

Stephany Menezes

MFT 603

Chapter Presentations

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1. On pages 159-171 in the “Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy” book by Worden William, discusses resolving complicated mourning. An interesting point I found in this section of the book was the distinction between grief counseling and grief therapy. As a person who has a hard time describing the differences between both therapy and counseling, it was interesting to think about the two in the context presented. I have learned that grief counseling is aiding the individual to go through the mourning process while grief therapy is meant to resolve the conflicts the person is still struggling with due to some kind of grief. An example would be the diagnosis of chronic grief, which is a type of grief that constantly comes back even though it has been years later since the incident which caused the grief.

2. Another item I found interesting in the “Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy” book was on page 171, when the author mentions fantasy as a form of grief therapy. To help the person overcome or “complete” the grieving process, the therapist has the client fantasize about how ending the grief would look like. I found this to be a very helpful strategy in aiding the client visualize the outcome. The client could be afraid of losing something, like the memory of the deceased. Interestingly, they could also be afraid of what other people think in regard to adequate mourning. These individuals can believe that others will judge them for not mourning as they believe they should.

3. Chapter 5 in the book, "The Myth of Closure: Ambiguous Loss in a Time" by Pauline Boss, discusses the idea of presence and absence in ambiguous losses. This paradox is very sad to experience. The story of the woman who lost her husband in Northern Ireland and had no information on whether her husband was alive or dead was devastating to read about. The person is left with unanswered questions, even after the missing person is found dead. What happened during the missing time they disappeared? The person is found dead and, therefore, cannot retell their story. How many children go missing, and parents to this day do not know what happened. Many parents keep the child's room intact for years after the disappearance in hopes that the child will return. I found the phenomena of presence and absence in grief very relevant to many devastating ambiguous loss stories.