Individual and Family Therapy week 9

Dr. Wells

Terri Zungre

I thought it was important to note that the DSM 5 changed Complicated Grief Disorder and Pathological Grief to the name:  Persistent Complex Bereavement Disorder. I agree with the book that to have pathological in the title or name makes it seem like the person would need to be medicated in order to move past the grief. I believe that putting it under the sub-heading of, Conditions for Further Study, also shows that we have much more to understand about complicated mourning.  This chapter five re-iterated the idea that each person's grief is unique. Their grief is as unique as they are. The book mentioned seven factors that cause people to not successfully grieve. One of these is personality of the survivor. My brother was the strong one at my dad's death and he didn't allow himself to grieve till about a year later when all his responsibilities as executor of the estate were completed. The other factor I wanted to mention was relational. Highly dependent was one of the relational factors that made it difficult to move through the grieving process. It is true of most married couples that they feel they are stronger together. You draw strength from your spouse. The Bible says if one is down the other is there to lift them up. If the spouse you are dependent on dies, the book emphasized their can be a regression in self-concept. It can make the person feel weak and helpless. The relationship with the person that made them feel strong is no longer there because of death. The result would be devasting, and they need to re-learn their self confidence in working through the new normal for their life.

The second point I wanted to mention is the disenfranchised grief around an abortion. This falls under the heading social factors that influence grief, and the loss is socially negated. If the person that has the abortion acts like it didn't happen, or doesn't tell anyone for fear of reproach from friends or family, the grief can re-surface later in life. My friend, who I won't mention her name has been my friend for over 30 years. She is a Christian woman who loves her husband and four children. One day after we had been friends for twenty years, she confided in me that she had had an abortion. I was shocked, but tried not to show it. I was honored that she would share that raw emotional confession with me. It also told me she needed to talk about it, and have someone say they loved her and cared. Her one daughter had tied to commit suicide but thankfully unsuccessfully. I wasn't sure if that triggered the other grief to come out about the abortion? Not sure, but I think she feels better with talking about it.

My final point has to do with The Gottman Method of Couples therapy (GMCT). Part of that therapy has to do with is a picture they created of The Sound Relationship House. God many times speaks to me with a picture in my mind's eye. Any time I can relate something I'm learning to a picture it sinks in better. The picture of the sound house reminds me a little of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, in that one level of the house builds upon the other. The first three levels work together to help couples reconnect as friends. After they see themselves as friends and have a positive outlook on their marriage, they can build on that. They can manage their conflicts, help each other fulfill their God-given callings, and even create a shared meaning together. Instead of always looking inward at conflict they can share what God has called them in marriage to, and the love the people God brings into their lives. I love that the pillars on either side of the house, or what I call the load- bearing walls, represent trust and commitment.

Gottman felt these pillars are essential in a relationship and that they bear the weight of the

relationship. Similarly, without truth and commitment it is difficult to build anything, because it

is like building a house on sand. Honestly, I can see myself using this house in couples therapy,

and the levels it represents. I feel the picture helps make things crystal clear for the client.