I doubt if it would have been written forty years ago; I'm certain it wouldn't have been sixty years ago. We are fortunate to live in a society where the quality of life is greatly valued, where bereavement, be it of life or limb, is seen as a major tragedy rather than a minor illness. We have learnt to appreciate the profound effect that loss can have on an individual, and have come a long way in our understanding of the whole grief process. So I found it alarming to read of the insensitive treatment meted out to widows by organisations where violent death is presumably always a possibility.

The author is out to make a political point, but in so doing has clearly highlighted a human need. Again and again, in her interviews with widows and families, Jean Carr mentions the anxiety brought about by the lack of information, or the passing of wrong information. After being told their son had been injured, one family spent twenty-four DAYS trying to find out what had happened to him and when he would be home. And many women, after hearing of a sinking on the television, were initially told their husbands were safe, only later to be informed that they had died. I don't think it is surprising then, that many widows either asked to bury their men at home, or to go out to the Falklands to view the graves. 'The lack of facts added to the unreality of it all, and did not prepare them for the inevitable consequences of all wars —death and injury'.

For most of us the Falklands conflict is now a memory. But for many men and women it is a wound that will not heal. This book is right to criticise the armed forces and the Ministry of Defence for their insensitivity when dealing with wives and families. But it also shows the need to look at our whole approach to the victims, and those left bereaved, through large-scale acts of violence. Maybe we too were found guilty of applauding the victors while ignoring the victims.

Revd. MALCOLM KING,
Chaplain to St. Peter's Hospital, Chertsey

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An anthology for those who grieve

Compiled by

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Introduction by

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Cruse Conferences

A Scottish Area Conference was held in Greenock last April. Under the general title of "Aspects of Loss", delegates heard Dr. Bertram Levy speak on "A G.P.'s View of Bereavement", and Dr. E. C. Nelson, Consultant Child Psychiatrist, on "The Effects of Bereavement on Children". Rev. Peter Sampson talked about the dying and their families, and Jane Balderston gave a hospital social worker's viewpoint on loss and bereavement. Delegates also took part in a workshop on practical problems in counselling.

The North Thames & East Anglia Area had their conference on 22nd September in Kensington, London. Delegates heard Dr. R. Fieldsend, Consultant Psychiatrist, speak about Bereavement & Suicide, and Mr. R. Howlett, Chairman of Dacorum Cruse, speak about Looking after the Elderly. Dr. D. Morgan, another Consultant Psychiatrist, gave a talk about Bereavement & Guilt Feelings, and the day was wound up with a discussion on rehabilitation through social contact and activities, initiated by Mr. Cedric Robinson, Chairman of Barkingside Cruse, and Mrs. Elsie Mallam of Southend Cruse. Seventy representatives from 23 Branches attended the conference.

The South-East had their conference on 24th November at Caterham in Surrey. Proceedings started with small groups discussing problems and possible solutions for Branch chairmen, secretaries and organisers, social sub-committee chairmen and counselling sub-committee chairmen. After lunch delegates heard a talk by Dr. Sheila Hollins on Children & Bereavement.

Barkingside Cruse had a Jubilee Day Conference on 29th September. Delegates saw the film "Living through Loss", and heard John Vivian, the local Cruse Area Organiser, outline Cruse's work and philosophy. The main speakers were Rev. Peter Speck, Chaplain of the Royal Free Hospital, whose talk was on The Religious and Cultural Aspects of Bereavement, and Penelope Crick, Clinical Psychologist, who spoke about Grieving, Mourning & the Family.

POSTBAG

From:
PAULINE GROVES
Chairman, Counselling Sub-Committee Epsom, Ewell & Mole Valley Cruse

In your last issue Jane Reardon questioned the use of the word "counsellee". I am happy to say that I have never heard the word used in our Branch. We have "members", or (if being counselled) "clients". But that word has a social work ring about it.

As a social worker I worry about the use of our jargon in Cruse. Normal English words are given a second esoteric meaning. One particular word which I am sure misleads is "supervisor". The Concise Oxford Dictionary definition includes "watch with authority". Is this what we do with our counsellors? Surely we support and lead them on. No wonder some of them will only turn to us with problems, or fear us checking up on them. Can we not find another word which has the meaning we want for the man and woman in the street—perhaps "advisor" or "supporter".

Or is Cruse slowly becoming a branch of social work, full of sophistication and jargon, but with little time for the volunteer, especially (horror of horrors) the volunteer whose contribution to the work is their own experience of widowhood, who may never before have volunteered for anything? Do not let us frighten them off with clever words and pretentious ideas.

From:
MARY MARSHALL
Counsellor, Worcester Cruse

I agree with Jane Reardon that "counsellee" is an awful word, and one feels that there must be a better word than "client". New to this—I refer to "my Cruse lady or man".

Dr. Agnes Wilkinson, who wrote the original article, comments:
I adopted the word 'counsellee' to correspond with 'counsellor' in the particular context of my very short article on *Counselling: a beginning, a middle and an end*. It has no particular relevance in wider contexts, and it would be lamentable if a word which I invented for a particular purpose were to be used in all sorts of inappropriate ways. I trust that Jane Reardon's apprehension on this score will prove unfounded, but the point she is making is worth serious attention.

BEREAVEMENT CARE is published for all Cruse workers and others who wish to deepen their understanding of bereavement. It is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be re-sold, reproduced in part or in entirety, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's consent.

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