


**Why Aren't You Crying?
Understanding Grieving Styles**

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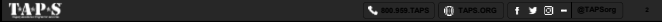
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Three Major Goals

- Discuss and differentiate grieving styles (Martin and Doka)
- Apply the concept of grieving styles to family systems
- Explore implications for counselors



Biography of a Concept I

- Father's death
- CPE
- Dennis Ryan's chapter in *Disenfranchised Grief*



The Myth of Men and Grief

- Emotionally unexpressive
- Unable to relate

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Simply put there is only one way to grieve. That way is to go through the emotional core of grief. Only by exploring the necessary emotional effects of your loved one's death can you eventually resolve grief.

- Staudacher, *Men and Grief*

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Grief and Gender (Corr)

1. Feminization of Grief

- Women's expression of emotion and seeking of support is a model for how individuals should grieve
- Men should learn from women how to express grief



(Staudacher)

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Grief and Gender (Corr)

2. Masculine Grief

- Men grieve in their own way and should be allowed to do so
- Emotions focus on guilt and anger
- Thinking rather than feeling
- Value self-reliance, problem-solving, and immersion in work



(Golden, early Martin and Doka, Lund)

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Grief and Gender (Corr)

3. Styles of Grief

- Styles of grief are influenced by gender but not determined by gender
- Individuals grieve according to ways they are socialized – influenced by gender, culture, and other factors
- Instrumental – Intuitive Continuum
- Persons should be encouraged to express grief in ways comfortable to them
- Even as we identify patterns and influences, we should not deny the individuality of grief



(Martin and Doka)

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The Myth of Men and Grief

Not supported in theory, clinical practice, or research

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Grief is Manifested in Many Ways

- Physically
- Emotionally
- Cognitively
- Behaviorally
- Spiritually


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Grief is a Very Individual Reaction

The need to assess

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The Grief Process
A Rollercoaster of Reactions



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Stroebe and Schut
Dual Process Model

- Calls for oscillation between
 - Loss-Oriented Processes
 - Restoration Processes
- Thompson notes how each pattern (especially at extremes) can inhibit oscillation



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Amelioration of Grief

- Over time the pain lessens
- Persons function at similar (or sometimes better levels) than prior to the loss
- Yet, grief still has a developmental aspect

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Biography of a Concept II

- Martin and Doka – ADEC Paper, “Take It Like a Man”
- Nichols
- Masculine Vs. Feminine/Conventional

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Advantages of the Term *Masculine*

- Theoretical value
- Related to gender
- Challenges concept that men were ineffectual grievors


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Disadvantages of Term *Masculine*

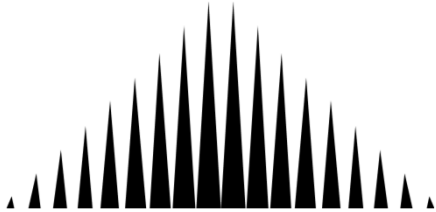
- Confusion with gender
- Perpetuates stereotypes
- Difficulties of gender-based terminology

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Intuitive vs. Instrumental




Grieving Styles Exist along a Continuum



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Grieving Styles: An Alternate Visualization



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Intuitive Grief

- Experiences strong affective reactions
- Expression mirrors inner feelings
- Adaptation involves expression and exploration of feelings

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Instrumental Grief


- Experience of grief is primarily cognitive or physical
- Grief often is expressed cognitively or behaviorally
- Adaptation generally involves thinking and doing

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Instrumental Grief

“Most contemporary Western philosophies, with the possible exception of empiricism, can be understood as instrumental ways to encounter death, loss, and grief”

D. Klass



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Men's Grief

- Smith suggests that Shakespeare's way of dealing with his grief over the death of his 11-year-old son, Hamnet, was to process his grief in his subsequent plays
- His contemporary, Ben Jonson, composed moving elegies to his two deceased children
- Eric Clapton composed "Tears in Heaven" after his son died



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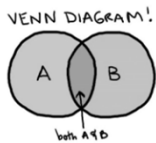
Dissonant Grief

Discontinuity in Experience vs. Expression

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Blended Grievors




- Share experiences, expressions, and adaptation strategies of both intuitive and instrumental grievers
- Often have varied experiences and use strategies depending on the relationship to the deceased, the situation experienced, and the time since the loss

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Oregon Center for Applied Science
Ways of Portraying Model


- Heart Grievers
- Head Grievers
- Head + Heart
- Head vs. Heart



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Grieving Styles Are Influenced By


- Gender
 - Biological?
 - Cultural?
 - Affected by change in gender roles
- Culture
 - Military culture
- Temperament
- Other



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Grieving Styles in the Life Cycle

- While there is likely to be consistency in grieving styles, they can change
- During the life cycle, some movement toward the poles in adolescence and toward the center in later life is not unusual



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Differences – Not Deficiencies

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These styles exist as general adaptive patterns and can be seen in other circumstances, including the illness experience.

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Each style has its own advantages and disadvantages.

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Grieving Styles and Anticipatory Grief/Mourning




Grieving Styles

- Intuitive
- Instrumental
 - Gerber, *anticipatory bereavement*
- Dissonant
 - Brett

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Potential Problems With Grieving Styles

- Intuitive – the problem of overwhelming potential support
 - The "paradox of support"
 - Widowers with strong social support fared well (Silverman & Campbell)
- Instrumental – the problem of premature problem-solving
 - Alcohol and substance abuse – the different reasons persons abuse substances



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What about androgynous approaches? Should we push clients to a more blended style?

- Schut's research supports the idea that:
 - Men valued from affective approaches
 - Women valued from more cognitive approaches

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Disadvantages of Androgyny

- Research was based on gender
- Double burden of androgyny
- Crisis is a poor time to teach new adaptive skills

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Support for Grieving Styles


- Theory
 - Grief reactions and adaptation
 - Coping literature
 - Emotion regulation
- Research
 - Gender (Law of Social Physics)
 - Bonanno, Nolan-Hoeksema
 - Rosenblatt, Cross-Cultural Research
- Clinical Practice
 - Rando
 - Stillion & McDowell

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Research

Gender Differences in Morbidity and Mortality in Widowhood

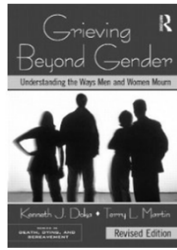
- A meta-analysis by Stroebe, Stroebe, and Schut (2001) indicated that while evidence is mixed, they determined that men have higher rates of morbidity (including mental health) and mortality in widowhood
- See some explanation in *buffering hypothesis* – women are more open to social support and note, as yet unsupported, idea that emotional coping assists
- Suggest that factor may be that gender constraints can inhibit individuals in dealing with the dual processes of bereavement



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Adaptive Grieving Styles

- Doughty (2009), in a Delphi study of experts, found that there was consensus among experts on the major premises of the model
- Humphrey (2009), in a book published by the ACA, highlighted the model as a valued one for counselors



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Working With Families

- Carefully assess styles and dimensions
- Interview family members individually
- Persons may appear instrumental as they seek to protect other family members
- In effect, they are doing a balancing act – trying to balance their needs with the perception of other's needs



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Working With Families



- Challenge families to acknowledge differences as differences
 - Illustrate effective models
 - Differences in coping and attraction
 - Challenge inappropriate judgments
- Take responsibility to meet own needs
 - How can families help themselves?

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How can counselors help?

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Begin with Self

- Acknowledge different grieving styles
- Recognize the culture of counseling (Sue & Sue)

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Validate Grieving Styles

- Instrumental grievers (especially early in the grief process)
- Intuitive grievers (later in the grief process)
- Male intuitive grievers
- Female instrumental grievers (the most disenfranchised)

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Assess – Do Not Assume

- Consistency in history of coping
- Comfort in discussing loss
- Sense of movement in grief
- Assessment instruments



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Counseling Approaches

- Avoid the “F” word
- Use eclectic methods – including expressive approaches (intentionally)

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Counseling Intuitive Grievers

- Traditional approaches work well
- Individual counseling can focus on expressing and exploring affect (within a holistic framework)
- Traditional support groups can help (within a holistic framework)



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Dissonant

- Some men can be prone to dissonant patterns of grief
- Dominant male ideology
 - "No sissy stuff" – avoid feminine behaviors
 - "Big wheel" – success and achievement valued
 - "Sturdy oak" – do not show weakness
 - "Give 'em hell" – seek adventure and risk
- Failure to adhere to these norms can create gender role strain (Levant)



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Counseling Dissonant Grievors

- Assess pattern carefully
- Explore factors inhibiting emotional expression
- Create a safe environment for expressing emotion
- Carefully-led and structured support groups can work, especially men's groups



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Gender Identity and Grief

- Gidden: Identity is constantly recreated, yet we retain a sense of continuity
- Cait: The strong feelings of grief can collide with entrenched ideas of masculinity, creating a sense of ontological insecurity that threatens identity continuity



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Counseling Dissonant Male Grievors

- Assess developmental experiences and socialization experiences in family of origin that inhibited emotional awareness and expression
- Create a safe, connected, equalitarian environment
- Use self-disclosure and model emotional expression
- Use action modalities – body movement, writing, etc.
- Strategies may include dosing and private expressions of grief

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Counseling Dissonant Female Grievors

- Assess developmental and socialization experiences that might inhibit emotional expression; could be protecting others such as children
- Create a safe environment
- Teach strategies of dosing



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Dissonant Grief: Case

- Mark, normally a male who copes in a very affective way, now works excessively after his daughter's death. He refuses to discuss his grief or daughter and claims it does no good to "wallow in the past."
- In counseling he expresses the fear that if he encounters his emotion, "the dam will burst."
- Counselor addressed the idea that perhaps the dam has an "overflow valve" (ie, the value of dosing).



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Counseling Instrumental Grievers
Motivating Instrumental Grievers

- Whose needs are being met?
- An altruistic frame
- A competitive frame

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Counseling Instrumental Grievers

- Assess
- Traditional approaches may not work well
- Cognitive therapies
- Active approaches
- Therapeutic metaphors (Carrying a heavy load, etc.)
- Psycho-educational approaches, especially the use of books and videos



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Counseling with Male Instrumental Grievers
Strategies



- Use styles compatible with the male role, such as storytelling
- Recognize that men will move in and out of emotions, often using dosing and humor

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Counseling with Male Instrumental Grievers *Strategies*

- Rituals have had an important cultural and historical role with men, such as rites of initiation
- Rituals draw on the need to “do” and offer elements of symbolic control
 - For example, building a coffin for a dead cat with one’s son



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Counseling with Male Instrumental Grievers *Strategies*



- Reframing strengths
- For example, many men take pride in coping with hardship
 - *“It might be tough to sit with your wife as she expresses pain, but that could be a helpful sacrifice”*

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Counseling Male Clients *Building on Strengths*

While Levant et al. stress dysfunctional elements of male ideology, more positive aspects of male ideology can be utilized:

- Self-sacrifice
- Protect the weak
- Courage valued
- “Take one for the team”
 - social responsibility and being a team player



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Resilient Widowers



• Resilient widowers' advice to other widowers:

- Stay active
- Have interests or develop them
- Seek companionship
- Rely on faith

(Moore & Stratton, 2002)

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Additional Male Strengths

- Male ways of relating: emphasizes activity and problem-solving
- Generative fathering: often emphasizes teaching/modeling
- Acknowledge male ways of caring: protecting, and assisting
- Male self-reliance/provider
- Courage and risk-taking valued
- Group orientation, part of a team
- Humor: expresses relationships, diffuses tension and anxiety



(Englar-Carlson & Kiselica, 2013)

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Counseling Male Clients

- Build on strengths
- Case: Widower focuses on work to the detriment of children
 - Commend him on ability to care for family in this difficult time
 - Assist him to assess the effect of his work on his children so that he can decide whether he needs to bring in more balance


(Troyer, *Counseling Widowers*)

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Counseling Female Instrumental Grievers

- Validation
- Explore roots of pattern (note research)
- Active and cognitive strategies



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Illustration: Support Groups

- Validation
- Ventilation
- Respite and support
- Learn coping techniques
- Hope

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Developing Groups for Instrumental Grievers

- Whose needs are being met?
- The importance of needs assessment



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Traditional Models May Not Meet the Needs of Instrumental Grievers

- Adventure-based groups
- Discussion and reading groups
- Educational seminars
- Informal groups (sharing wives' recipes)
- Problem-solving groups (Parents without Partners)
- Expressive art groups

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Men's Groups

- The Harvard Bereavement study suggested that fathers were best served by offering a group on how to be good single parents, rather than offering emotional support (Worden, 2008)



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Conclusion



- We grieve because we love
- We grieve as we live
- We cannot expect someone to grieve differently
- But we can support them in their own ways of grieving, however they do so

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About the TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing

The TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing, through an alliance with HFA, serves as a resource and training center, providing programs for both professionals working in the field of grief and loss and the public. The TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing was launched in March 2018.



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Upcoming TAPS Institute programs

All programs will be live webinars and will take place from 12:00-1:30 p.m. ET.

- August 7 — *Understanding Children's Grief**
 - Presenters: **Vicki Jay**, CEO, National Alliance for Grieving Children and **Bob Arrington**, Chair, Funeral Service Foundation, Arrington Funeral Directors
- August 21 — *#grief: Social Media and Mourning*†*
 - Presenters: **Kelly Rossetto**, PhD, Assistant Professor, Boise State University and **Michelle Post**, MA, LMFT, CTBS, Manager of Donor Family Aftercare, OneLegacy
- August 23 — *Coping with Grief, Reaching Out for Support*
 - Presenters: **Heidi Horsley**, PSYD, LMSW, MS, Co-founder, Open to Hope and **Debbie Rambis**, Executive Director, The Compassionate Friends
 - Moderator: **Gloria Horsley**, PhD, MS, CNS, Co-founder, Open to Hope

* Continuing Education Available
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