GRIEVING FOR OURSELVES

- RUTH M BRIDGES

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Resource Guide

About Ruth M Bridges

I am a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and Programme Leader for the MA/PgD in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Person-Centred) at the University of Cumbria. Highly relational in approach,

I hold a strong belief in the importance of authentic and compassionate practice. Before my re-location to Cumbria in 2015, I worked for ten years within Macmillan Cancer Care offering counselling to clients and carers in the midst of significant and life threatening illness.

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Event Details

The role of counselling in honouring profound personal loss: A personal and professional consideration of the uniquely intimate experience of grief in the light of significant illness and pain.

Resources for participants

Bridges, R. (2017) Grieving for Myself: The Silence and Spirituality of Personal Loss. In P. M. Gubi (Ed.). What Counsellors and Spiritual Directors can Learn from Each Other: Ethical Practice, Training and Supervision. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

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Grieving for Myself

The silence and spirituality of personal loss

Ruth M Bridges, MA, PgD Couns.,
BA (Hons), FHEA, MBACP

Grieving for Myself…

‘The news falls neatly between one moment and another.

You would not think there was a gap for such a thing.’

(Coutts, 2014: 2)

- A uniquely intimate loss
- On grief and grieving
- Bearing witness
- Implications for practice

(Bridges, 2017)

A uniquely intimate loss

'Illness is an abrupt, violent way of revealing the…bodily nature of our being.'

(Carel, 2008: 27)

On grief and grieving

'Grief is a powerful experience that cracks us open

and leaves us immensely vulnerable…'

(Granek, 2014: 61)

Bearing witness

'It takes courage to remain in the dark, resisting the appeal of offering soft answers to the hard questions.'

(Mayne, 2001: 149)

Implications for practice

"For as good as we are as professionals…there's something about sometimes getting pulled up sharp personally that actually makes us better at what we're doing."

(Participant in Bridges, 2017: 118)

Implications for practice

- What are my motives for this work?
- Am I hearing my client's mind, body, spirit?
- Am I aware of my own?
- Am I the kind of person I would like to have near me if I were dying?

(Stanworth, 2006 adapted)

"Should I be this upset?"

'This, for me, is the total pain as defined by Cicely Saunders,

…and is suffering at its most profound.'

(Bridges, 2017: 114/115)

References

- Bridges, R. (2017) Grieving for Myself: The Silence and Spirituality of Personal Loss. In P. Gubi (Ed.). *What Counsellors and Spiritual Directors can Learn from Each Other: Ethical Practice, Training and Supervision*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
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- Coutts, M. (2014) *The Iceberg: A Memoir*. London: Atlantic Books.
- Granek, L. (2014) 'Mourning Sickness: The Politicizations of Grief.' *Review of General Psychology*. 18 (2) pp: 61-68.
- Mayne, M. (2001) *Learning to Dance*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.
- Stanworth, R. (2006) http://www.internurse.com/cgibin/go.pl/library/article/cgi?uid=9145&article=IJPN_3

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