



Deep Release Online
Professional Training for Counsellors

Working with Loss and Grief



Historical Overview: How we have handled Grief and Loss

In London in 1830 the average male life span was:

- 44 years for the better off
 - 25 years for tradesmen
 - 22 years for labourers
 - Out of every hundred working class children, 57 would be dead by the age of 5.
-
- On someone's death, curtains closed and mirrors covered (many superstitions)
 - Queen Victoria – after Albert's death (age 42-81) – wore black until she died, even to 2 daughters' weddings
 - Christianity and role of the Priest was central



Historical Overview: 2 World Wars and Spanish Influenza

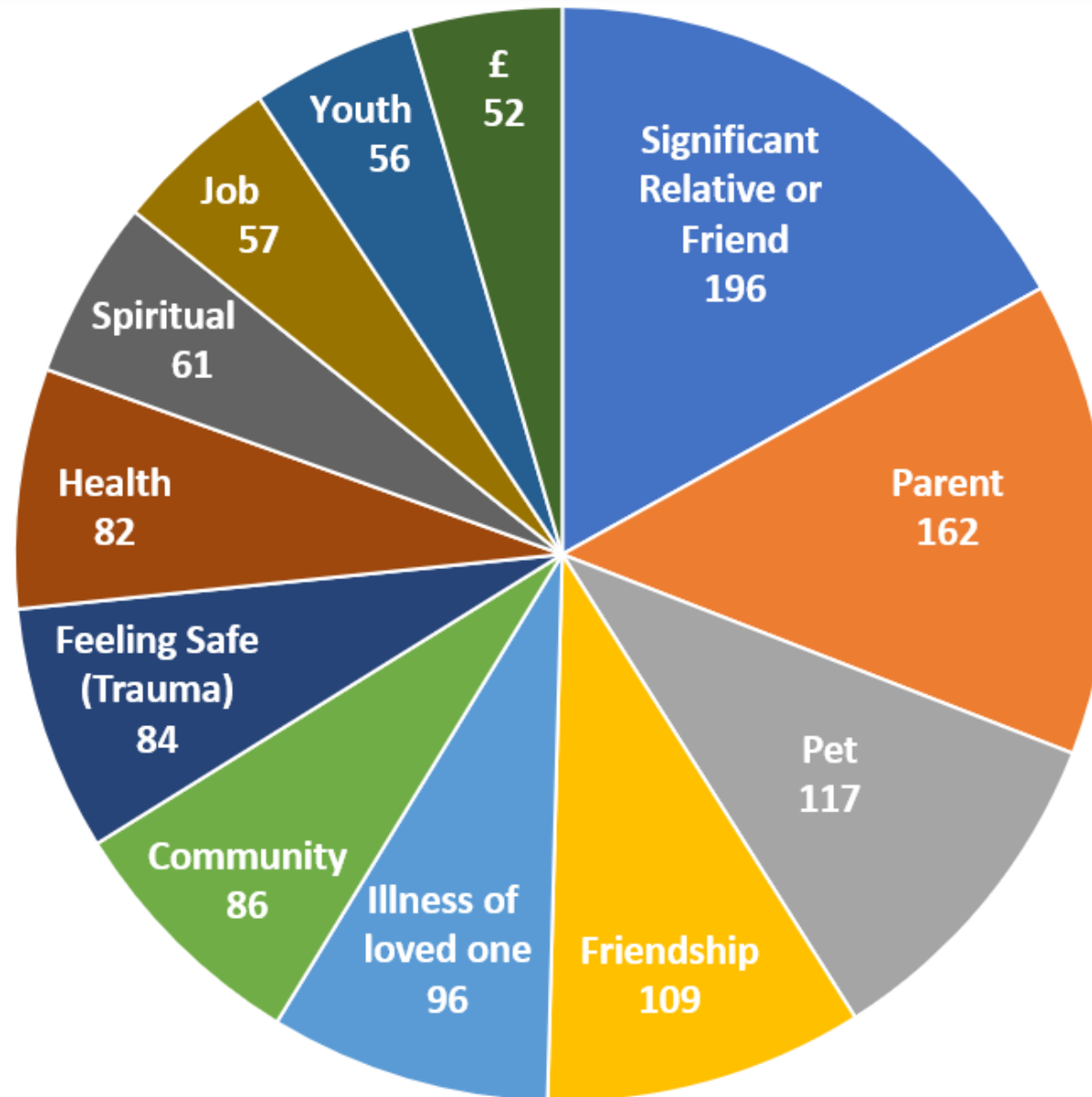
WWI	17 million killed worldwide
Flu Pandemic	100 million died worldwide
WWII	75 million died worldwide (weaponry / Holocaust)



- Everybody lost somebody
- Victorian rituals no longer possible, practically or emotionally
- Grief suppressed
- Decline of Christian faith
- Emergence of faith in medicine, vaccines, antibiotics
- Death seen not as will of God, but failure of the doctor

Experiences of Loss from Facebook Poll 2021

- Miscarriage
- Divorce
- Empty Nest
- Multiple Losses
- Childlessness
- Home
- Counsellor
- Items stolen
- Infertility
- Position at Work
- Sex/Intimacy/Touch
- Pregnancy
- Child
- Childhood
- The old me
- Sense of self
- Freedom



- Partner
- Libido
- Dementia
- Sibling
- Lost Years
- Manager
- Supervisor
- Autonomy after children
- Singleness
- A sense
- Sibling in Womb
- Suicide of a loved one
- Body part
- Culture/heritage
- Birth mother
- Foster family
- Dreams

"I cannot believe how many I have ticked..."

MODELS OF GRIEF

LINEAR APPROACHES



KÜBLER-ROSS GRIEF CYCLE

DENIAL

avoidance,
confusion, elation,
shock, fear

ANGER

frustration,
irritation,
anxiety

BARGAINING

struggling to find
meaning, reaching
out to others, telling
one's story

DEPRESSION

overwhelmed,
helplessness,
hostility, flight

ACCEPTANCE

exploring options,
new plan in place,
moving on

➡ **“Closure”**

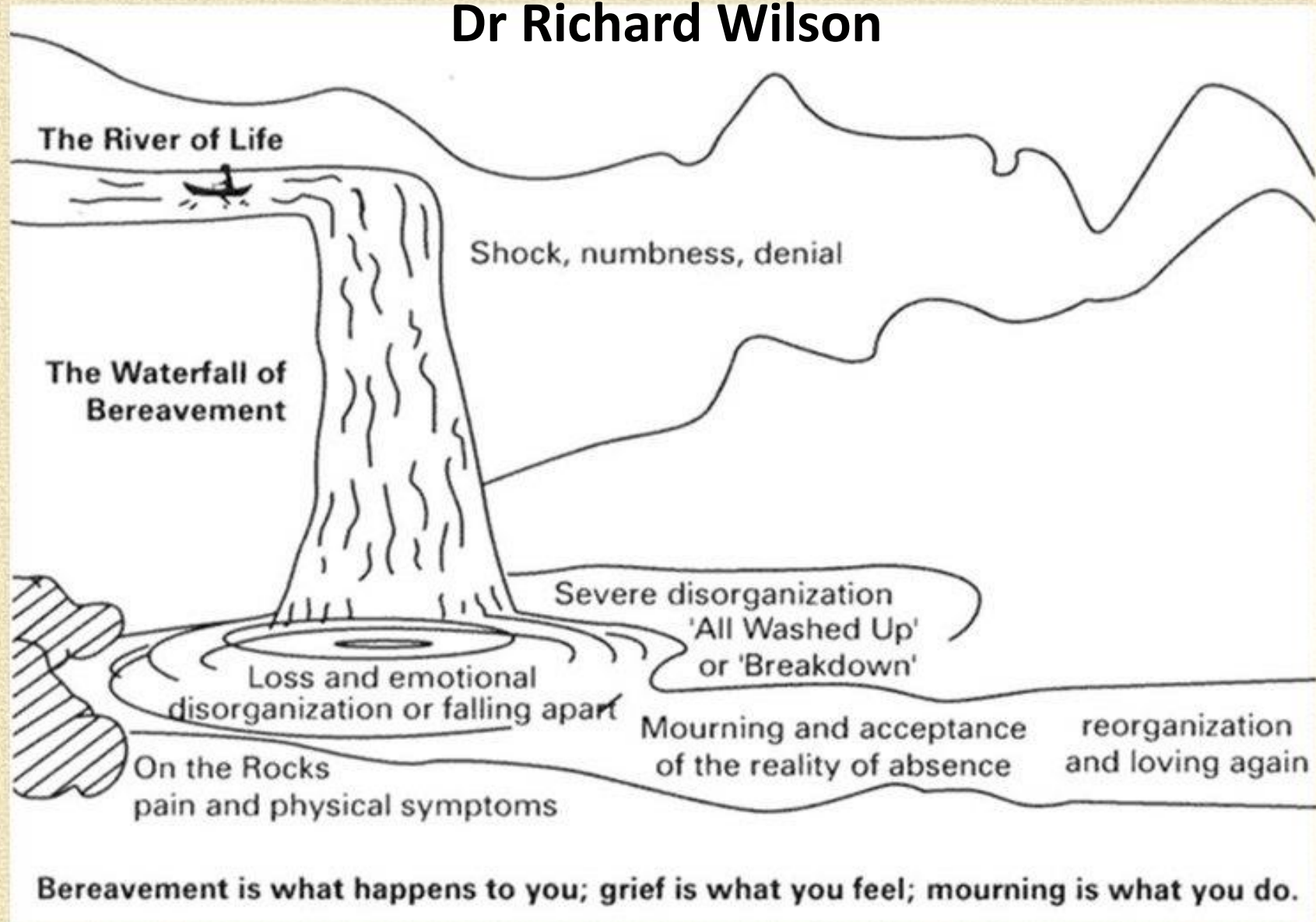
**INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION**

**EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT**

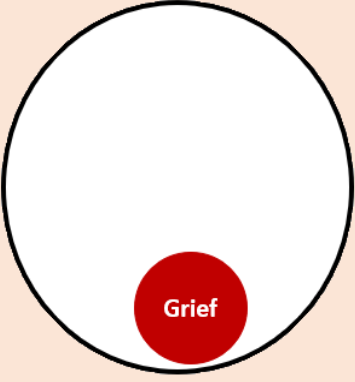
**GUIDANCE AND
DIRECTION**

THE WHIRLPOOL OF GRIEF

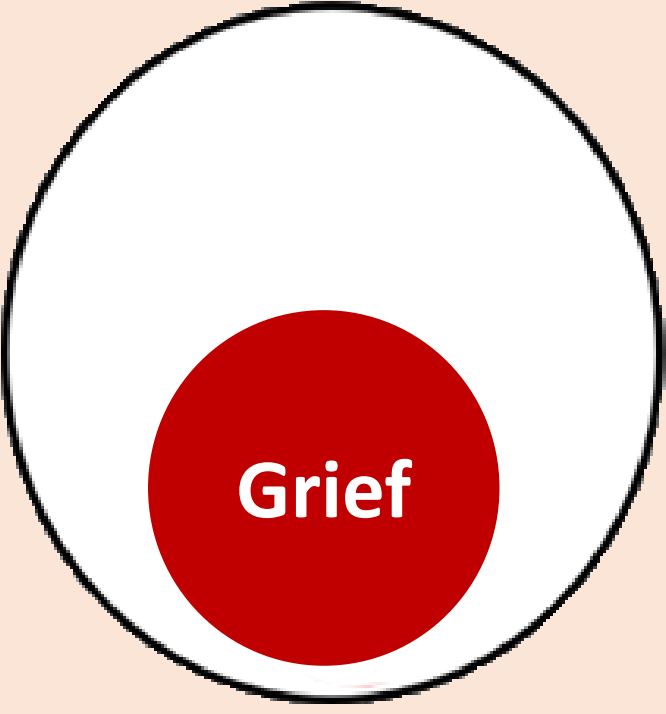
Dr Richard Wilson



Lois Tonkin, Growing Around Grief, 1996



People think that Grief.... Slowly gets smaller.... As time goes by.....

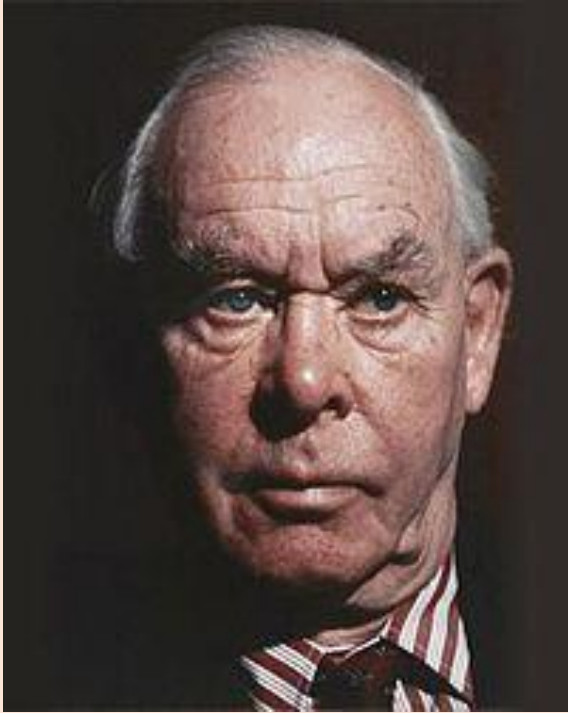


In reality, grief stays... The same size... But slowly life begins... To grow bigger around it

Jenny's Story – “Normal” Grief



Loss, Grief and Attachment Theory



John Bowlby 1907-1990

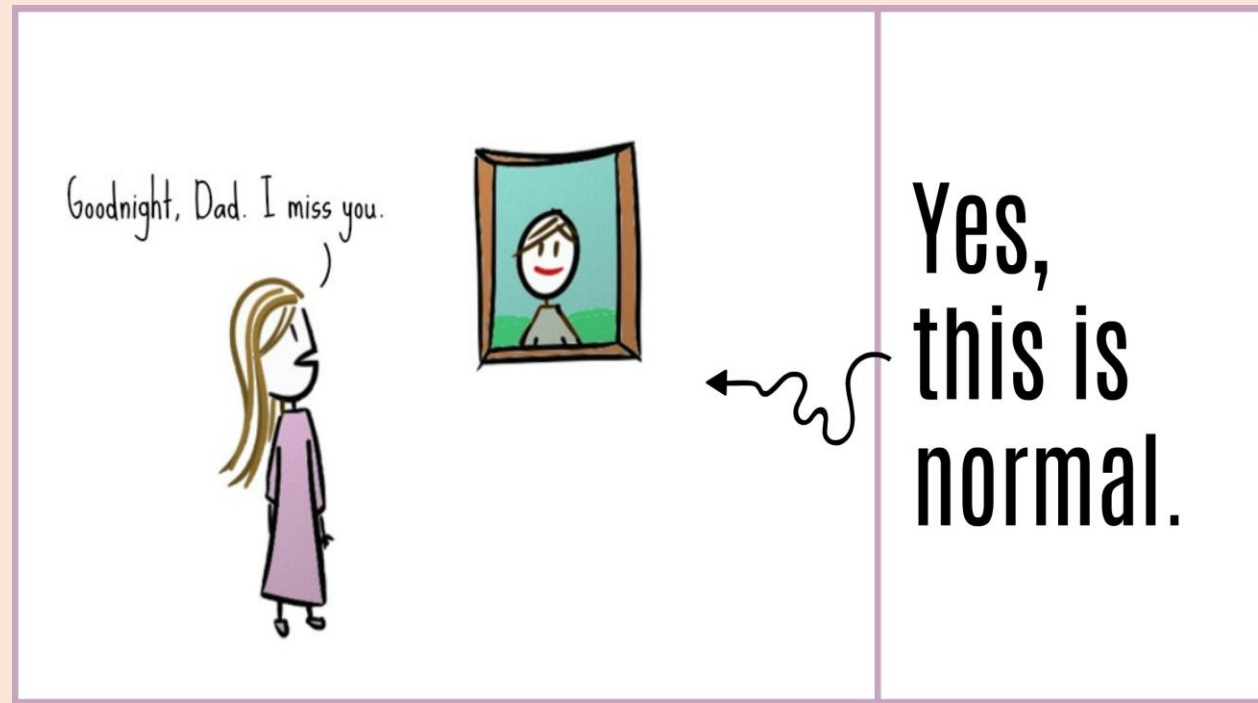
- Bowlby studied children's reaction to separation and to death of a loved one
- He described grief as the feeling when an attachment bond is broken – deeper form of separation distress
- This became the accepted understanding

UNTIL...

- Klass, Silverman and Nickman (2014) said the attachment bond is not necessarily broken when someone dies
- They called this a ***Continuing Bond***

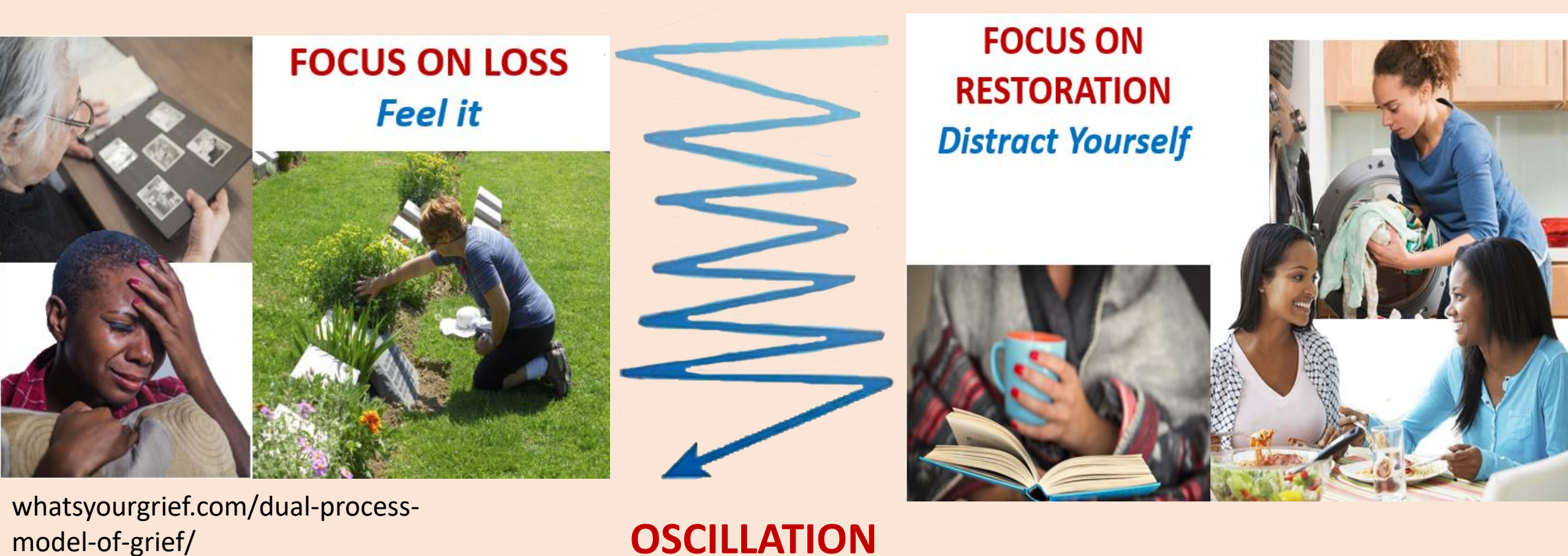
Continuing Bonds: New Understandings of Grief

- Staying connected to the person who died can provide comfort and support in coping with loss
- Grief becomes a part of you
- The relationship isn't static, but evolves over time and can become a peaceful and positive presence



Dual Process Model - Margaret Stroebe and Henk Schut

- Dual Process – a move away from Linear models
- Facing grief head on is exhausting!
- Avoid, deny and suppress – it's ok and can even be HEALTHY
- Grieve in *manageable chunks*, interchanging with getting on with other stuff



The Client's Internal Working Model

SECURE ATTACHMENT

- Life is meaningful
- I am loved and I am worthy of love
- I can express my grief freely
- With help, I will get through this and come to terms with the loss
- I am comfortable with Oscillation

ADULT ATTACHMENT = AUTONOMOUS

INSECURE AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT

- Life is D.I.Y.
- Tendency to disengage from others
- May not experience distress
- Likely to have increased somatic symptoms
- Spend more time in Restoration focus

ADULT ATTACHMENT = DISMISSIVE

INSECURE AMBIVALENT ATTACHMENT

- Life is unpredictable
- Higher levels of distress
- Ruminating on loss
- Difficulties in adjusting to change
- More prone to depression
- Spend more time in Loss focus

ADULT ATTACHMENT = PREOCCUPIED

DISORGANISED ATTACHMENT

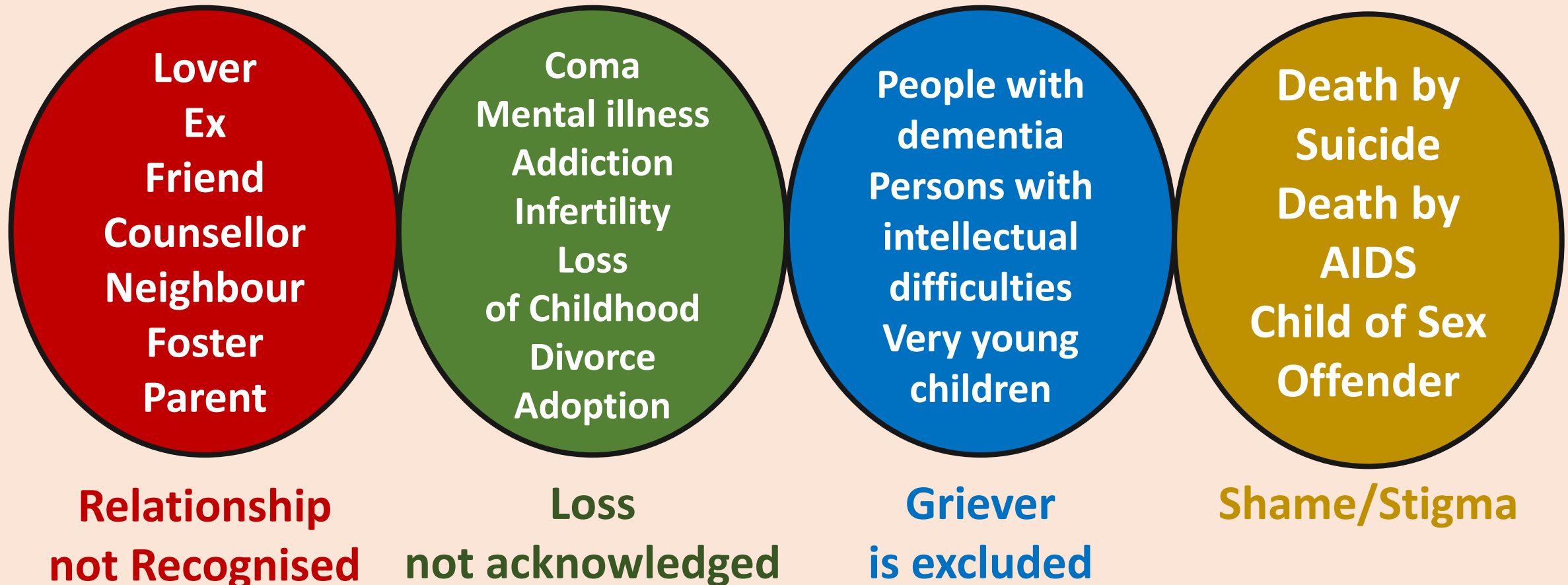
- Life is fundamentally unsafe
- Person who died may have been cruel
- Fight, flight, freeze response
- Trauma memories aren't processed or integrated in the same way
- Inability to self-soothe

ADULT ATTACHMENT = UNRESOLVED

Disenfranchised Grief

“When a person experiences a significant loss where the resultant grief is not openly acknowledged, socially validated or publicly mourned. In short, although the individual is experiencing a grief reaction, there is no social recognition that the person has a right to grieve or a claim for social sympathy or support.”

Kenneth J. Doka in “Non-Death Loss & Grief”



Persistent Complex Bereavement Disorder



- Preoccupation with the circumstances of the deceased's death
- Intense sorrow and/or distress that does not improve over time
- A desire to join the deceased
- Difficulty trusting others
- Depression, loneliness, emptiness

Mass Trauma

- collective trauma
- when the same event, or series of events, traumatises a large number of people within some shared time span



Buddy Group Discussion Ideas

- Which ways of working with grief and loss interested you?
- Share any personal experiences, if it feels safe.
- How did Jenny's story impact you?
- Comments & Questions to Katy Bodman, please

15 minutes





TAKE A
BREAK!

5 minutes



**ANY
QUESTIONS
OR
COMMENTS?**



Loss and Grief Stories



Kathryn



Chris



Hazel

Ambiguous Loss with Katy Bodman



Ambiguous Loss

- Ambiguous loss refers to losses that by their nature are **unclear** and often have no closure
- The term covers a wide spectrum of losses, especially those not validated or understood in our society ('disenfranchised grief')
- We are all likely to encounter some ambiguous losses through our lives



Ambiguous Loss

- **Prof Pauline Boss, pioneering family therapist and researcher, coined the term in the 1970s**
- **Studied families where fathers were absent either physically or psychologically; also her own father's experience of being an immigrant in the US**
- **Worked with 9/11 families and victims of war and natural disasters where bodies were never recovered**
- **Model is now applied in many ways – e.g. Red Cross, foster children, infertility, terminal illness**



Pauline Boss

Type 1: Person is Physically absent, but psychologically present

- Unconfirmed death:
 - Physically missing
 - Kidnapping, War, Terrorism
 - Ethnic cleansing, genocide
 - Natural disasters
- Suicide
- Prison
- Serving in military
- Divorce and relationship breakdown
- Adoption
- Immigration (separation from loved ones)
- Pregnancy loss
- Loss of friendships
- 'Empty nest'

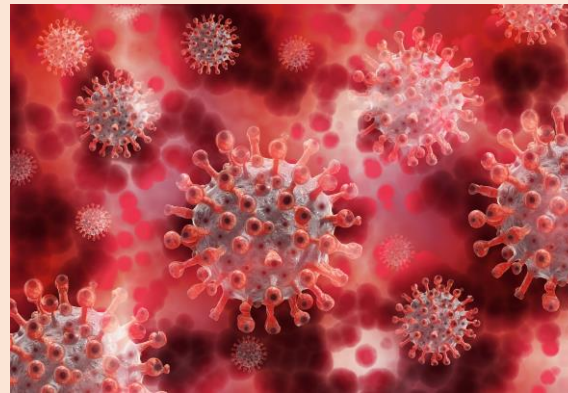
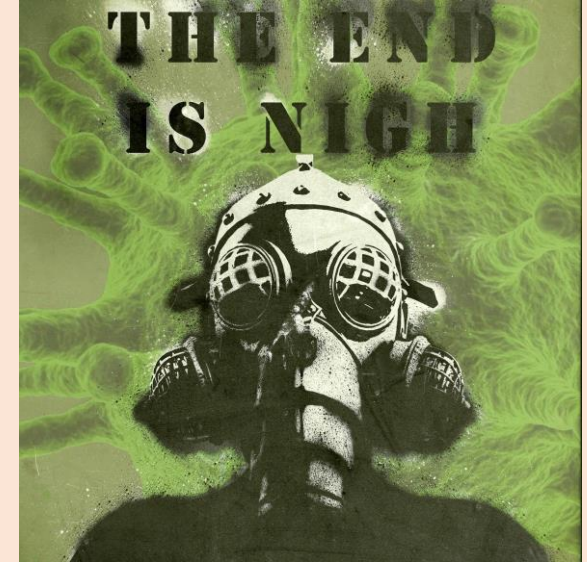
“Leaving
without
Goodbye”

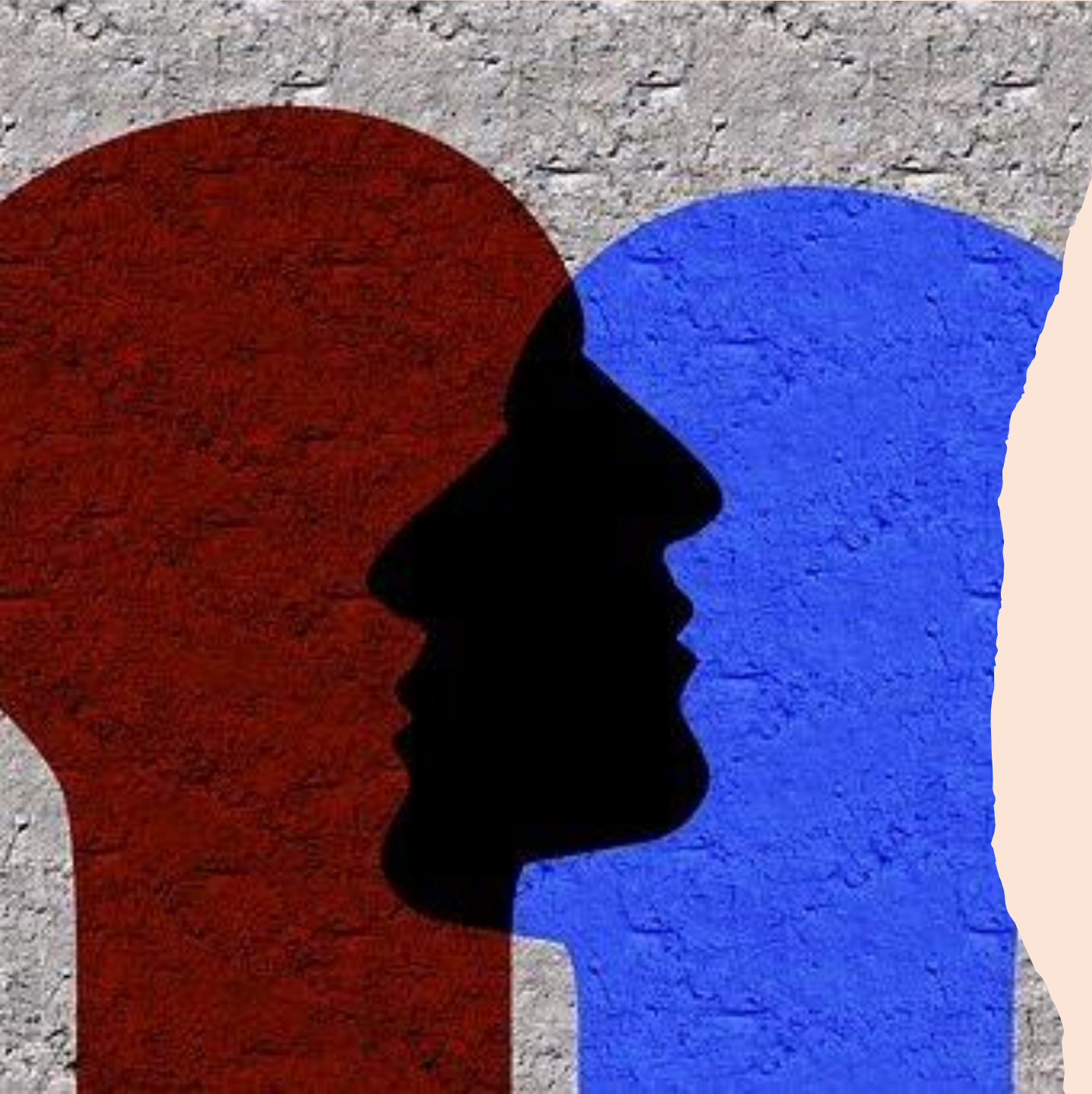


Type 2: Person is Psychologically absent, but physically present

- Dementia
- Traumatic brain injury
- Addictions of all kinds
- Depression and chronic mental illnesses
- Obsessive thinking e.g. politics, world situations
- Ageing parents, relationship issues, alcoholic parent

“Goodbye
without
Leaving”





Type 3: Personal Ambiguous Loss

INTERNALLY CAUSED:

Losing something that affects our relationship with self – physical or psychological (e.g. illness, eyesight, hearing, voice, memory, ageing)

Or

EXTERNALLY CAUSED:

loss of status, personhood, or purpose by some outside circumstance (e.g. redundancy, victim of crime)

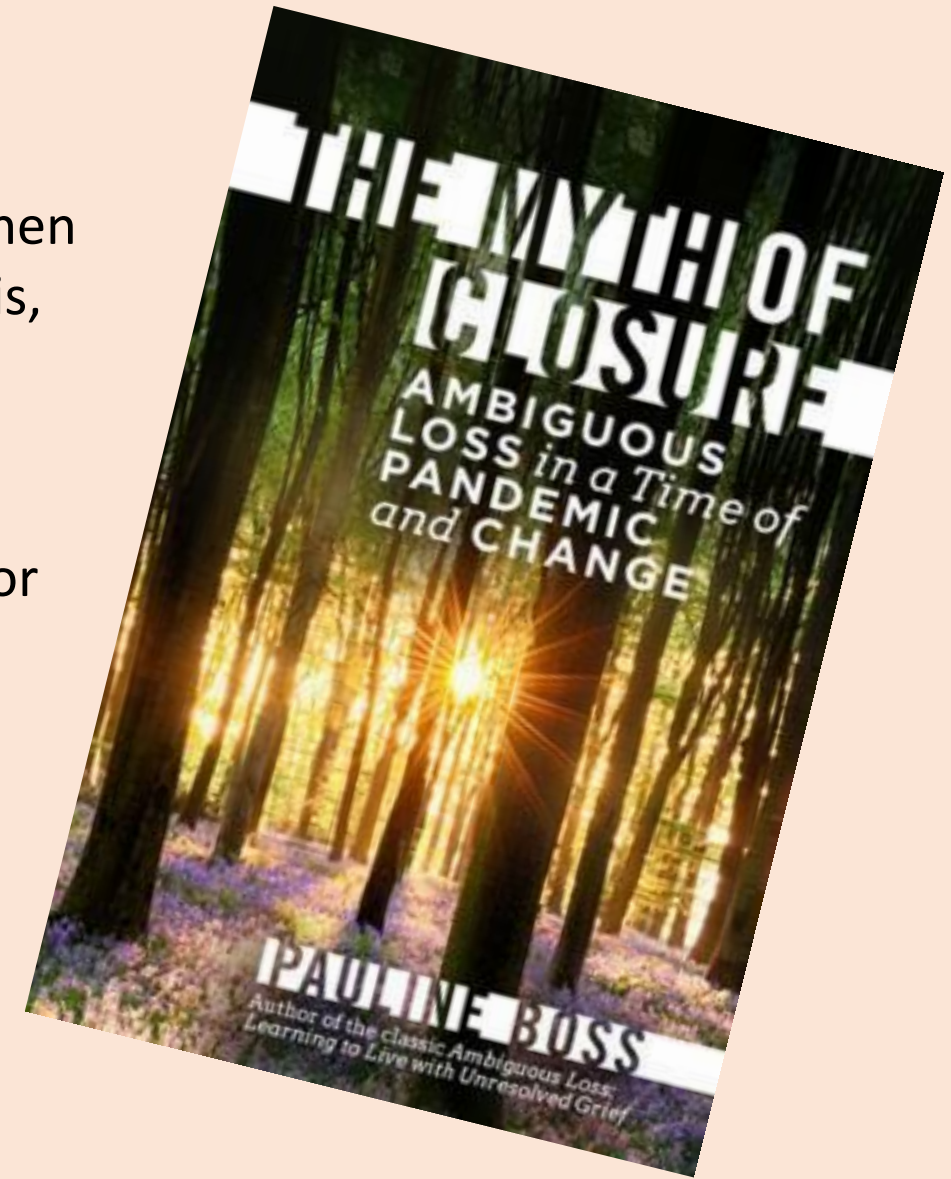
Type 4: Societal and global losses

“Now, after much thinking since that fateful Memorial Day when George Floyd was killed, here in my hometown of Minneapolis, combined with the questions coming to me from around the world, I have expanded my ideas about ambiguous loss.”

“It can happen to one person, one family, a local community or the global community.”

- Current wars around the world
- Racial violence
- Climate change
- Covid pandemic

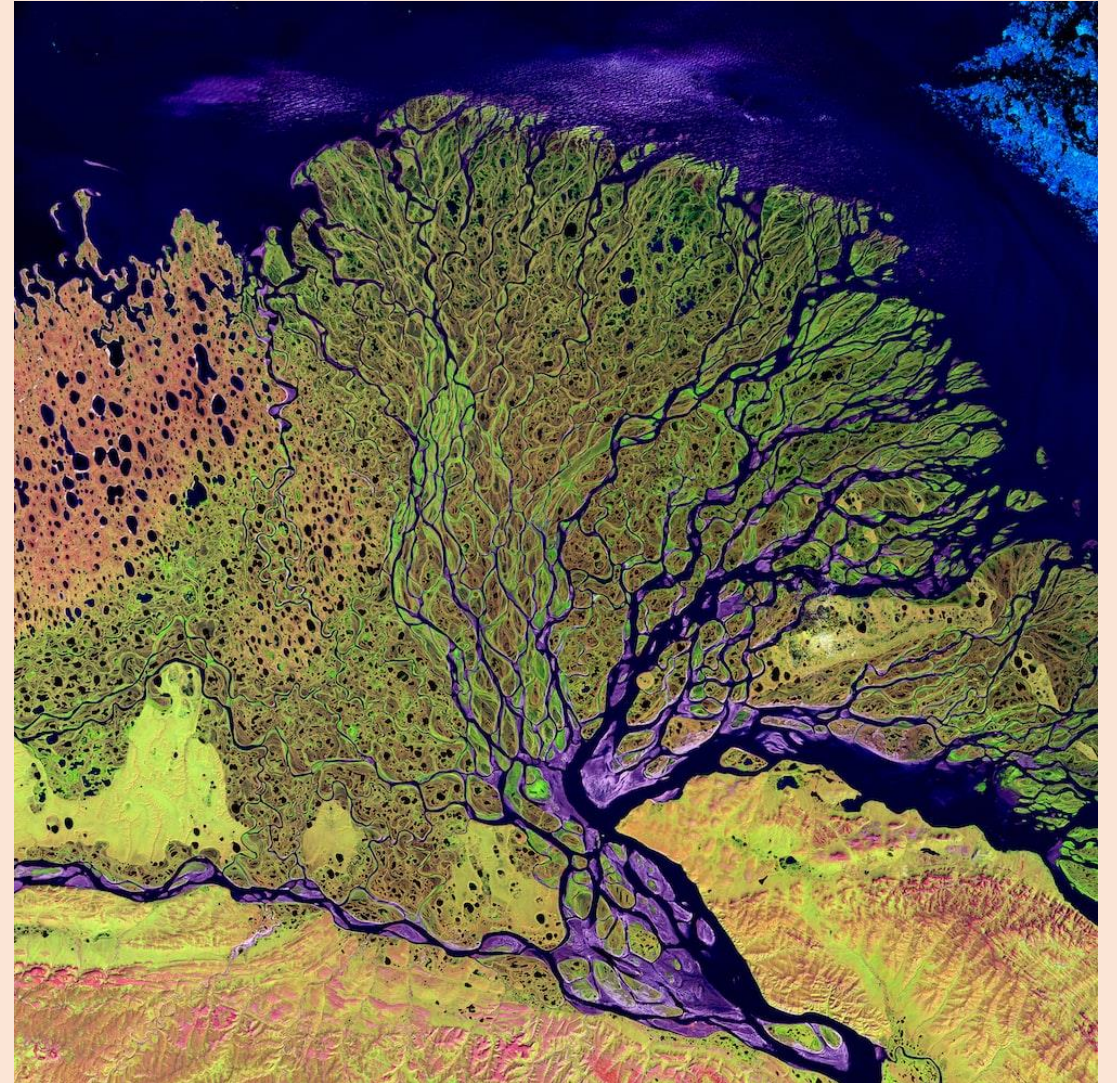
Loss of safety, identity, will the world ever be the same again, will there ever be justice...



One ambiguous loss can lead to another:

Examples:

- Child experiences the physical loss of one parent and psychologically loses the other parent, who is depressed
- A person who is displaced may experience multiple external and internal losses: loved ones, home, job, community, identity
- And even 'positive' experiences can prompt feelings of loss



**OVERALL AIM IS TO BRING SOME BALANCE TO THE
LOSS, NOT A CONCLUSION**

Loss



~~**Closure**~~

**Hope
Coping
Meaning**

Challenging the idea of closure

Closure has a definition meaning finality. It means closing the door on something that has happened.

It's a perfectly good word in the business community for closing a contract, for closing a real estate deal, or for closing a road and after a flood has occurred, but it is a harmful word in human relationships.

It indicates that even though we have had attachment to someone or something, like a pet, that once they are gone, we can close the door on that. That's not true. There are continuing bonds, as has been now declared in the grief literature, and we don't close the door, we live with loss and grief.



Pauline Boss



Challenging the idea of closure

“People are very creative and very resilient in coping with Ambiguous Losses, but therapists have tended to miss it because it’s sometimes considered rather strange behaviour.” – Prof Boss

Families of
those
missing after
Tsunami



the
missing
son

Key principles in working with clients:



- **Linear models of grief unhelpful-** loss follows its own path. Western ideas of self-sufficiency, rationality and ‘working hard’ to overcome are often unhelpful. Letting go of our aims and agendas as counsellors
- **There is nothing wrong with the person** - it’s the situation that is causing the ongoing grief (similar to trauma: normal reaction to an abnormal event)
- **Non-dualistic thinking is helpful:** allowing ourselves to think or feel more than just one thing about the loss, even holding seemingly opposing ideas: “With the physically missing, people might say, “He’s gone, he’s probably dead, and maybe not,” or “He may be coming back, but maybe not.”

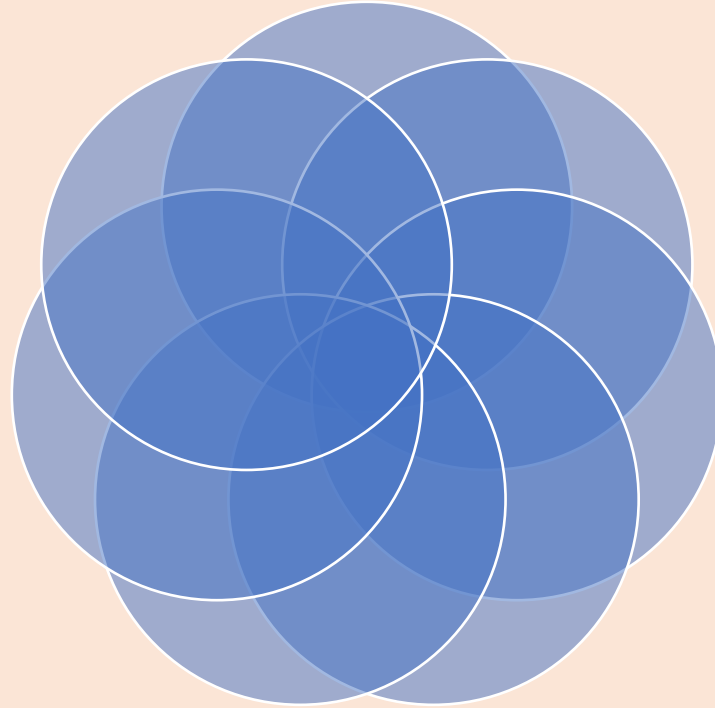
Six guidelines for coping with Ambiguous Loss & Developing Resilience – Pauline Boss

6. Discovering hope -
*how do I find hope in
an ongoing loss that
has no closure*

5. Revising
Attachment - *How do
I both let go and
remember?*

4. Normalising
ambivalence - *What
do I do with my
conflicted feelings?*

3. Reconstructing
identity - *Who am I
now that my loved one
is ambiguously lost?*



1. Finding meaning -
*What does the
situation mean to the
client?*

2. Tempering mastery
- *How do I let go of
what I cannot
control?*

**NOT
LINEAR!**

1) Finding meaning - *What does the situation mean to them?*

- We need meaning to move forward
- Their meaning, not ours – (e.g. – died a hero, fate dictated, God)
- Sensitivity to cultural/religious/spiritual meanings
- Self-blame, guilt, revenge feelings common
- Meaning can be action – e.g. seeking justice or even no meaning becomes one (e.g. wrong place, wrong time or why not me?)
- Can understandably be a long process

2) Tempering mastery - *How do I let go of what I cannot control?*

- Western society: we are big on problem solving, and controlling outcomes: 'mastery'
- Beliefs, scripts and drivers that reinforce this:
 - if I work hard, life will be good
 - bad things shouldn't happen to good people
- Balance feelings of helplessness with 'self-mastery', e.g. meditation, exercise, prayer, music, community, self-care, therapy

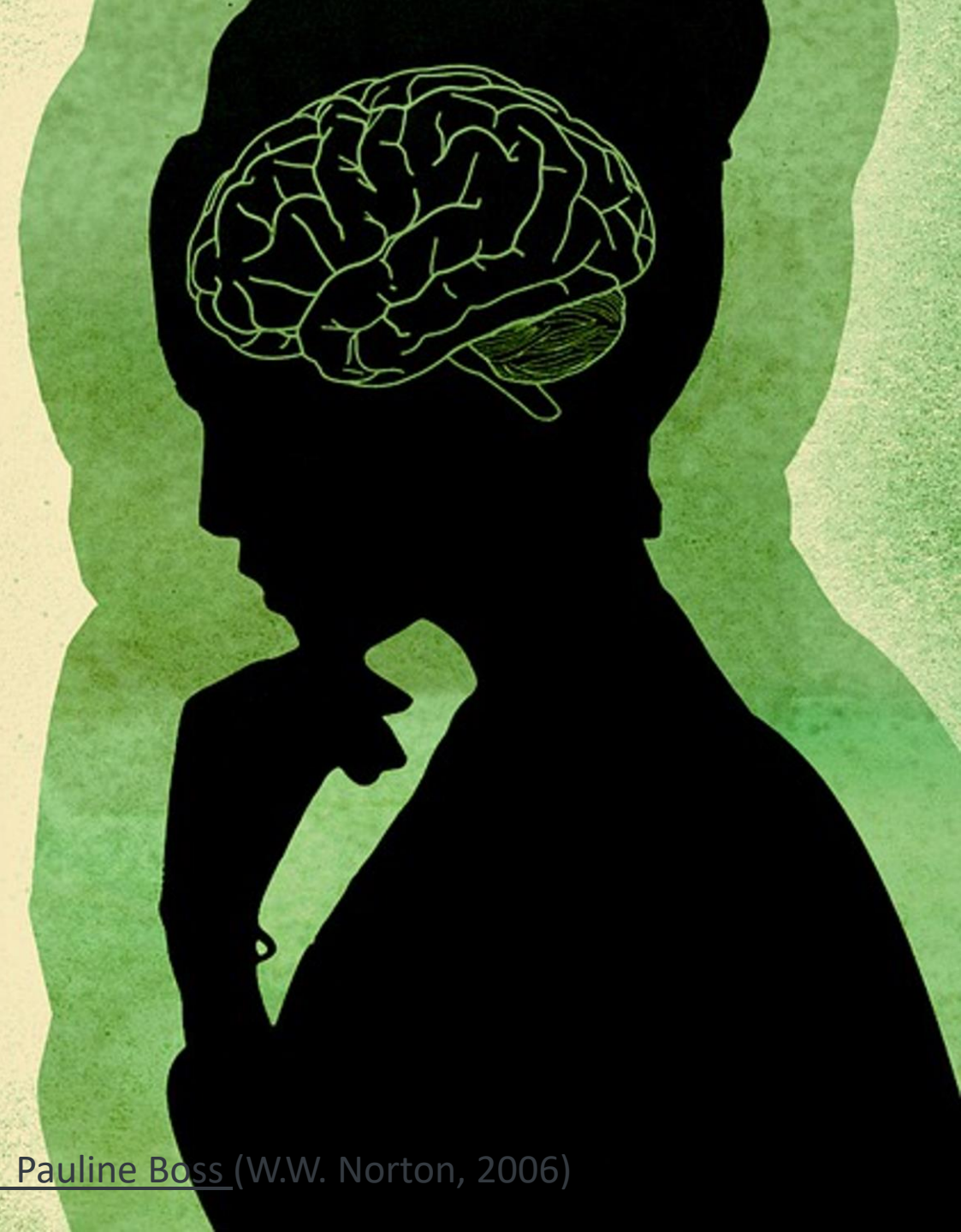
[Loss, Trauma, and Resilience: Therapeutic Work with Ambiguous Loss](#), Pauline Boss (W.W. Norton, 2006)



3) Reconstructing identity

- Who am I now that my loved one is ambiguously lost?

- Am I a wife or a widow? (e.g. missing person)
- Am I a husband, or carer?
- Peace with the paradox of who I was, am and will become



4) Normalising ambivalence

– *What do I do with my conflicted feelings?*

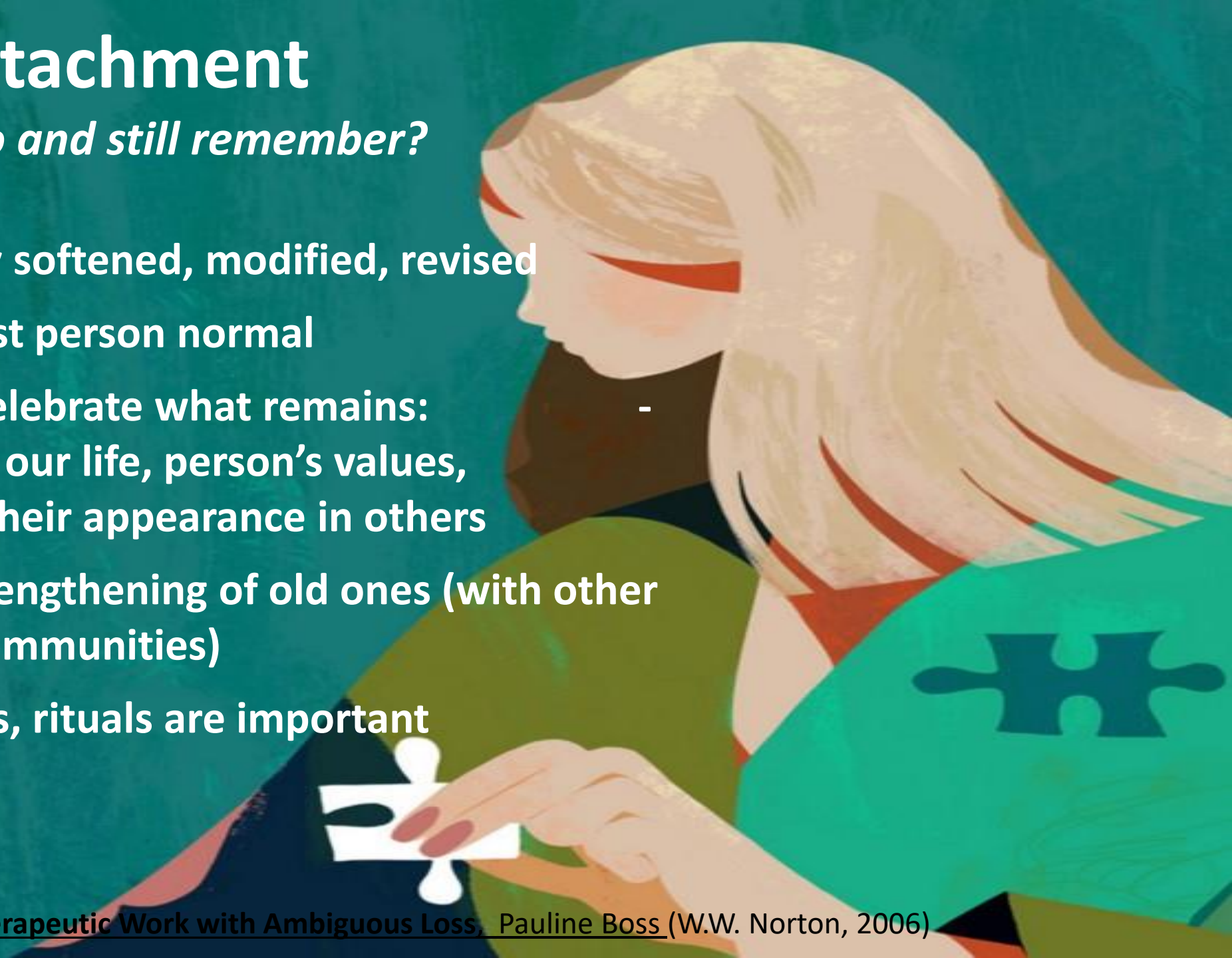
- Conflicted feelings are normal – “the situation is crazy, not you.”
- Guilt and anger are common: “I’m glad she’s alive, but angry I feel trapped - and I feel guilty for thinking that.”
- Empathy for & engagement with every part of the client
- Film, dance, music, art, literature can help – often depict ambivalence



5) Revising attachment

– how do I both let go and still remember?

- Attachment gradually softened, modified, revised
- Talking to, 'seeing' lost person normal
- Grieve what is lost, celebrate what remains: the mark they left on our life, person's values, achievements, even their appearance in others
- New connections, strengthening of old ones (with other survivors, families, communities)
- Memorial ceremonies, rituals are important



6) Discovering hope

– *how do I find hope in an ongoing loss that has no closure?*

- **Becoming more comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty**
- **May need periodically adjusting – e.g. moving from finding a cure, to a ‘good’ death**
- **Be open to future possibilities**
- **We may put energy into helping others**



Offering our clients deep understanding

“When the other person is hurting, confused, troubled, anxious, alienated, terrified...doubtful of self-worth, uncertain as to identity —then understanding is called for.

The gentle and sensitive companionship offered by an empathic person... provides illumination and healing. In such situations deep understanding is, believe, the most precious gift one can give to another.”

Carl Rogers, A Way of Being



Buddy Group Discussion Ideas

- Share your reactions to Kathryn, Hazel and Chris's stories
- What did you think about Katy's session on Ambiguous Loss?
- Comments & questions to Katy Bodman, please

15 minutes





**TAKE A
BREAK!**

10 minutes



**ANY
QUESTIONS
OR
COMMENTS?**



Regina's Story : Traumatic Grief



Creative Interventions





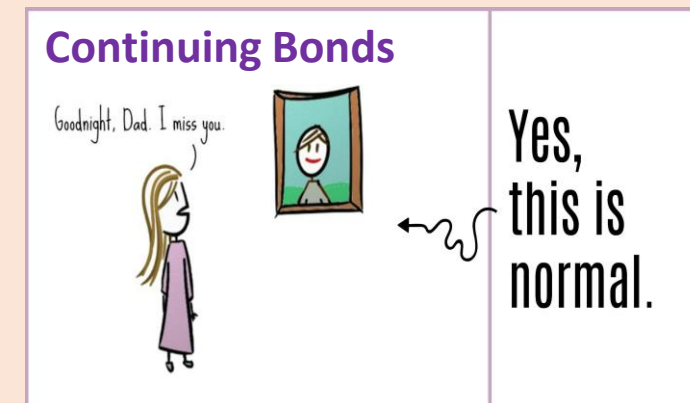
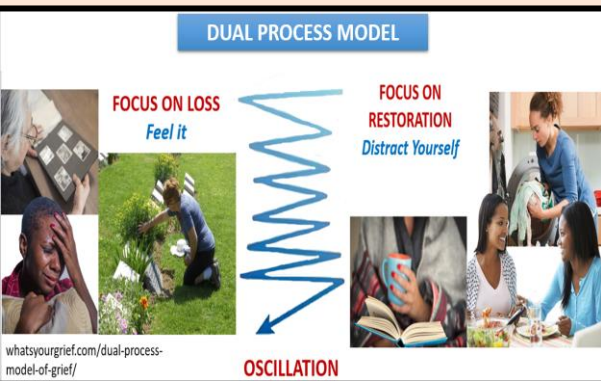
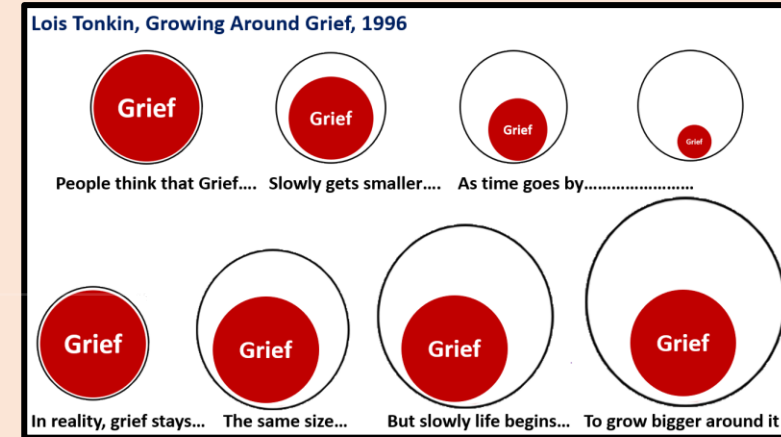
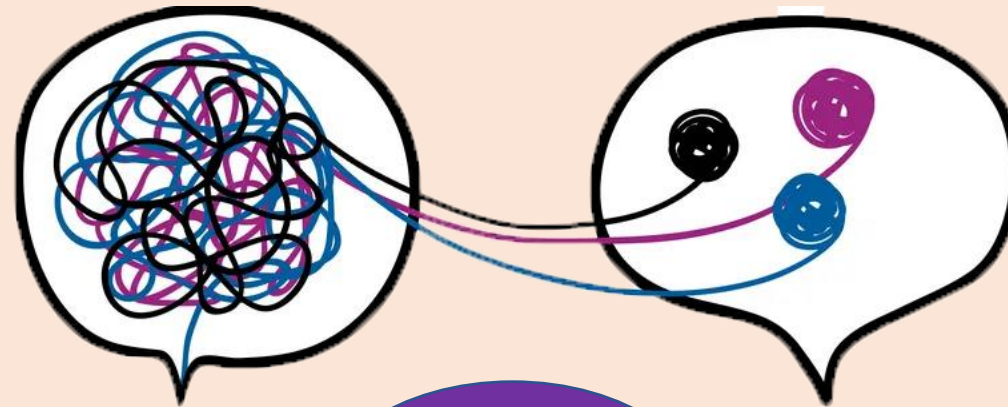
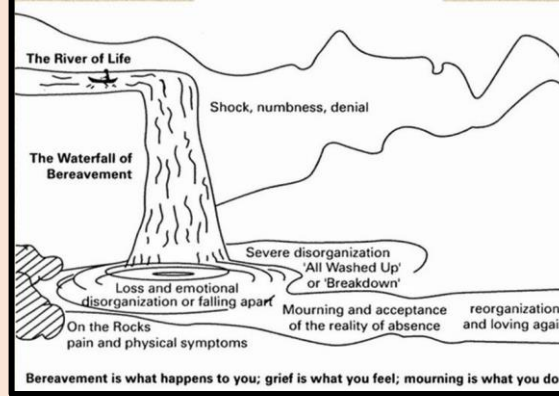
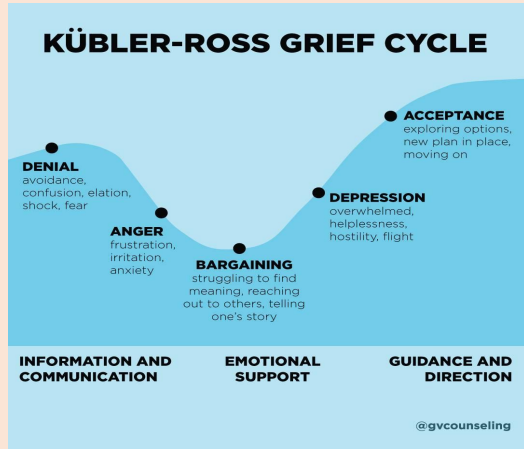
Saying Goodbye

Two-Chair Work in Counselling & Supervision



Vicky: *"In my Poem..."*





Taking Care of Ourselves

**Balance your
life and work**

**Check our own
unresolved
grief**

**Make sure you
can return to
your own
world**

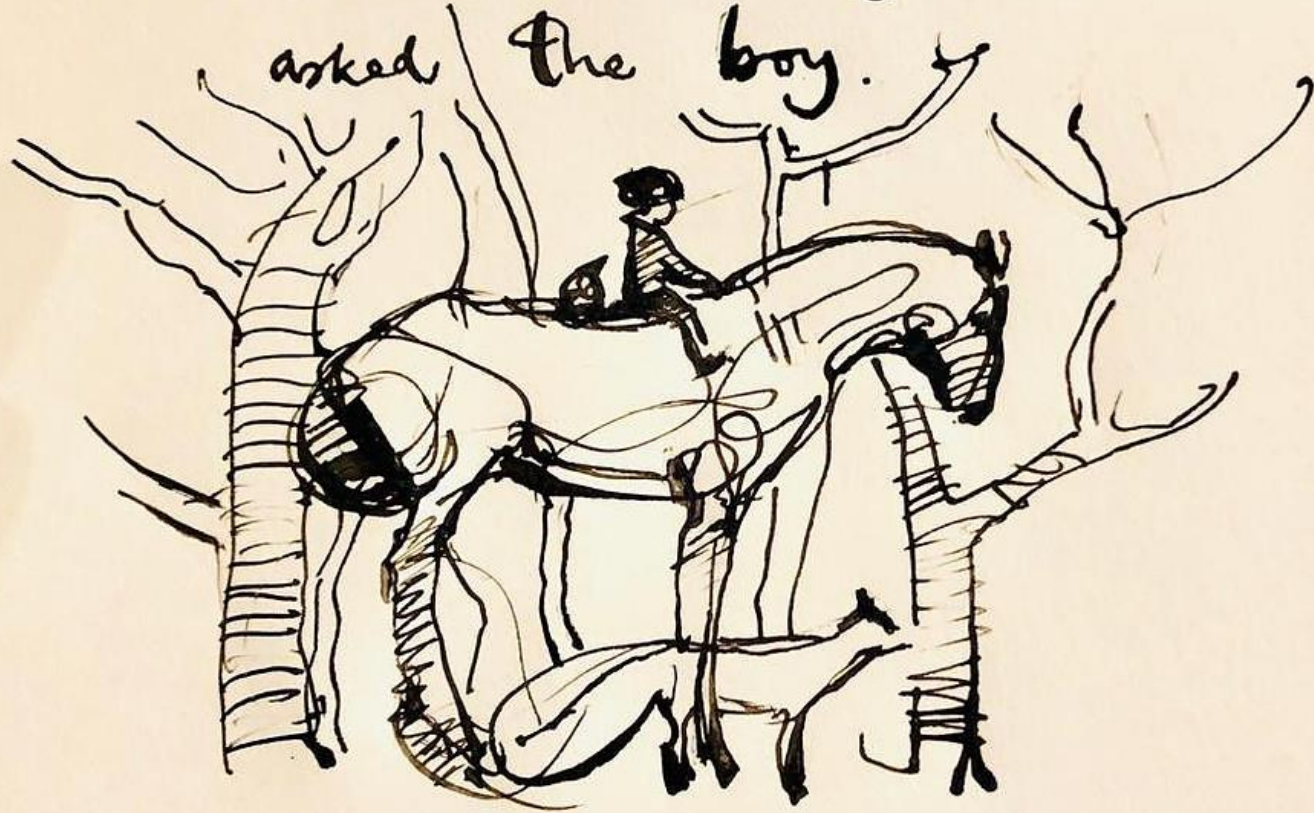


**Working with
grief and loss
will change us**

**Personal
Therapy**

**Good
Supervision**

"What else have you learnt?"
asked the boy.



"That everyone you meet carries
their own grief" said the horse.
"So. we must be gentle."



TAKE A
BREAK!

5 minutes



**ANY
QUESTIONS
OR
COMMENTS?**

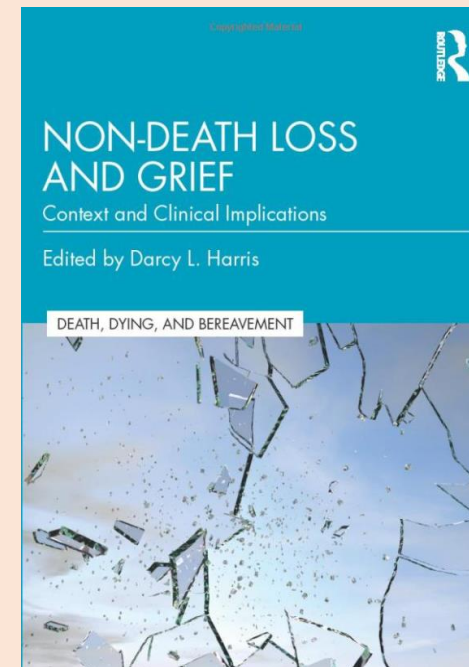
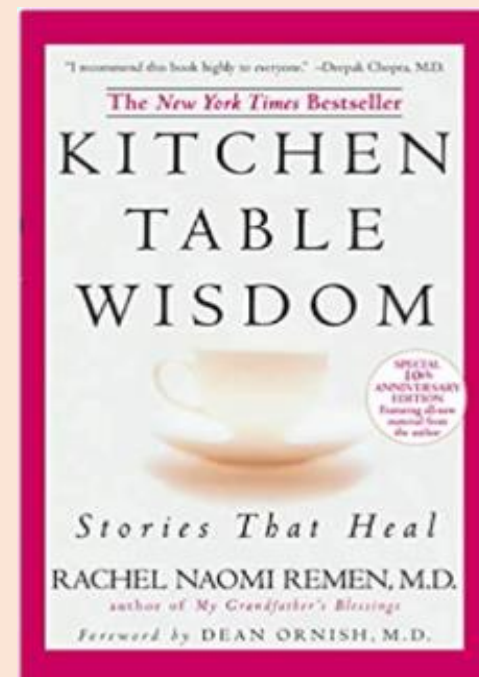
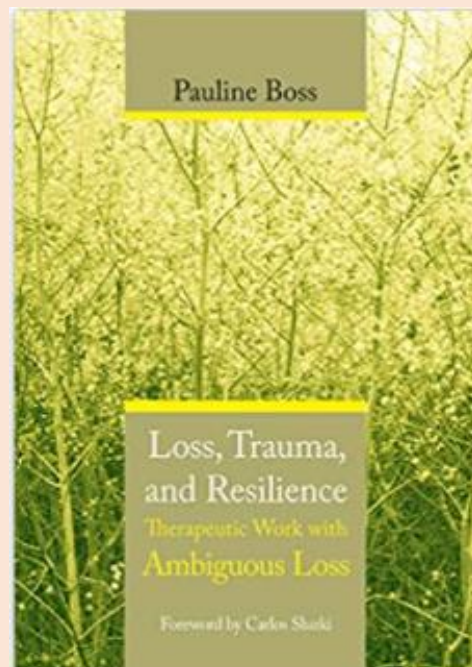
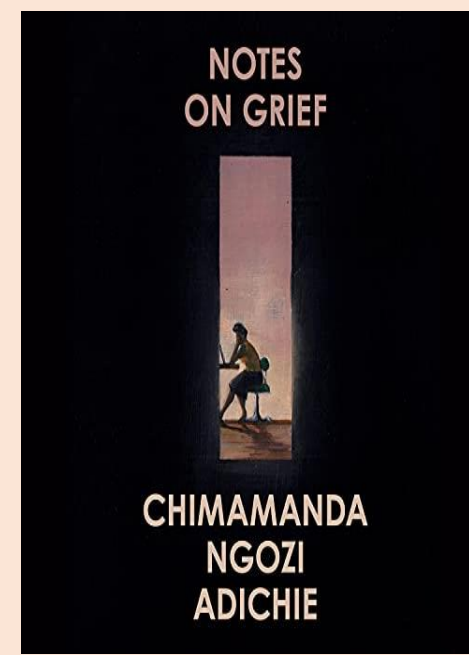
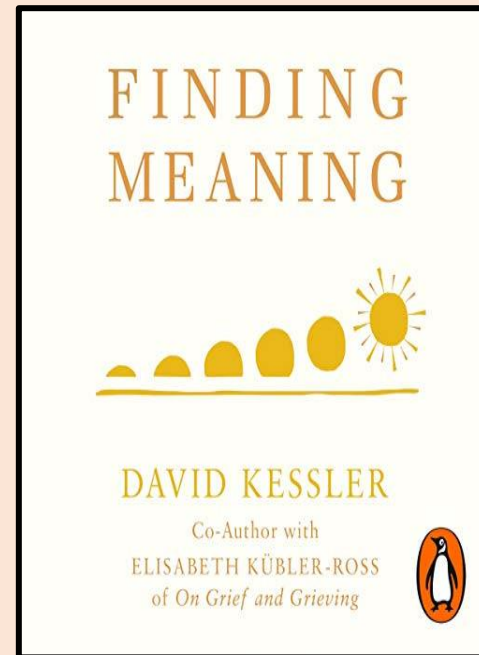
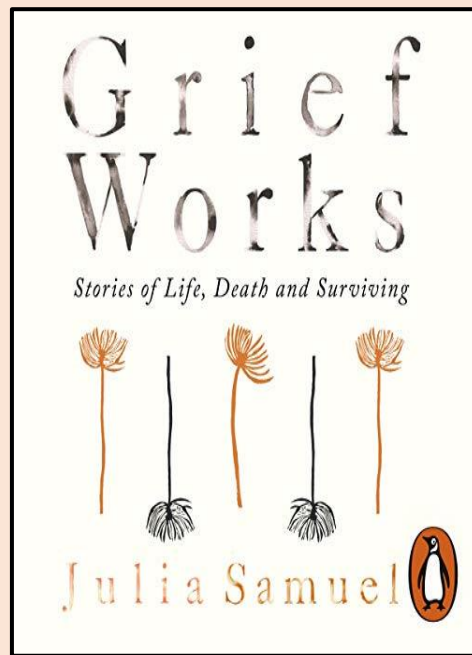


Buddy Group Discussion Ideas

- Share your take-home ideas
- Say goodbye, and exchange contact details if needed.

5 minutes





Grief After A Bereavement

The pain of loss can feel overwhelming but there are healthy ways to manage your grief



G

Give yourself time to process your loss, there is no instant fix

R

Remember to be kind to yourself and look after your needs

I

Invest your energy in things you can change

E

Everyone's grief experience is individual, don't compare yourself to others

F

Find someone you can talk to about your feelings;
a friend, family member or a counsellor

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/your-health/health-services/bereavement-services/bereavement/>

- **The Loss Foundation** – The Loss Foundation is the only UK charity dedicated solely to providing bereavement support following the loss of a loved one to cancer, whether that be spouses, family members, friends or colleagues. They also offer specific Covid-19 loss support.
- **BAMEStream Bereavement Support Service** – offering free therapeutic support in over 20 different languages to people from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic (BAME) communities.
- **Cruse Bereavement Care**
- **Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide** – National charity with local and online support groups.
- **Miscarriage Association**
- **Blue Cross** – Support through pet bereavement and pet loss.
- **SAMM** – Provides a wide range of peer support services to people bereaved by murder and manslaughter.
- **Strong Men** – A bereavement charity for men aged 18+ to help men tackle the mental, emotional and physical health conditions brought about by bereavement.
- **Child Bereavement** – www.winstonswish.org
- **Muslim Bereavement Support Service (MBSS)**



Resources

[PACT-RESOURCES.CO.UK](https://pact-resources.co.uk)

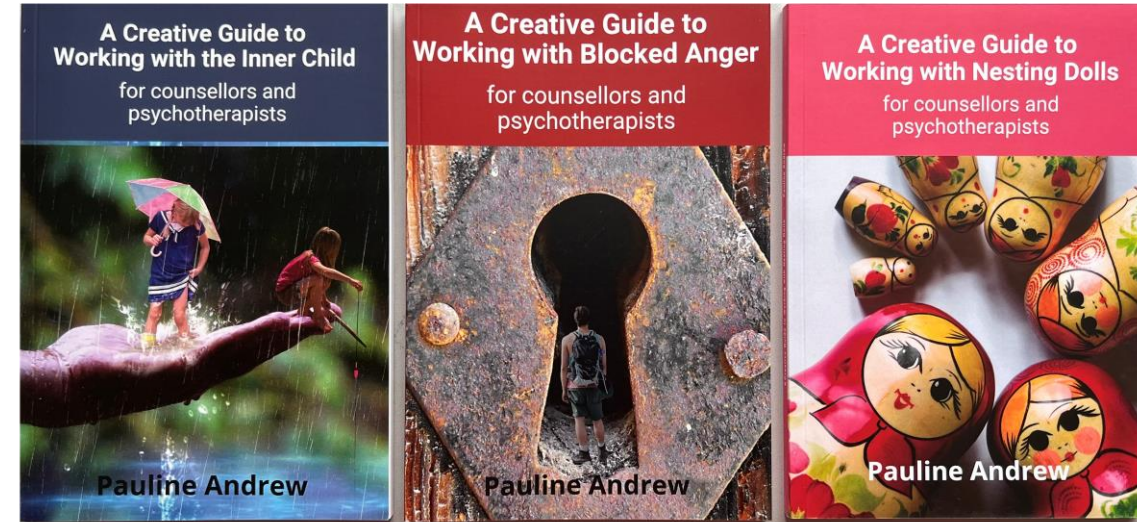
ORIGINAL & CREATIVE
COUNSELLING RESOURCES

Cards



Roles Played in Families
Extra Set A

Books



£11.50 each

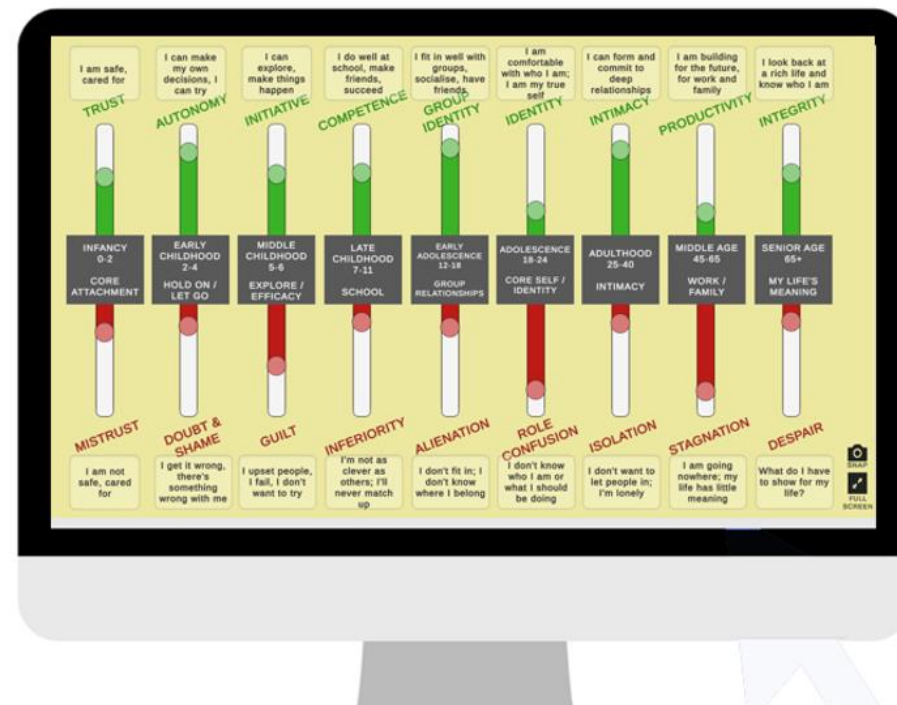
3 for £32 (save £2.50)

Also available on Kindle

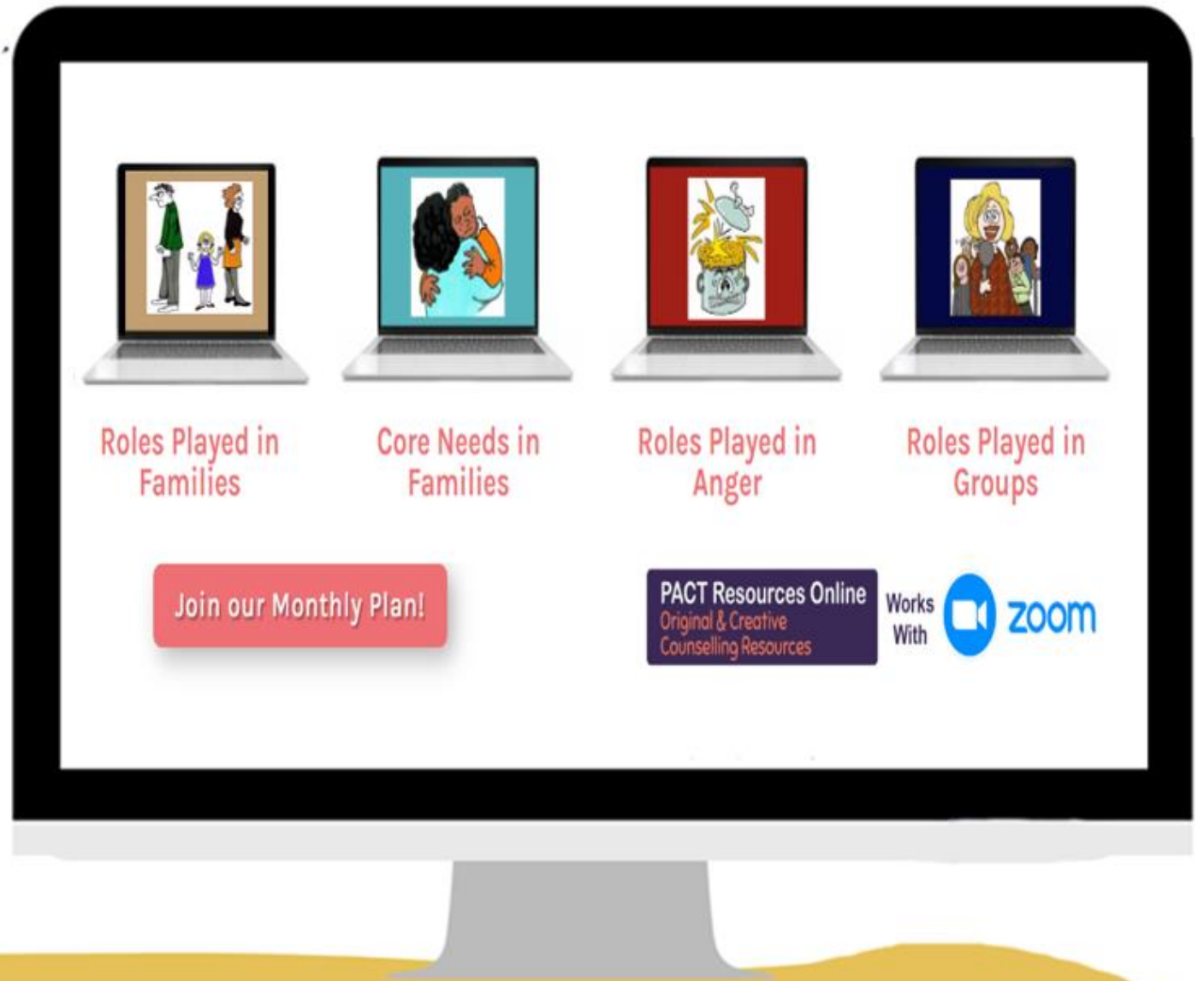
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The Wheel of Life and Erikson's Life Stages

FREE Web Apps!



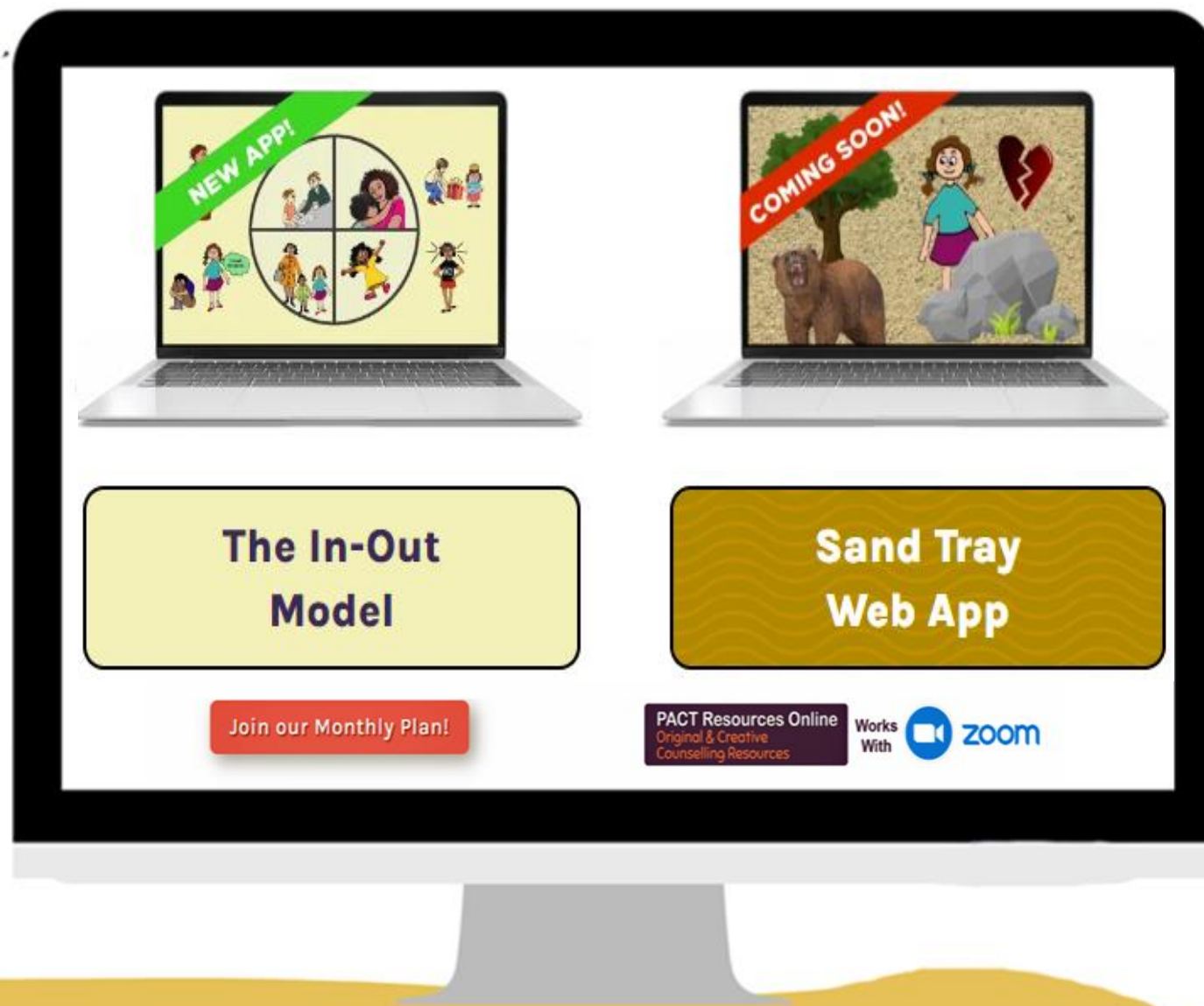
The 4 sets of cards
are available as Web
Apps by paid
subscription.
Other apps to
follow!



pact-resources-online.co.uk

The 'In-Out' Model web app is now including in your paid subscription!

'Therapeutic Sandscapes' soon to follow!



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e-Resources



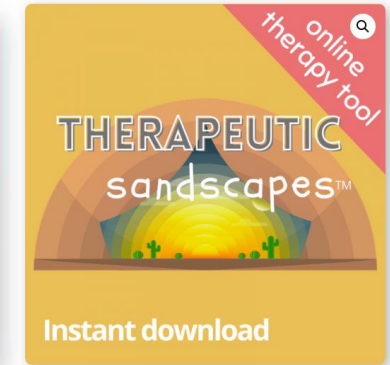
Erikson's Life Stages
£3.50



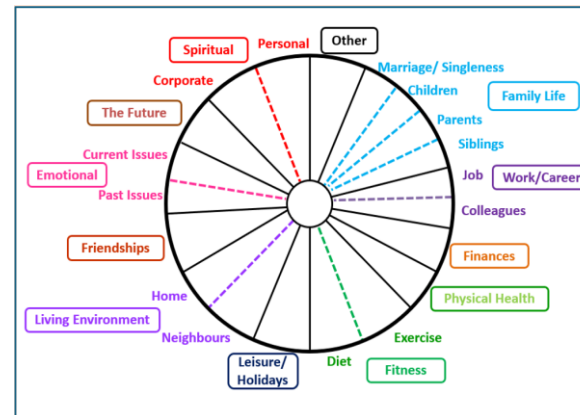
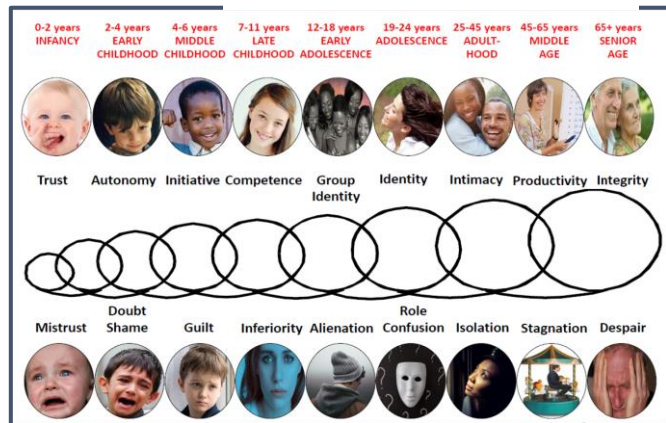
Wheel of Life
£3.50 – £5.00



Working with Animal
Figures Online Pack



Instant download



Use PowerPoint

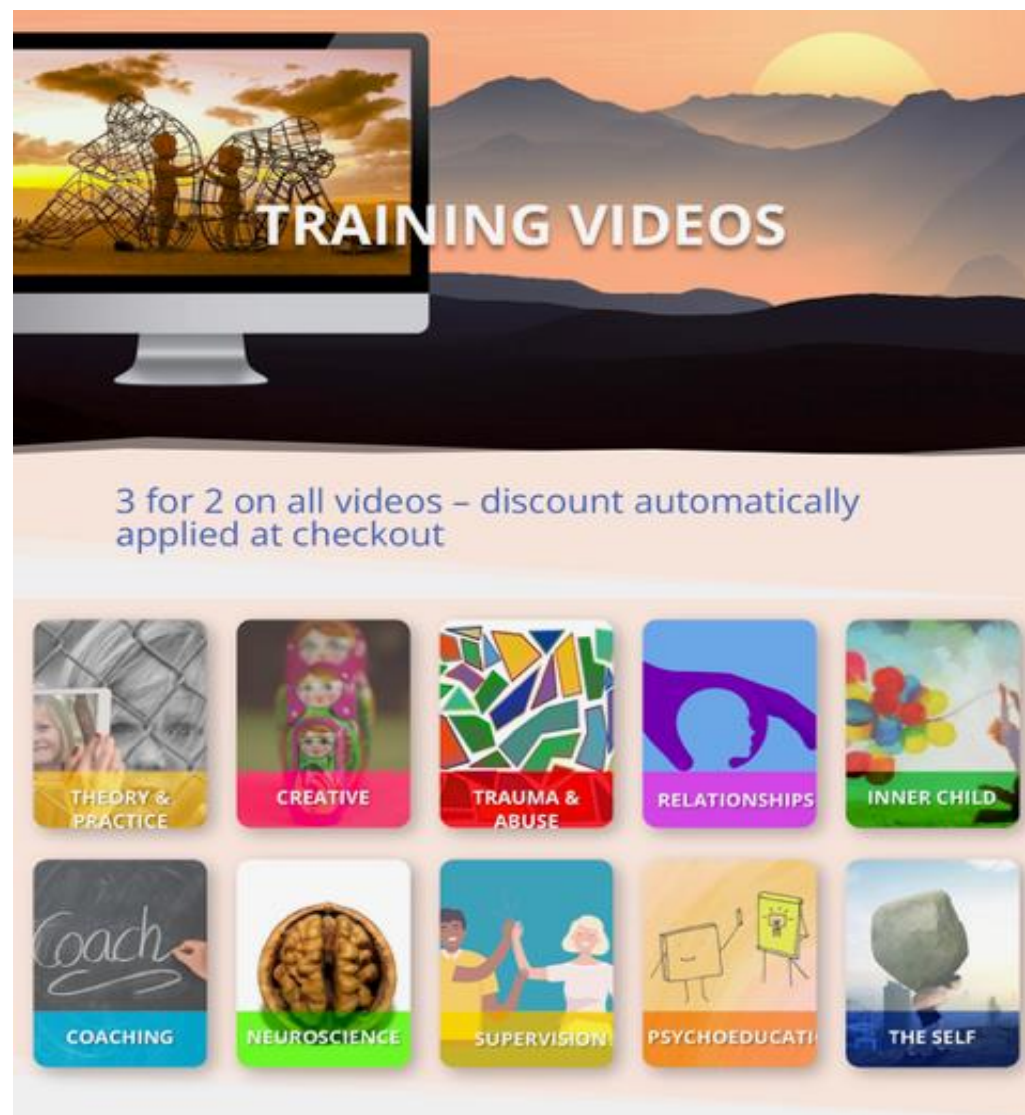
Web Apps in progress!

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Working Creatively with the Inner Child, Residential



26
APR

Sorry!
SOLD OUT

Working Creatively with the Inner Child
in Counselling Weekend
Fri Apr 26 – Sun Apr 28, 2024
Moor Hall Conference Centre, Cookham

2024 Annual Counsellors Conference, Residential



Moor Hall,
Berkshire

27-29
sept

**2024
COUNSELLORS
CONFERENCE**



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Professional Training for Counsellors

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- A closed group for counsellors & trainee counsellors
- Please answer the joining questions!



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Search 'Pauline Andrew Creative Counselling'

- Lots of videos on working creatively
- Please subscribe!



Search 'Brain, Body and Beyond'

- Videos on Life, the Brain and Relationships
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your feedback!



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Thank you

