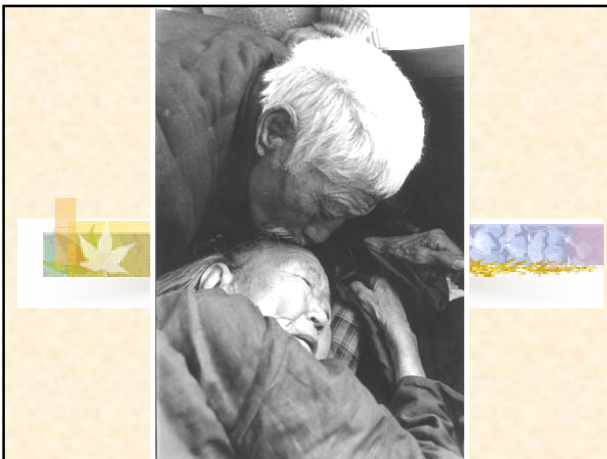


Community Bereavement Group for the Elderly

**Old age is the time of the
life course when death
occurs most frequently.**

Moss, Moss and Hansson



Some age related issues M.Moss, S. Moss & R. Hansson

- ❑ **Changes in Physiological Functioning.**
 - Changes in the body system affecting the adaptive reserve.
 - Cognition
- ❑ **Regulation of Emotion in Later Life**
 - More accepting of the reality of later life.
 - Greater sense of emotional moderation.
 - "Comparing themselves only with other older persons who have similarly suffered and reappraising negative events to find something positive in them."

Impact of bereavement in old age

- ❑ **Highly individualistic**
- ❑ **Should *NOT* underestimate *NOR* overestimate**
- ❑ **Elderly bereavement should be taken *NO* more *NOR* less seriously**

Common obstacles in grief process among elderly Chinese

- ❑ **Lack of acknowledgement & understanding**
- ❑ **Suppression of feelings**
- ❑ **Lack of social network**
- ❑ **Low self esteem**
- ❑ **Loss of self identity**

Survey on the Hong Kong Chinese people's bereavement experience.

**Jessie
and
Thomas
Tam
Center**



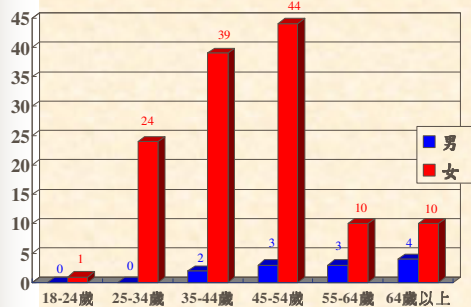
**Center on
Behavioral
Health**



Age of the respondents and the Subject Pool

Age Range (year old)	Respondents (N=140)	Subject Pool (N=300)	Response Rate
18 – 24	1 (0.7 %)	7 (2.33 %)	14.29 %
25 – 34	24 (17.1 %)	51 (17.00 %)	47.06 %
35 – 44	41 (29.3 %)	106 (35.33 %)	38.68 %
45 – 54	47 (33.6 %)	85 (28.33 %)	55.29 %
55 – 64	13 (9.3 %)	24 (8.00 %)	54.1 %
65	14 (10.0 %)	27 (9.00 %)	51.85 %

Distribution of Age and Sex



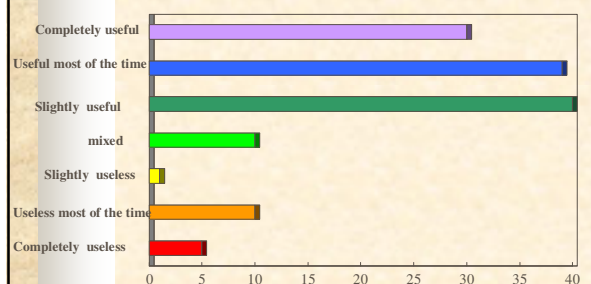
Persons to share with the loss experience

	Being chosen to share with the B.E.	Being Chosen as the one to share with the B.E. mostly
Spouse	13 (9.3%)	5 (3.6%)
Parents	41 (29.3%)	14 (10.0%)
Siblings	74 (52.9%)	29 (20.7%)
Other family members	55 (39.3%)	13 (9.3 %)
My Best Friend	88 (62.9 %)	49 (35.0 %)
A Friend	69 (49.3 %)	23 (16.4 %)
A Neighbour	28 (20.0%)	3 (2.1%)
A Colleague	29 (20.7%)	3 (2.1%)
A Professional	104 (74.3 %)	59 (42.1 %)
A Religious person	36 (25.7%)	12 (8.6%)

Persons to share with the loss experience

- The top three categories of persons to share with as well as the persons to share with mostly are professionals, their friends and their best friends.
- 71% of the respondents choose outsiders (i.e. friends, neighbors, professionals and religious staff)to share their bereavement experience.)

The effectiveness of emotional sharing



Structured & time-limited bereavement group

“... provided the members with the number of structured exercises that were to assist members in experiencing important elements in the bereavement process”.

(Stone, 1988)

Process of Bereavement : 6 “R”s (Rando, 1993)

1. Recognize the loss
2. React to the separation
3. Recollect and re-experience the deceased and the relationship
4. Relinquish the old attachments to the deceased and the old assumptive world
5. Readjust to move adaptively into the new world without forgetting the old
6. Reinvest

Therapeutic Factors in Group (Yalom, 1985)

- ❑ Instillation of hope
- ❑ Universality
- ❑ Imparting Information
- ❑ Altruism
- ❑ Corrective recapitulation of the primary family group
- ❑ Development of socializing techniques
- ❑ Imitative behavior
- ❑ Interpersonal learning
- ❑ Group cohesiveness
- ❑ Catharsis
- ❑ Existential factors

Objectives of bereavement group

- ❑ Facilitate sense of common as to minimize loneliness
- ❑ Encourage and Facilitate the expression of grief Reactions
- ❑ Facilitate life integration through life review
- ❑ Enhance coping method and validation

Group Format

- ❑ 7 sessions; 2 hours per session
- ❑ 8 to 12 members
- ❑ Mixed group
- ❑ 2 group leaders

Pre-Group interview

- ❑ Understanding expectation, prepare & motivate clients for the group experience
- ❑ Screening for suitable candidates who can benefit from group:
 - Absence of extreme or unique grief reactions
 - After the crisis or acute phase
 - Absence of mental illness
 - Absence of severe suicidal ideation
 - Willing to share and deal with grief experience

Assessment tools

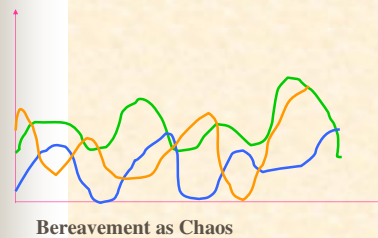
Grief Reaction Assessment Form (Graf) 2001

- Modification of the 21 questions to 7 questions.
- Additional questions about life review and death anxiety.
- Open end questions.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

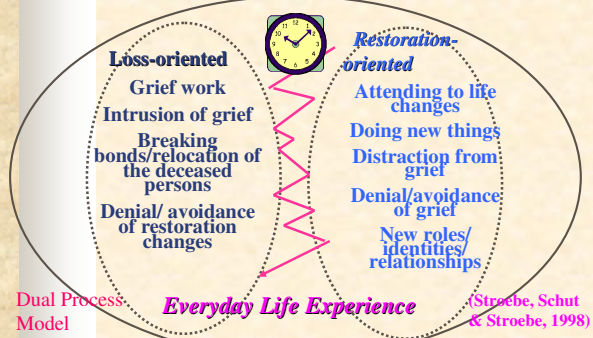
Group Objectives

1. Promote Sense of common



Group Objectives

1. Promote Sense of common



Group Objective

2. Facilitate Expression of Grief Reaction

- Absent-minded Behaviours
- Social Withdrawal
- Talking about/Avoiding Reminders of the Deceased
- Sadness , Crying
- Guilt
- Carrying Objects That Remind The Bereaved Of The Deceased
- Lonliness



2002年 壬午年農曆二月廿日

崔屏再中屏再散
破鏡重圓鏡重破
清明時節思亡妻
流淚濕枕至天明

Group Objective

3. Facilitate Life Integration by

Means of Life Review

- Developmental task to achieve ego-integrity (Erikson, 1950)
- Reminiscence as a means
- Reminiscence & mourning as similar and parallel psychological process (Viney, Benjamin & Preston, 1995)

Group Objective

4. Coping with Life and Death

- ❑ Death of loved one triggers off thoughts of own death
- ❑ Support for elderly to work toward own way of both dignified life & death
- ❑ Group as a platform to share about fear and worry at the end of life



Post-Group interviews

- ❑ Evaluate the group impact on members
- ❑ Assess the need for further individual follow-up

Process of Change

- ❑ From **loneliness/isolation** to **connectedness**
- ❑ From **suppression** to **expression and being understood**
- ❑ From **loss of “WE” identity** to **development of “I”**
- ❑ Acknowledgement of **continuing bond** with deceased when moving on with life

Implementation of Bereavement Group in Elderly Center

❑ Some Suggestions:

- ❑ Environmental
- ❑ Atmosphere
- ❑ Further Development Of Group:
 - Follow-on Group, Open-Group,
 - Bereavement of Other relations,
 - Life-review Group