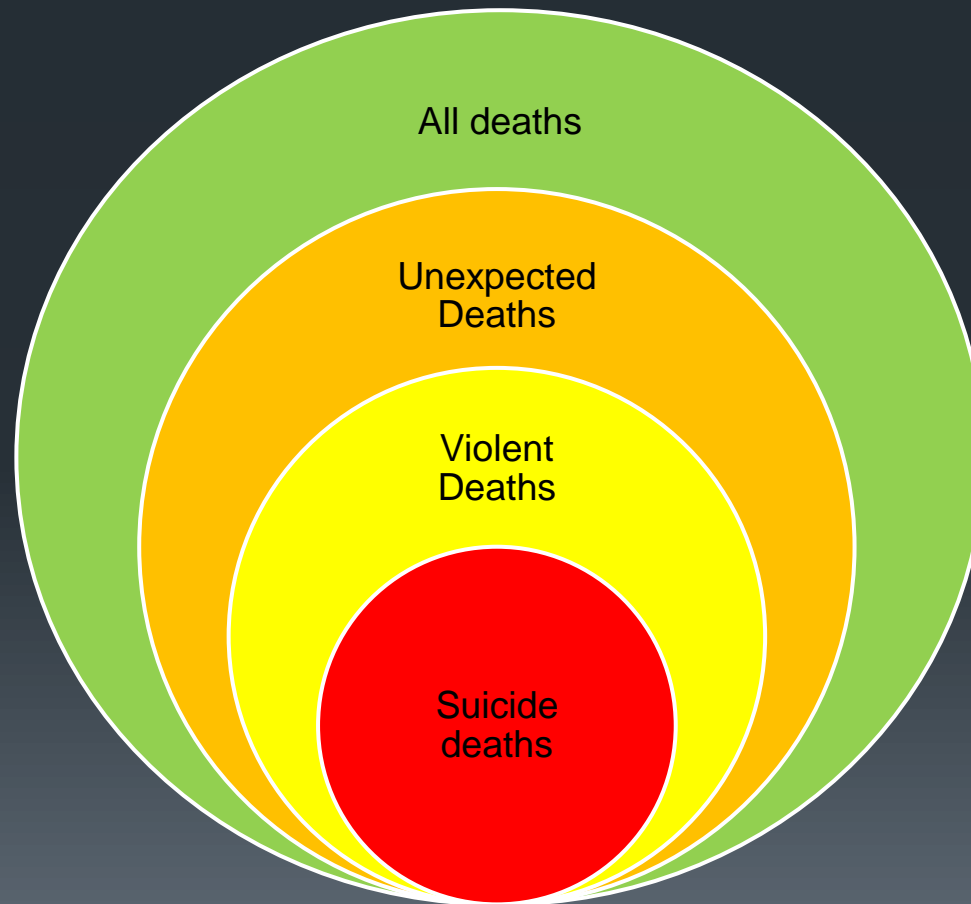
- Is suicide bereavement different?
- What are the prominent themes for survivors?
- Are there positive effects of survivorhood?
- What is the impact on families?

Is Suicide Bereavement Different?



Aspects of Bereavement Related to Mode of Death

Jordan & McIntosh (2011)



Prominent Themes For Survivors



The Four Things That Matter Most

Ira Byock

- Please forgive me.
- I forgive you.
- Thank you.
- I love you.



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Wave

Sonali Deramyagala



From a Good Reads
Review:

“Perhaps the greatest shock of grief isn’t that human life is fragile; it’s that survivors are so resilient, and that a cruel world is somehow so beautiful.”



The Survivor's Voice

Denise

Balynda

Tracy





“When spring comes, it melts the snow one flake at a time, and maybe I was just witnessing the first flake melting.”

The Kite Runner, p. 391
Khaled Hosseini