

## **HEALTHY GRIEF: Practical grief interventions for families, children and pets.**

Duane T. Bowers, LPC, CCHt

### **THE PROCESS OF HEALTHY GRIEF**

This seminar begins with defining Grief and Griefwork. Then, the progression of the models of grief is presented beginning with Attachment Theory, and considering Anticipatory Grief, Tasks of Mourning, the Grief Cycle and Complicated (Traumatic) Grief. This discussion is further developed by presenting the obstacles to healthy grieving including Stress Reaction, Lack of Integration, Lack of Resilience, Guilt and the Perceived Need for Forgiveness

### **THE FAMILY AND HEALTHY GRIEF**

A frank discussion of the Ethical Issues at the end of life, the need for Advanced Directives and their impact on the grief of the survivor is presented. The survivor's Coping Styles, and the topic of Family Resilience are discussed as well. The type of death or process of dying involved in the death are explored. The topic of Long term Illness is presented as well as the survivors' adjustment to the diagnosis, illness, and impending death. Sudden Death (including homicide, suicide, accident) includes a discussion of the needs of the survivors, and their process of creating the picture of the death. The unique characteristics for the survivors of the death of a child are also presented. Interventions discussed for these topics include Grief ritual (Memorialization, Invocation, Celebration, Waves of Grief), Cognitive Behavioral approaches, and Complicated Grief Therapy. Interventions for the physical response to grief which are presented in this section include Eye Movement Therapies, Relaxation Techniques and Stress Inoculation Therapies. Finally, the spiritual aspect of grief is considered with a discussion of Spiritual themes, and the death's affect on the client's belief system.

### **CHILDREN AND HEALTHY GRIEF**

Types of grief responses exhibited by children are presented, and the model based on Age Appropriate Grief Responses is compared to a Conceptual Processing model for children and grief. This section of the presentation looks at how children integrate loss, and the role of projection in integration. Basic Play Therapy techniques are also discussed.

### **PETS AND HEALTHY GRIEF**

The symbiotic relationship of supporting a grieving pet, and looking at pets as support to human grieving is the topic of this section of the presentation. There is also a discussion of appropriate grieving for the death of a pet.

### **THE PROFESSIONAL AND HEALTHY GRIEF**

Self care on the part of mental health professionals, specifically burnout, secondary trauma, vicarious traumatization, and compassion fatigue are presented and discussed. Information about self care is focused around The Four Basics; caseload, education, social network, peer Support.