CRISIS INTERVENTION: Grief and Bereavement. (Audio-cassettes) Dr. Nira Kfir. 1986.

Set of 4 tapes £13.99 from Adlerian Workshops & Publications, Museclear Ltd., 36 Dobbins Lane, Wendover, Bucks HP22 6DH.

This audio package of four tapes, each running 45-60 minutes, records lectures by Nira Kfir during a conference in London in September 1986. Dr. Kfir has extensive experience of working with bereaved people in Israel. Having personally attended several sessions of the conference I found her to be an excellent lecturer, and this comes through on the recordings. She relates her lectures to life through many case examples and a welcome lack of jargon.

Tape 1 includes an overview of crisis, what it is, how it develops and how an individual may experience growth as a result of crisis. Tape 2 discusses the three main components of crisis intervention: giving information, support and alternatives. Kfir goes on to exemplify the importance of each component through the use of a case history.

Tape 3 discusses family crisis. In this lecture Kfir explains the ways families function, parent/child interactions, and the individual's role and influence within the family.

The fourth tape, Bereavement and Grief, is perhaps the one most relevant to Cruse counsellors. It would also be educational for individuals working within the organisation in other capacities. In this tape Kfir points out that bereavement is not a crisis but has crisis potential. She goes on to discuss when bereavement can become a crisis and illustrates her point with case material. This lecture emphasises the value of lay volunteers and the importance of what they have to offer.

There seemed to be only two problems with the tapes: Dr. Kfir's accent, while easily understandable for the most part, makes the occasional word difficult to understand. Additionally, the recordings have picked up background sounds of traffic which some listeners may find distracting.

Although Dr. Kfir is an Adlerian psychologist she does not emphasise a particular theoretical model of counselling in her lectures. One of the main values of these tapes is that she allows for individual differences in counselling approaches, "There is no single right way". While the tapes are not entirely specific to the work of Cruse I feel they would be an asset to any professional or lay person working with bereaved people.

LYN FRANCHINO, Ph.D. Counsellor



From:

MAGGIE FISHER, Matron
REVD. COLIN KASSELL, Chaplain
St. Catherine's Hospice, Crawley

Dear Sir,

Re: Article in Bereavement Care—Volume 6 Number 1—Spring, 1987. **BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING: a therapeutic hypothesis, by Dr. Robert Johnson.**

We support the concept of bereavement counselling being a re-education process for the client. We are, however, concerned about Dr. Johnson's hypothesis, particularly in the following areas:

1. He states that the motto is "if they don't like it don't do it" and also subsequent to this "to argue with the patient is to lose". Firstly, yes, we feel that we should negotiate the counselling process but if the individual being counselled feels that they don't want to continue we should try to enable them to look at why. Perhaps they are feeling frightened or vulnerable, etc. Secondly, we wonder whose loss? What are we trying to gain?
2. He states that "patients in this situation believe *falsely* that they cannot survive . . .". Who are we to judge? Counselling surely involves empathy and trying to see the world through the other person's eyes and not to judge.

So finally we wonder about his concept of bereavement counselling and particularly its brief time scale.

Dr. Johnson replies:

It is hardly surprising my approach to counselling evokes sceptism or even "incredulity" as in the earlier editorial comment. Based on 20 years' careful research, it proposes a new approach to mental distress, and breaks the old rules.

I use it daily in my work, finding it more effective and quicker not only for bereavements, but for all mental disease. Even a six-year-old is coming to see he is "blaming" everyone (and therefore hassling his grandparents) for his mother's recent suicide. I ask him to re-evaluate his strategies for emotional survival—though not quite in so many words!

My approach is explicitly prescriptive—I invite people to agree that adults no longer need the parental care and attention they did when infants. They may wish for it, but they can physically survive without it. Not everyone believes this, or behaves as if it were true. Their life-survival strategies need bringing up to date, especially when they continue to view the deceased as a derelict parent-figure.

Only negotiation and consent can safeguard the danger of my becoming parental, which may be what they want, but which helps neither them nor me. I offer it strictly on a take-it-or-leave-it basis: if they decline, I try again—but only within limits they set.

What we all stand to lose is that the bereaved may actually "join" the deceased, as some threaten, and too many do. My objective is actively to change how they see the world which their emotions are now telling them "falsely" holds no future for them. I aim to re-educate their emotions. The rational mind can at last be engaged in controlling the irrational. It is sad how often this approach is resisted. Thank you for your interest.

COURSES & CONFERENCES

Bereavement & Loss. 9th-11th September, 1987. British Institute of Mental Handicap, Wolverhampton Road, Kidderminster, Worcs., to be held at Whirlow, Sheffield.

Dealing with Bereavement & Loss. 8th October. WILL (Workshop Institute for Living & Learning), 105 Christchurch Road, S.W.14.

Age Concern Courses at Seebohm House, Maryland Drive, Northfield, Birmingham. 15th-16th September, for **Voluntary Community Services for Terminally Ill People.** 26th-27th November, **Helping Elderly People to cope with Bereavement.**

St. Christopher's Hospice Fourth International Conference: A Kaleidoscope of Hospice Medicine. 28th September - 2nd October 1987, at the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. £30.00 per day (£50.00 overseas delegates). Information from Avril Jackson. St. Christopher's Hospice, 51-59 Lawrie Park Road, Sydenham, London SE226 6DZ. Tel. 01-778 9252.

Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice. First International Conference: Multi-disciplinary Aspects of Terminal Care. 8th-10th September, 1987, at 73 Carlton Place, Glasgow G5 9TD, Scotland.

Cruse Study Day on Disasters and how to cope with them. 28th November at Bristol. £25. Details from: Cruse, 81 Park Street, Bristol, Avon.

Cruse Annual Course on Bereavement Conselling. See page 24.

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