

Ana DaCosta

Chapter Presentation

Week Five

One of the three things I learned from the reading this week that could be useful for my clinical work was about the myth of closure. By seeking closure (which according to the author is an illusion because one can never find it), the survivor may be distracted from seeking other coping options that would help them to grow emotionally and in resilience. The idea of closure may cut the connection with those who have gone before us.

In addition to learning last week about the tasks of mourning it was essential to understand the mediators of mourning.

Mediator 1: Kingship is one of the strongest predictors of grief. It's important to identify the kind of relationship the person had with the deceased. For example, two siblings who lost a mother will grieve differently depending upon their relationship with her and how present or close the mother was to the kids.

Mediator 2: The nature of attachment. The strength of attachment, the emotional security of the attachment, the ambivalence in the relationship, conflicts with the deceased, and how dependent the relationship was will significantly affect how a person responds and adapts to the death.

Mediator 3: How the person died. The death will be grieved differently depending on how it happened. Deaths are categorized into natural, accidental, suicidal, and homicidal.

Other factors that will affect bereavement is the proximity to the death that occurred. For example, a family member who lives in another country will be impacted differently than a family member who lives in the same house as the deceased. How sudden or unexpected the

death was. According to some studies, survivors of unexpected deaths have a more challenging time grieving than those who were already aware of the possibility of losing the loved one.

How violent or traumatic the event of the death was. The counselor needs to be aware that deaths involving accidents, suicides, and homicides can often contribute to the development of complicated bereavement. Multiple losses in one event or a short period can contribute to bereavement overload. Preventable deaths can also be a strong mediator affecting grief because the person may deal with the guilt and blame for losing the deceased.

Mediator 4: Historical antecedents. Unresolved loss and grief, previous losses, and mental health history can affect the current mourning process.

Mediator 5: Personality variables. Personality structure should be considered while trying to understand an individual response to loss.

Finally, as a future therapist is essential to be aware of these mediators, especially when dealing with parents who lose a child, as such deaths are often sudden and premature. Bereaved parents may have the need to blame someone for the loss and may deal with intense feelings of guilt.