

# Chapter 8

## Advancing the Wellbeing of Bereaved People Toward Effective Rehabilitation

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Among the inevitable traumatic hazards that people encounter is death of a loved one. A notable reaction to such loss is grief. Individuals in grief could develop a crisis and suddenly start to function with diminished capacity. While some individuals navigate their grieving phase with minimal damage and return to functionality, others lack the requisite resources to manage the phase, leading them to crisis. This latter group needs counsellors to assist them navigate the phase and return to pre-crisis functionality. This chapter provides two-way effective grief and trauma counselling therapies. To social supports, it provides empathic listening, tolerating awkward responses from the bereaved, and observing a task that needs to be done and do it vicariously, etc. To the bereaved, it offers cognitive restructuring, self-monitoring of thoughts and recording, increasing help-seeking behaviours, Premack principle, time out, self-compassion, bibliotherapy, and reinforcement, among other therapies, to manage grief and trauma during bereavement.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Emotional hazard describes any situation that brings about unexpected upset within the social forces in which an individual lives, in which the individual is capable of navigating with insignificant amount of stress. These emotional hazards could be brought by natural events such as war, earthquake, maturational challenges, sudden death of a loved one, flooding, tornado, plane crash, inferno, etc., or man-induced such as divorce, terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, rape, gun shooting, building collapse, to list a few, each of which could adversely affect just a person or affect entire community (James, 2017; Roberts, 2015). For some other individuals, however, working through the same emotional hazard disorganises and immobilises them, such that they experience acute and protracted disturbance called crisis, consequent of the emotional hazard (Roberts, 2015).

One of the notable reactions to emotional hazards linked to loss of a beloved person is grief. Grief has been defined by Asgari et al. (2023) as an inevitable experience of individuals' response to the death of a beloved person, while Skalski et al. (2022) described grief to be emotionally a painful and natural response to loss by individuals, with manifestations such as aggression, anxiety, and depression, denial, loss of control, extreme sadness, and shock (Gross, 2015; Williams et al., 2023). Interestingly, a number of factors such as culture and personal definition of the position of the deceased to the bereaved could influence the seriousness of the grief being experienced. Admitting the huge negative impacts of what unresolved grief could bring upon the behavioural, physical, emotional, mental, career, and psychological wellness and the health of the people in grief, it is imperative to commence adequate preparation of counsellors in grief and trauma counselling education during their training in order to adequately equip them to help people successfully work through grieving phases occasioned by bereavement. Notably, counsellors have a dual role in such task – to social supports who partner with them on the rehabilitation drives of the bereaved, and to the bereaved persons themselves.

This contribution, therefore, presents grief and trauma intervention counselling as encompassing systematic provision of information, education, and therapies by rehabilitation counsellors (that is, a counsellor who is proficient in application of therapies to help people return to normal life after encountering traumatic experiences) both to social supports – neighbours, friends, family members, clergies, who assist in the rehabilitation of the bereaved, as well as to the bereaved themselves, in order to accelerate the healing of individuals in grief and trauma to successfully work through and subsequently return to pre-bereavement functionality. In literature, such as Sallnow and Paul (2015), and Aoun et al. (2018), social supports are synonymously identified as informal sources of support, and they are reported as the most frequently used forms of the social supports.

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