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adaptation is extremely difficult when things happen so fast, so absolutely, and in such an extreme fashion. Especially when there is no corpse or grave, the rituals of mourning can be difficult or impossible. There are broadly two alternatives for the survivor. He can stay numb and never recover properly. At the other end he can achieve meaning and even illumination. Most end up somewhere between the two.

Some "prophetic survivors" can bring forth knowledge of special value. There have been some Vietnam veterans, some death camp survivors and some American physicists who have brought out truths with a view to preventing the experience recurring. The work of Vietnam veterans has had much influence on subsequent United States' policy.

THE HEALING PROFESSIONS

Many veterans moved away from the veterans' hospitals to unofficial groups, and expressed great anger and irony against "Chaplains and Shrinks". We discovered that previously when they had felt great anxiety and fear and also moral revulsion, and had consulted either a chaplain or a psychiatrist, they had been encouraged to go back and persist in the daily atrocities. Here was the spiritual authority in one's society undermining one's last vestiges of decency. This led me to question the whole concept of the professional. In medieval times we had the idea of a profession of faith. Now we have the idea of a body of skills. I suggest we have lost some of our values. We think that because we belong to a healing profession, anything we do is perforce good. I think we need a model in respect of advocacy for, and detachment from, such issues. Sufficient detachment, yes, to apply our technical knowledge, but with awareness of what we stand for being in the forefront rather than being bootlegged in; it is not unscientific to have such moral advocacy. We have a series of moral struggles as great as have those who fight or are involved in wars.

So we study man-made disasters and survivors of violent events, not only to understand and offer help to those survivors, but to counter the violence itself, to contribute to the prevention and repetition of these destructive events, and especially the ultimate violence of the nuclear end.

Modern Man Facing Death

Summary of the plenary speech by

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

As an emigrant from Russia, a soldier, a French resistance worker, a doctor and a priest I have been in contact with death and violence all my life. For most Western people life is now safe within limits of which I had no notion when I was a child.

I find a strange inconsistency in modern man's attitude to violence. We show great indifference to the destiny of the victim; all our interest is concentrated on the fate and psychological situation of the culprit. The punishment of the aggressor, whether it is a collective aggressor or an individual one, frightens the majority of people. We have lost the sense that a judge is both more or less than human, more because he has a divine right to judge and condemn, and he has not the human right to give way to his natural compassion. Violence and aggressiveness are not resolved by these attitudes to death and violence. When we respond to the possibility or fact of violence with anger and hatred and fear, we only increase the violence, and create an atmosphere where some will enact the violence we feel within ourselves.

I find the fear of dying and of death all the time among Western people, but less among Russians who have suffered a great deal, yet face it calmly as one of the events of life. In schools we should have education for this, rather than so much sex education. There is a sort of craven turning away from death. It results not in an intensity of life, but a hunger for survival at all costs, for many a survival without meaning, and at the cost of quality of life. I feel many people could face both violence and death if they knew more clearly what they stood for. They would then be prepared to pay the cost. If we were prepared to take moral responsibility more clearly in this way, we should be able to identify, in all situations, what we are called to do.

Unfortunately in normal life twilight or patches of darkness are more frequent than moments of pure and perfect light. Often I will realise that I cannot altogether be what I want to be, or should be. There are limitations placed on me by my society, my education, my intellect, my willpower, and everything that I am.

There are, however, ways in which we can retain personal integrity even if the general cause, the war perhaps, seems to be wrong. Instead of looking at things at a level beyond us, we can look at them at our own level, where we can act responsibly. In war, for instance, we can focus on solidarity with comrades. The cost can still be high, sometimes life itself. Occasionally life itself is more costly even than death, and eventual death may be a release.

So an ideal can sustain someone in the face of great suffering. Even if the ideal itself is ugly or wrong, we should not insist on its error.

What of faith and real atheism? St. Paul spoke of being "separated from the God whom I love" while he lived. In this spirit there are examples where violent death is actually an expression of love. I reckon most of those who call themselves atheists are actually agnostics. Many say they reckon there is nothing after death. If you talk with them in more detail, you discover they are terrified of a void after death, an experience of not being, which is a logical absurdity.

One of my friends came back, miraculously, after four years in Auschwitz. I asked him what he brought back from his time there. He said "I see with horror how unreal life is around us, how trivial, how empty, how meaningless the life of people is in freedom". Also he said "I have lost my peace". By this he meant that as long as he was a victim of all the brutality and in danger of death he could ask God to forgive his tormentors. Now he was free, and wondered whether God still hears prayers that are only sustained by the memory of suffering.

As long as the victim thinks in terms of revenge, and hatred is not

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cured, there can be no ultimate inward healing. It is a problem of cure for the survivor, and a problem for someone on the threshold of death who remains a prisoner of fear and greed and hatred earlier in his or her life. One has to try to identify with one's tormentor, to try to build up one's integrity and perhaps project it on to the tormentor. I knew a woman who managed this towards an interrogator after the Russian Revolution. She said eventually "I realised we were simply like leaves in the autumn taken up by the whirly wind; I happened to fall on one side of the table, and he on the other." "I smiled, and he smiled back . . . the spell was broken".

Martin Buber's book "The Tales of the Hassidim" tells of a young Rabbi who could change people's lives because he did not see their sins as theirs alone, but as belonging to both of them. We must really meet closely with men of violence, which means allowing them to look right into our eyes, our soul.

What of bereaved people? With every person who dies, part of us is already in eternity. We must, if we love this person, live up to the great encounter of a living soul with a living God. We must let go of everything that was small, that was separation, alienation and estrangement, and reach out to that serenity and greatness, newness and abundance of life into which the departed person has entered. We should not speak of our love in the past tense. Love is a thing that does not fade in a faithful heart. It does not go into the past unless we betray our love. We must keep our love alive in a new situation, but as actively and creatively, and more so, more often, than when the person was with us. Our love cannot be dead because a person has died. If that is true, our life must be a continuation of theirs, with all its significance. We must reflect on all that was beauty, and nobility, in that person, and make sure those around us, and our surroundings, do not lose anything through the death. This applies to all families and friends as well as the immediate bereaved, so that the seed that has fallen into corruption may give a hundredfold harvest in the hearts and lives of others.

One thing is at the front, with every bereaved person—the sense of separation, of being left alone. One has to accept it creatively and to say "I have a double task to fulfil—the dead person's work and my own. I must be great for two, reveal integrity for two". Yet in violent death, and prolonged death as with cancer sometimes, there can be a sense of horror—a body murdered, lacerated or emaciated. And yet the first signs of physical corruption I noticed on my mother's body were a liberation. A preserved body would have been an aberration, and I the prisoner of the tomb. I realised the person I loved was not to be sought in the body, but in terms of undying love, and for me, a creative faithfulness to example.

Sometimes people suffer great agony of mind before they die. It comes because of the aloneness in which they are left, and that aloneness comes from cowardice. Sometimes people who appear to be unconscious may be quite capable of receiving messages of hope and comfort, which alleviate their agony greatly. This is connected with the fear of telling someone that death is there. By not telling them we deprive them of the only possibility of sharing their anguish, fear and pain. We also deprive ourselves of the wonder of sharing and helping.

Grieving Hindus in Britain

By Dr. H. N. GHADIALI MD DPM MRCPsych

Second in our series on how different immigrant groups, and subsequent generations, mourn, is an article about the needs of bereaved Hindu people in Britain. Dr. Ghadiali is a Consultant Psychiatrist and Jungian Analyst at St. George's Hospital, Stafford,



A loss is a loss and it is never replaceable. Every death has a devastating effect on those who survive the dead, irrespective of one's race or cultural origin. Although healing of such devastation is a psychological phenomenon, a religious belief system and firm social customs often aid the healing.

Hindu Family System

Hinduism is not only a religion but also offers a social structure. For Hindus birth, marriage and death are not only family incidents, but are also bound up with social and religious obligations. Hindu family structure is essentially that of an extended joint family, having hierarchy and authority structure with clearly defined roles. Economic forces and migration have divided the joint family into nuclear families. However, unlike a western nuclear family, it maintains emotional ties with the rest of the extended joint family, often thousands of miles across the globe. The role of an individual as husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, etc. is deeply rooted in religious obligations and social tradition.

Religious Belief

Hindus generally believe that the soul is external, but is bound by the law of **Karma** (action) to the world of matter, which it can only escape after spiritual progress through an endless series of births. Death is seen as a door to rebirth. Death of an elderly and ill person is easily rationalised with this belief system. Hinduism emphasises the **maya** (illusive nature) of social relationships, but social tradition and interpretation of the law of **Karma** gives the opportunity of the same social relationships in the

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