have had to bury the process of bereavement soon after the funeral.

After the death, the lovers became much more aware of their own possible susceptibility to AIDS, a fear of contagion that they suspended in order to remain close to their dying friends. Moreover, they were acutely aware of what AIDS looks like and were quite fearful of getting it from or giving it to anyone else. Consequently, sexual repression and anxiety attacks about contagion occurred in the men treated.

The survivor often felt stigmatised by his association with the victim. On becoming aware that he was seropositive with the AIDS antibody, one man expressed guilt that he had possibly transmitted AIDS to his lover. Simple extensions of understanding and compassion appeared to help soften feelings of alienation and to help lessen the person's horror of his own contagiousness. Since the disease required exhausting schedules before their lovers' death, these men have been too busy to worry about dating and safe sex. They may need good advice at this time with reassurances that they are capable of being close to men physically without exposure to or transmission of the AIDS virus.

In this instance, denial may lend some saving grace. Among the men in this small sample, those who denied casuality between their lovers' illness and their own susceptibility to AIDS adapted more quickly. They were more likely to become engaged in new relationships and less likely to have fears about contamination, even while being cautious about transmission.

In this population, research results that link bereavement and depression to suppression of immune function are particularly relevant. For the therapist, the question arises of how much depression and dysphoria should be encouraged as clients work through feelings about their lovers' death. This is a dynamic question that usually must be related to each individual's coping style and personality factors. Fortunately, it is most often answered by the clients themselves as they move naturally between the constituent phases of denial and acceptance.

Those who were primarily responsible for the day to day care of their lovers had a much more difficult time emotionally afterwards, particularly if they had conflicts with their lovers' families about the care. These men were caught in a stance of protective vigilance at the moment of their lovers' death, a tension-filled position which made relaxation very difficult.

A rigid idealisation of the dead lover can occur, making new boyfriends unwelcome. At the same time that our bereaved patients longed for the closeness and support they gave to their dying partners, they also compared anyone who approaches to the idealised image of their partners. This tendency only served to heighten their loneliness. In the last stages of his life, the person with AIDS and his lover return to a stage where romance is extremely high and ego boundaries are loose. Problems arise when the lover dies during this stage and leaves behind a fiercely devoted widower.

As most relationships progress, a working balance of autonomy and dependence is negotiated and maintained. Because of the inordinate dependency of those suffering from terminal AIDS, the youthfulness of the men it attacks, and the untimely interruption to intimacy that a lover's death brings, those who are left behind have sacrificed their autonomy but later need to regain it. Unlike a relationship which ends because of incompatibility, here it is difficult to mobilise anger at the departed partner as a means of resecuring one's sense of well-being and rightness. In the special instance of bereavement, a therapist can help the partner finish the dialogue of the relationship and prepare to move on.

Finally, those who got involved with volunteer activity in an AIDS organisation recovered more quickly after their lovers had died. Some reported that they found within these groups other men who had similar stories to tell. Since the loss of friends and lovers to AIDS has increasingly become a community-wide occurrence, a great deal of wisdom and support is available alongside the great amount of pain the community experiences.

This article is based on a paper presented at the AIDS and Mental Health: Policy Administration, Treatment conference held at the University of California, San Francisco, 13th-14th September, 1985.

BOOK REVIEWS

BASIC COUNSELLING SKILLS
Lyn Franchino, 1987. Cruse, 126 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1UR. £25 + £1.50 p&p.

The content of Lyn Franchino's 'Basic Counselling Skills—a Training Manual for Bereavement Counsellors' is very similar to the content of the first module of the skills training offered to Marriage Guidance counsellors. This is hardly surprising since both draw heavily upon the work of Robert Carkhuff and Gerard Egan, those pioneers of counselling skills training.

I thought that the manual was excellent. It describes clearly the skills to be taught, it offers a brief, explicit rationale for their use by counsellors and it grounds the acquisition of each new skill very firmly in practice and repeated practice.

I liked the clear instructions to trainers at each new development and also the way in which trainers are urged to summarise what has been aimed for in each session, and to check back with the trainees that they understand and are able to use the skills taught.

This repeated checking out with the consumer is further enhanced by the use of handouts which act as a resumé of the material presented and the exercises used in each session.

Throughout the manual the focus of the practice sessions is kept firmly on the issue of bereavement and the role play scenarios and exercises are cleverly targeted on those aspects of loss and change with which the bereaved person has to wrestle.

The specific skills are clearly and straightforwardly described and examples of their use are offered frequently. I found myself uncomfortable with one of the sample responses used to illustrate immediacy, where it seemed to me that an important client nuance had not been responded to, but that is a minor criticism of an excellent manual.

As a final comment, counselling skills are tremendously useful in training volunteer counsellors but if the trainees are to develop beyond being merely skilful these skills need to be offered in relation to a model of the counselling process.

The Three Stage Model of Robert Carkhuff or the Four Stage Model of Gerard Egan would, if offered at the outset of this manual, anchor the very good skills content and drive home the fact that skills are to be viewed as re-cyclable and re-usable at each stage of the counselling process.

MOIRA FRYER
Head of Counselling,
National Marriage Guidance Council

GOOD GRIEF
Talking and Learning about Loss and Death. A Schools' Pack. Barbara Ward and Jamie Houghton, in association with Cruse—Bereavement Care. London: Good Grief Associates, 1987. £15 + £1.50 p&p. Available from Cruse, 126 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1UR.

Having worked with the local branch of Cruse for the past 13 years, it is all too easy to forget the naïvety and anxiety with which I initially approached the topic of bereavement. My own understanding has been broadened and deepened through the privilege of contact with bereaved people in a variety of settings, including face-to-face counselling and leading a parents' circle for the past seven years. Consequently, it is with a tremor of concern that

Continued on next page

one realises the limited opportunities available to young people in secondary schools to learn about this all-important area of life's experience. This is thrown into even more stark relief by the debate in education circles centred on the national curriculum and its prescriptive approach.

The publication of the "Good Grief" package has been well-timed. With increasing awareness through media coverage and personal experience of the impact of natural and man-made disasters on the individual, the subject of bereavement is becoming ever more prominent in discussions in schools. This was brought home to me recently when I addressed a group of secondary head teachers and went through the objectives and format of the package. Their response was very favourable and has been backed up by action, as I understand that every school has bought at least one copy and many have invested in several.

From my own experience, the great value of the "Good Grief" package is in clearly identifying its objectives so that schools know the aims which they are working towards, and in providing a clear, carefully thought out and structured framework to enable young people to explore the concepts of loss and death, and the impact of a bereavement. The authors are aware of the importance of involving young people in discussions and providing them with activities which enable them to express their own views and learn from the experience of their peers. I have also been able to adapt many of the exercises for use in a training programme with youth workers and counsellors who operate a "walk-in" service. Again, the ideas were well received and the format enabled individuals to explore their own experiences and use them positively in preparing themselves to help others.

The "Good Grief" package has been produced by counsellors with a good practical understanding of helping bereaved people and a thorough knowledge of the relevant literature. I have found it an invaluable addition to the materials I use in training and have been delighted with the positive responses from head teachers who have pioneered its use in their schools. I hope it receives as wide a distribution as possible, so that teachers can be better prepared for helping and supporting young people in their understanding of loss and bereavement.

PETER NORMAN
Senior Educational Psychologist,
Buckinghamshire County Council

BEREAVEMENT AND HEALTH: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES OF PARTNER LOSS

by W. Stroebe and S. M. S. Stroebe. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univers'ty Press, 1987. £27.50 hardback; £9.95 paperback.

It is a rare pleasure to be able to give unqualified approval of a new major work in the field of bereavement. This book is a subtle, intelligent and erudite review of the current state of our knowledge of the effects of conjugal bereavement on physical and mental health. Over 600 scientific papers have been examined with a critical eye and their relevance for our understanding of bereavement spelled out in a way which this reviewer found quite absorbing. Each of the major theories about grief and bereavement are described and their value and limitations considered. Bereavement is a complex phenomenon and the Stroebes do not over simplify, yet their articulate and logical analysis seldom fails to bring clarity in areas where others have proved mystifying or unintelligible. Of particular value are the chapters of "Depression models of grief" and "Stress models of grief"; these have implications which extend beyond the field of bereavement and they lead on to closely-reasoned consideration of the behavioural and physiological changes that mediate between stress and illness. In these chapters the authors achieve a synthesis which has not, to my knowledge, been transcended.

The emphasis throughout is on science and there is very little reference to clinical studies or illustrative material. Only in the final chapter do the authors set aside their scientific stand-point to give some "guidelines for supporting the bereaved" and this brief section is hardly adequate to its purpose. Nor is there any account of the treatment of pathological grief. These topics are much better covered in Warden's "Grief Counselling and Grief Theraphy".

Other volumes which bear comparison with the Stroebes are Raphael's "Anatomy of Bereavement" and Osterweis's "Bereavement; Reactions, Consequences and Care". Both of these cover much of the same ground but neither is as articulate and

Continued on next page

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penetrating as this work. Raphael includes the effects of bereavement on children and the effects of the death of children on parents, both important topics which, in turn, enlighten our understanding of other types of bereavement. The book by Osterweis *et al* is a multi-author volume which matches the Stroebes in scientific respects and, in addition, gives a more detailed account of services for the bereaved in the USA but it suffers from being written by a committee.

All in all, Wolfang and Margaret Stroebe are to be congratulated on writing an important text book which must be read and kept for reference by every serious student of bereavement.

COLIN MURRAY PARKES
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Consultant Psychiatrist,
London Hospital Medical College

THE PITCH OF GRIEF
Video cassette US$350. Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax Street, Boston, Mass. 02130 USA.

This 28 minute video allows four articulate Americans to talk about their exprience of bereavement. A young widow, a young mother who has lost a child and an older widow and widower describe simply and directly what they went through, what helped and what did not help.

The accounts are inter-cut so that we follow the grieving process from its painful beginnings through to a very positive and encouraging outcome in all four cases. There is no attempt to explain or theorise but two hospice co-ordinators add their own comments. I particularly liked one of these: 'You can't lead somebody through grief, all you can do is to try to follow'.

Made by a journalist, Eric Stange, after the death of his wife, "Pitch of Grief" provides a rich material suitable for any training programme for bereavement counsellors. Several of the bereaved people have been helped by attending mutual-help groups and are able to explain how this came about.

My only doubts concern the overall impression given by the film that grief, though painful, is inevitably a beneficial experience. One of the speakers almost seems to be apologising for the fact that, however much she may have gained from her bereavement, she would still prefer to have her child back! This Pollyannish view may be encouraging to bereavement counsellors but should not lead them to imagine that every, or even most grief, will have a happy ending.

Despite the fact that all the participants in the film are Americans the implications are universal and easily intelligible.

The Film of the Year Award of the American Hospice Association was well dese ved.

COLIN MURRAY PARKES
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London Hospital Medical College

Cruse News

Cruse Bereavement Counselling Courses

MIDLANDS

The following Midlands Branches will be running courses this autumn, most of which will start in mid/late September:

Birmingham (contact Cruse, Office 5, Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham B2 7SX. Tel. 021-643 4822.)

Leicester (Winifred Thomson, 140 Knighton Church Road, Leicester LE2 3JJ. Tel. 0533 705863.)

Mansfield (Jim Stocks, Millbrook Unit, Kings Mill Hospital, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts NG17 4JL. Tel. 0623 22515 ext. 3458.)

Newark (Ann McKenzie, Kinder Lodge, Trent Close, North Muskham, Newark. Tel. 0636 71869.)

Redditch (Richard Burrows, 34 Broadway Close, Church Hill, Redditch. Tel 0527 61869.)

Shrewsbury (Joan Kynaston, 13 Old Coppice, Lyth Hill, Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury SY3 0BP. Tel. 0743 72 2648.)

Wolverhampton (Wendy Gould, 5 Larkswood Drive, Penn, Wolverhampton. Tel. 0902 895 904.)

NORTHERN ENGLAND

Blackpool. A Training Course will start on 19th September 1988. Contact Mr. Bernie Kirk, Community Health Council, Queen Street, Blackpool.

Isle of Man. A Bereavement Care training course will start on 3rd August 1988. Contact Barbara Larkin, tel. 0624 73357.

Selby. A Training Course will be held in autumn 1988. Contact Julie Gouding, tel. Selby 706762.

Warrington. A Training Course will start in mid-September. Contact Mrs. Sue Dennis, 17 Whitefield Road, Stockton Heath, Warrington.

SCOTLAND

Autumn courses are being arranged in **Elgin, Galashiels and Peebles,** and **Inverness.** For further details please contact Mrs. Ruth Hampton, Scottish Area Organiser, 138 McDonald Road, Edinburgh EH7 4NL. Tel. 031-556 4489.

SOUTH EAST

North West Surrey Branch are running their sixth course for those interested in becoming Cruse counsellors, as well as those who want to study different aspects of bereavement and mourning. The course will run on Tuesday evenings from 27th September to 6th December. Fee £29. Closing date for applications 18th July. Apply to Miss Jean Connel, tel. 0932 848796 (home) or 0932 840000 (work).

WALES

A Bereavement Care course followed by a Counselling course will be held in the autumn in **Newport, Powys.** For details of this and any other Welsh courses, please contact Mrs. Sheelagh Burton, Welsh Organiser, Yew Tree Cottage, West End, Magor, Newport, Gwent NP6 3HT. Tel. 0633 881380.

SOUTH WEST

Weston-super-Mare Branch will be holding a course beginning on 5th October 1988. Enquiries to Mrs. Tricia Rawlingson Plant, South West Area Organiser, Trendle Farm, Tower Hill, Bruton, Somerset, tel. 0749 812307.

These courses are not normally considered suitable for those who have been bereaved for less than two years.

New Branches

Since our last issue, new Cruse Branches have opened at: Coventry East, East Kilbride, Huntingdonshire, Leven and South Warwickshire.

Steering Committees

New Steering Committees working towards the opening of a Branch have been set up in: Bridlington, Coventry East, Foyle (Northern Ireland), Harrogate, Isle of Man, Kettering, Leicester, Mansfield, Rushden, Tunbridge Wells, Waltham Abbey and Weston-super-Mare.

Welsh Area Conference

The Cruse Welsh Area Conference will be held on 29th October 1988 at Cambrian House, Newport. Enquiries to Mrs. Sheelagh Burton, Welsh Organiser, Yew Tree Cottage, West End, Magor, Newport, Gwent NP6 3HT. Tel. 0633 881380.

Correction—Bereavement Training Course for Professional Workers

Certain details of the Bereavement Counselling Course for Professional Workers (course director Lyn Franchino) published in the Spring Issue of Bereavement Care were incorrect. Please note that the course will be held this autumn on Thursday evenings from 29th September-8th December at The Hale Clinic, 7 Park Crescent, London. Applications should be made to Nick Tyndall, Training Officer, Cruse, 126 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1UR (tel. 01-940 4818) by 31st July.

Cruse Director: Derek Nuttall
Training Officer: Nicholas Tyndall
Information Officer: Wendy Wilson
Cruse House, 126 Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1UR. Tel. 01-940 4818.

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