



Techniques of Grief Therapy

Creative Practices for Counseling the Bereaved

Presented by

Robert A. Neimeyer, Ph.D.

Overview

Dr. Neimeyer will discuss and demonstrate several methods for helping clients integrate the reality of the loss into the ongoing story of their lives, while also reconstructing their continuing bond to their loved one

Objectives: Participants will be able to describe:

- Differences between therapeutic “presence” and “absence” in the process of therapy
- Empirical risk factors associated with complicated grief reactions

- Restorative retelling and situational revisiting procedures
- Differences between forms of directed journaling that foster self-immersion and self-distancing
- Insecure attachments that complicate adaptation to the death
- Differences between healthy and unhealthy features of continuing bonds with the deceased
- Invisible loyalties to the loved one
- Techniques for consolidating a constructive bond with the deceased

Note: We have deleted the audio & video recordings of clients Dr. Neimeyer showed in this presentation because he did not have permission to include them

The Power of Presence

Orienting to Client Needs and Resources

- the power of presence as a fundamental dimension of the therapeutic “holding environment”
- Assessing needs, particularly when clients struggle with complicated and prolonged grief

Restorative Retelling:

Mastering the Narrative of Death

- Fostering a safe relational container for a healing “re-telling” of the loss experience

Analogical Listening

Exploring Sensed Meanings of Grief

- the unvoiced meaning of client grief stories

Chapters of Our Lives:

Rewriting Stories of Loss

- helping clients integrate the event story of the death into the larger narrative of their lives

Continuing Bonds

Tracking Through Bereavement

- grieving as a process of reconstructing
- various impediments to revisiting and reorganizing the “back story” with the deceased

Remembering Conversations

Reintroducing the Deceased

techniques that can help move such work forward

- methods for re-introducing the deceased into the social and psychological world of the bereaved

Encountering Resistance:

Working with Pro-Symptom Positions

fostering a sustaining sense of connection and alliance with the loved one in embracing a changed future

Enacting Emotion:

Reopening Dialogues with the Dead

Robert A. Neimeyer, Ph.D.

Robert A. Neimeyer, Ph.D., is Professor in the Department of Psychology, University of Memphis, where he also maintains an active clinical practice.

Since completing his doctoral training at the University of Nebraska in 1982, Dr. Neimeyer has published 30 books, including *Techniques of Grief Therapy: Creative Practices for Counseling the Bereaved*, and *Grief and the Expressive Arts: Practices for Creating Meaning*, and serves as Editor of the journal *Death Studies*. He has written nearly 500 articles and book chapters.

Dr. Neimeyer is currently working to advance a more adequate theory of grieving as a meaning-making process, both in his published work and through his frequent professional national and international workshops.

The recipient of the MISS Foundation’s Phoenix Award: Rising to the Service of Humanity, Dr. Neimeyer served as Chair of the International Work Group for Death, Dying, & Bereavement. He has also been elected President of the Association for Death Education and Counseling.

In recognition of his scholarly contributions, Dr. Neimeyer has been granted the Eminent Faculty Award by the University of Memphis, made a Fellow of the Clinical Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association, and given Lifetime Achievement Awards by the Association for Death Education and Counseling, and the International Network on Personal Meaning.

Approved Home Study Hours for Psychologists Counselors Social Workers Nurses MFT AOTA

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