



BONewsletter

When Someone Deeply Listens To You



The inspiring magnificence of autumn lay before me as I sat down to compose my first article for the newsletter, as Chair of BON. However, words and thoughts just would not emerge. I paced, I sat, I read, I talked—all without avail until I stopped, and through meditation, listened to what I wanted to say. I heard myself speak of how quickly my first decade with BON had passed. Then I began to reflect on those ten years that proved to be an amazing journey. There were nine of the BON annual conferences to revisit, each with its own special flare

and memories. There was the support and wisdom shared by BON members in many forums and in many fashions. And there are the friendships that have grown into some of life's most precious gifts including an increased appreciation, understanding, and love of oneself. There were times of laughter, singing, sorrow, tears, and losses. One ever so powerful act that I witnessed many times over the years is that of genuine listening. It is an act that has "moved mountains" so that people may continue on the journey of living life and living with death. John Fox, in the book, "Finding What You Didn't Lose," reveals in his poetry the true nature of deep listening:

*When someone deeply listens to you
it is like holding out a dented cup
you've had since childhood
and watch it fill up with
cold, fresh water.
When it balances on the top of the
brim,
you are understood.
When it overflows and touches your
skin,
you are loved.*

*When someone deeply listens to you,
the room where you stay
starts a new life
and the place where you wrote
your first poem
begins to glow in your mind's eye.
It is as if gold has been discovered.*

*When someone deeply listens to you,
your bare feet are on the earth
and a beloved land that seemed
distant is now at home within you.*

The practice of deep listening is essential to the growth and vibrancy of life and community. It is with this in mind that I ask you to take the time to listen to yourself—to be there in your truth for yourself and ultimately for ALL those you touch on your daily journey. Let BON—the Board, a Board Member, or your Regional Rep know how we may better listen so as to support the nurturing of that "beloved land within you." The stronger and richer the ME, the stronger and richer the WE.

Susan McCoy, Chair

If there were no rain,
fields would become parched and brittle,
and many creatures would die.
If we could not cry,
All our emotions would eventually dry up too,
And soon we would not laugh either.
Our tears cleanse us.
Our tears heal us.
They make us whole.
Tears are important to our growth,
as rain is to a flower.
They help release the pressure of
sadness so we can feel better.
After a storm, when the sun shines again
through the clouds,
a bright coloured rainbow often appears.
After our tears, our inner sun shines again,
and rainbows may be formed from our pain.

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Vacant

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To contact your regional representative please refer to the BON Directory or call the BON office at 905-639-2344.

We greatly appreciate the support of our readers in locating new regional representatives. Would you be interested in joining us?

## BEREAVEMENT ONTARIO NETWORK

### *Mission Statement*

*Bereavement Ontario Network is a network of individuals, groups, and organizations which, through the exchange of ideas, resources, and energy, is dedicated to helping the bereaved and the dying.*

Bereavement Ontario Network (BON) is a diverse group of organizations and individuals across Ontario that work in the field of grief and bereavement as professionals and volunteers.

BON provides opportunities to access, in a reciprocal manner, the knowledge, experience, wisdom, and sensitivity of other members in Ontario. You can use BON to access this support for your clients and yourself.

Membership in the Bereavement Ontario Network is open to individuals, volunteer organizations, small business, and corporations. If your work brings you in contact with bereaved individuals, BON can help you to help them.

BON offers an annual conference, a directory of members, this newsletter, an interactive website, and the services of volunteer regional representatives. These representatives are available to answer questions and to refer you to available resources within your region.

### ABOUT THE BONewsletter

The BONewsletter belongs to you! We encourage your contributions by submitting articles, book reviews, and audiovisual reviews. Let us know about news in your region, any upcoming events, as well as your comments and suggestions. Tell us about a great website that we can share with everyone in the BON "Network" across Ontario.

We accept previously published articles that are accompanied by written permission to reprint.

The BONewsletter committee reserves the right to edit all contributions for clarity, punctuation, spelling, grammar, and syntax.

Please send your submissions as a typed copy to:

BON  
5014 New Street, Suite 414  
Burlington, ON L7L 6E8

If your submission is 2 pages or less you may e-mail it to:  
[bonet@idirect.com](mailto:bonet@idirect.com)

The BONewsletter is published three times each year.

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Post Conference: November 1

*Your Newsletter Committee:*

Editor: Ellie Deveau

Layout: Laurie Mitchell

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# Angels Spotted at BON Annual Conference

One might ask why a nice pair of Angel Ladies are hanging out with the Bereavement Ontario Network? "You cannot imagine a nicer, more caring, more fun-loving bunch of people," we'd reply. And judging by the gathering at the Geneva Conference Centre in October, we're not the only ones who think so. In fact, we'd have to say we had a heavenly time! As the conference neared its closing hour, we were posed an interesting question: "Were there any angels at the conference?" Our immediate answer was an enthusiastic "YES!" And we were not just referring to the pretty gift items at the display table, either. When you work with angels, it becomes easier to recognize their heavenly signatures around us, signalling "Angels At Work." And angels were certainly busy at the BON Conference.

While it is certainly true that angels are everywhere, it's equally true that



not all people are aware of, or interested in, them. Many people don't even believe in angels. Still, for those who had their angelic antennae up, there was a lot of winged activity at Geneva Park. The reverent quiet of the labyrinth, the grace of the Tai Chi movements, the peaceful path of the

nature walk, the truths of the stories...of course angels were present!

Angels provided support as hard and personal stories were shared, tears were brushed away, and wordless hugs of consolation were offered. Angels guided aching hearts to others and gifted them with understanding. Angels were there in the smiles and in the laughter, in the songs, and in the good-natured ribbing and bidding. They were there in the faces and in the eyes, in the gentle and empathetic touches, in the silence, and in the kind words. They were even hidden under a lapel, waiting for a chance to minister compassion and love! Angels bring us to a place of grace and peace, and where we find these we find a higher purpose at work.

Deb Vaughan and Jean Porche,  
The Angel Ladies  
The Inner Resource Centre,  
905-898-7373

## A Holiday Memorial



For many people the candle is a symbol of something special. When you are a child, candles are equated with birthday cakes. When you are first in love, a candle is a symbol of romance. Candles

are often lit in churches to symbolize a religious celebration. During this time of preparation for Christmas, we light Advent candles. Sometimes we light candles when the power goes out and there is thunder, lightning and darkness around us.

Grief is like the darkness and so we light candles to give us hope through the difficult days. The lighting of candles is an important symbol and ritual which is very much a part of our grieving process. These candles act as reminders that we are grieving the loss of a very special someone who was a part of our lives.

You may use the following ritual in a support group, in a family gathering, or where people have gathered to remember and to reflect. Use four candles: one for your grief, one for your courage, one for your memories, and one for your love.



### **Light the first candle:**

This candle represents your grief. The pain of losing someone is so intense. It reminds us of the depth of our love for that person.



### **Light the second candle:**

This candle symbolizes your courage to confront your sorrow, to comfort each other, and to change your lives.

### **Light the third candle:**

This light is in memory of the person that died—the times you laughed, the times you cried, the times you were angry with each other, the silly things you did, the caring and joy you gave to each other.

### **Light the fourth candle:**

This candle symbolizes love as you enter this holiday season. Day by day you cherish the special place in your hearts that will always be reserved for the person that died. You are grateful for the gift that person's living brought to each of you.

Marilyn Hollinger, MSW, MTS



# New Partnership Brings Acclaimed Documentary to BON Members

BON is pleased to launch a new working relationship with Toronto's Sky Works Charitable Foundation. Sky Works is the producer of the acclaimed breast cancer documentary, *How Can We Love You?*, which had a very successful screening on October 2, 2002 at BON's 12th Annual Meeting and Conference in Orillia. Based on the positive response of that audience, BON's board of directors and Sky Works have agreed to work together to bring this documentary to BON member communities next year.

According to BON Chair, Susan McCoy, "How Can We Love You? addresses many issues that people involved in death and bereavement work deal with on a daily basis. *How Can We Love You?* addresses these issues in an instructive, yet deeply human and compelling way and is a valuable learning resource for our members and for the clients and communities that they serve. I hope that BON members will get on board and get this documentary seen in their communities."

*How Can We Love You?* offers audiences a personal, behind the scenes look at Mary Sue Douglas and Jan Livingston, cast members in the breast cancer play *Handle with Care*, as they perform their stage roles and deal with the treatment of their cancers. Along the way, the women talk frankly about their own feelings of mortality—and about their joy and fulfillment in making a difference for others with breast cancer.

The documentary's goal is to sensitize audiences to the experiences and needs of women with breast cancer and, in particular, women with metastatic breast disease (cancer that has spread to other parts of the body and is treatable, but rarely curable). *How Can We Love You?* also addresses the concerns of those who love and care for them—friends, family, and the health care community. Moreover, the issues raised by the documentary extend beyond breast cancer, they apply to anyone dealing with a serious illness.



Since its January 2001 launch, *How Can We Love You?* has been presented more than 70 times in 40 communities across Canada. During the 2001 tour, the Sky Works' volunteer team of presenters and facilitators did a research study in which 1200 women with breast cancer were asked about their experiences and needs. One major need revealed by the study's findings was that *How Can We Love You?* should be seen by people in the medical community.

Based on that finding, Sky Works has focused on bringing this documentary to a range of health care workers, including family doctors, radiologists, nurses, hospice workers, palliative care workers, and social workers. For the past two years, *How Can We Love You?* has been part of McMaster University's Program in Continuing Medical Education for palliative care workers in Waterloo-Wellington-Dufferin regions. According to the program trainer, "This documentary helps us get to the heart of the issue." Last year a nursing school instructor at Dalhousie University in Halifax told the Sky Works presenters, "You have taught these nurses more in one evening than I could have taught them in four years."

While the medical community's response has been positive, Laura Sky, the documentary's producer and director notes, "We're always discovering new audiences and new ways of reaching audiences. When we showed *How Can We Love You?* at the BON conference, I was elated by people's responses and by how they connected

with the documentary. I knew instantly that we'd discovered a new, untapped audience. Bereavement professionals and volunteers are a natural fit for us and I'm looking forward to a productive working relationship."

Over the past two years, Sky Works has partnered with more than 70 groups and institutions in bringing *How Can We Love You?* to Canadian communities. Partners have included local chapters of the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, breast cancer support groups, business and professional associations, government agencies, hospitals, universities and colleges, community health centres, palliative care organizations, and women's health groups.

About Sky Works....

Laura Sky has made award-winning documentaries on a range of contemporary social issues for the past three decades. In 1983, she established Sky Works Charitable Foundation, her independent non-profit documentary organization. The organization specializes in films that deal with contemporary social issues and are designed to encourage specific audiences to see the value of their own experience and to take action on their own behalf. The documentaries raise questions, stimulate discussion, and encourage the audience's participation in social and community process.

We invite your comments on *How Can We Love You?*

If you attended the screening of *How Can We Love You?* at the BON Annual Conference, we'd like to hear from you. Contact your regional representative or fax or e-mail us with your comments. Tell us how the documentary helped you, what you learned, and how and where you think it could be used in your community. And if you were really inspired by this production, let us know if you'd like to hold a screening yourself. Sky Works works with local hosts in organizing and promoting screenings.

## NEWS FROM ACROSS THE REGIONS

### L1 Regional Report

Deb Vaughan and Jean Porche, Directors of the Vital Innergy Inner Resource Centre in Newmarket, are pleased to announce the association of Ken Penrose, Bereavement Group Facilitator and Grief counsellor. He offers individual grief counselling, eight-week bereavement discussion and groups, and workshops and presentations focusing on bereavement education. With Ken's caring support and gentle counsel, clients can find purpose and meaning in life after experiencing loss. Ken also offers discussion and supportive services to clients going through such transitions as divorce, job termination, and relocation.

The Inner Resource Centre, located in a heritage home at 444 Timothy Street, Newmarket, is dedicated to offering services, products, workshops and events to assist people in creating more satisfying and joyful lives. To that end, the directors have welcomed associates whose integrity, knowledge, and expertise are unquestioned. We are pleased to add Ken Penrose to our family of associates: Lori Beardmore (Feng Shui, Reiki), Angela Dacey (marketing, colour therapy), and Shilo Shannon (Success Coach). For information on workshops and other offerings, call 905-898-7373.

### Upcoming Workshops

For upcoming workshops at the Inner Resource Centre, 444 Timothy Street, Newmarket, Ontario, call 905-898-7373 for information and registration.

Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2003 Mid-Life Tune-Up! 1:30pm-4:00pm. Registration fee \$30. Let's face it: We're older now, the kids have their own lives, retirement is within shouting distance... now what? You know there's more—but how to find it? We have some ideas about that...and you're going to love them!

**Kathi Kelly,**  
**L1 Regional Rep.**

### L3 Regional Report

As the fall season moves ahead into winter, our group from Welland Hospital are still reflecting on the profound experiences we had at this year's BON Annual Conference. We

look forward to next year's conference and in anticipation some of us are putting savings away each month. While browsing through the bookstore and purchasing some material for our palliative care library I reviewed the Genesis Bereavement Resources. There feature videos and books for use in grief work—I chose "By the Waters of Babylon," a video that has proven to be a valuable resource for our bereavement self-support group. Feedback from the group indicated that there was much work for them to do in their inner reflection and personal growth. They suggested that they view one section each time they met followed by a group discussion about their healing grief journey. I was so pleased to receive this reaction and highly recommend this video for use in support groups. For a list of Genesis Bereavement Resources call 1-866-924-2958.

**Nancy Riou,**  
**L3 Regional Rep.**

### N1 Regional Report

I attended the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Orillia this fall and I am still feeling very energized from the entire interaction with the excellent speakers, with the attendees, and with my colleagues on the Board. As the holiday season approaches, we will all need extra energy. In the Bereavement Resources Program, at the Canadian Mental Health Association, W-E Branch, we generally experience a surge in referrals during this time of the year. And, the people we are presently supporting seem to require more support. Fortunately, we have excellent print material and a video to offer our bereaved clients. Do not hesitate to call or e-mail me if you need some handouts.

Many of our local funeral homes offer special presentations on coping with the holidays. presenter, Chris Byrne, is well known for her work in grief and bereavement. In December there will be a 5-week Grief Recovery Out Reach program offered in Wheatley, Ontario. This program, presented by Connie Latam, one of our BON members, is designed to meet the needs of persons experiencing grief due death, divorce, job loss, and other issues that cause grief. There is a fee and registration is necessary. For

more information call Connie at 519-825-7009.

The St. Thomas nondenominational Christmas service for the bereaved will be held on Monday, December 23 at 7:30pm in the Central United Church, 135 Wellington Street, St. Thomas.

To find out more about the upcoming events in the St. Thomas and Elgin County area or for information about grief support groups call BRCE at 519-633-2149 or toll free 1-800-463-1810.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Katherine Scimmi, McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home, for completing a 150 hour program (5 courses) in Death and Grief Studies, in conjunction with the Colorado State University at the Centre for Loss and Life Transitions, with Dr. Alan Wolfelt, in Fort Collins, Colorado.

I know there are several other events happening in the N1 region and I want to hear about them. So please keep in touch. Everyone if very busy, but we need to share information and resources so that we can support one another while we support the bereaved.

**Deborah Ayotte,**  
**N1 Regional Rep.**  
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### Great News to All Members of BON!



Two Canadian companies that have an extensive range of books, videos, and other bereavement and trauma resources are offering a 10% discount on all purchases made by BON members. The companies: Canuckcare and Roberts Press offer more than 1000 resources and have agreements with most major publishers and producers. They have very competitive pricing together with a high level of personal service. The business owners, Christine DerNederlaanden of Roberts Press and Kent Laidlaw of Canuckcare have extensive backgrounds in the bereavement and trauma fields. AND, they are both active members of BON. They collaborate in the development of resource libraries for care providing organizations. Purchases can be made through the internet, telephone, or by fax. Contact these companies via their web sites, [www.canuckcare.com](http://www.canuckcare.com) and [www.robertspress.ca](http://www.robertspress.ca).

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## **N2 Regional Report**

The fall of the year always reminds me of the book *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf* by Leo Buscaglia. Our tree of life sometimes loses its leaves and we experience grief and loss. I have been reading this book followed by a discussion to a group of parents who have had a child die and it is comforting for them to be nurtured by this story. The London chapter of Bereaved Families was honoured to have Mary Vachon as a speaker at their fall meeting. In the Waterloo Region several funeral homes offer bereavement programs with individual and group support. There is an educational group with Bill Webster, weekly self-help groups, and a once monthly support group. Hospice of Waterloo Region has introduced the Changing Leaves of Hospice Parent Support Group to coincide with the Changing Leaves of Hospice Children's Support Program. The children's program is for children who are living with a terminal illness, have a family member living with a terminal illness, or have experienced a death within the family. The parent support group, held at the same time as the children's program, walks parents through their own grief experiences and focuses on how to help their children. Hospice of Waterloo Region is delivering an educational series on "Grief and Loss" and "Supporting Others at Times of Loss" within the Grade 11 "Leadership and Peer Support Skills" credit course, at one of our local secondary schools.

The "Healing Prayer Service" provides an environment for the bereaved to pray in a most comforting way. Special services will be on February 9<sup>th</sup>, April 6<sup>th</sup>, and June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2003 in Byron United Church at the corner of Byron Base Line Rd. and Boler Rd., London, Ontario. For more information, please contact Helen Nash at [ghnash@sympatico.ca](mailto:ghnash@sympatico.ca)

A special thank you to Clayton Healey from London for his work in N2 region for the past two years. Nancy Gingerich, the day program coordinator for Hospice of Waterloo

Region, is the new N2 regional representative. She is an energetic person with a creative vision for BON. You may contact her at her home phone number: 519.634.9870 or her work number 519.743.4114 or through e-mail: [nancy\\_gingerich@yahoo.ca](mailto:nancy_gingerich@yahoo.ca).

"Life After Loss Centre", a new community outreach organization in Waterloo, offers grief support and education. With Marilyn Hollinger, executive director, we are facilitating groups for people experiencing loss or multiple losses such as pet loss, loss of mental health, bereavement, loss of physical health, and aging. An additional focus is young adults in the university community who are often feeling loss with little support to help them heal. For program information call 519.747.3439 or e-mail to [lifafterloss@sympatico.ca](mailto:lifafterloss@sympatico.ca).

"A Focus on Bereavement" is a networking community which meets every two months to keep in touch with the current bereavement events in the Waterloo Region. This group has representatives from the hospitals, churches, community centres, private counselling practices, hospice, school crisis teams, and bereavement counselling. We are fortunate to use the Ratz-Bechtel Family Centre for these early breakfast meetings but then delicious food attracts people at any hour!

As you can read, Waterloo Region cooperatively tries to meet the needs of people who are grieving. Please keep Nancy Gingerich informed of your happenings for the N2 region so she can report them with enthusiasm.

*Marilyn Hollinger*

## **N2 Region: The VON Bereavement Support Program**

There are essentially 3 components of the VON bereavement support program, all stemming from the Palliative Care Volunteer Program. First, the coordinator visits the client and family when life threatening or terminal illness is diagnosed and offers support in the form of one-on-one visits, or support with a trained

volunteer. After death occurs, VON has options for bereavement support. These include a support group for widows and widowers, follow-up with the palliative care volunteer, and one-on-one visits by the coordinator. This service is not professional counseling but rather it provides opportunities for clients to share their feelings of loss and grief. VON has a library of bereavement resources for all age groups including books, movies and audiovideo tapes. In addition, VON keeps an updated list of providers of bereavement counseling for Middlesex County.

Clients who are dealing with loss may also have needs in other areas where VON programs can be helpful. The following services are available: transportation, meal services, nursing services, adult day program, home maintenance referral, Alzheimer support services, and wellness exercise clinics. Often these services overlap, as needs vary with life changes.

Speaking personally, I find BON to be an excellent resource for up-to-date information about available programs and services that may be helpful to the people I work with locally. I believe that through networking we can present a unified voice in seeking improved resources, as well as learn from each other how to enhance our own individual programs.

*Holly Watson, Coordinator, Client Services,  
VON Palliative Care Volunteer Program, Strathroy, ON  
519-245-3177 or 1-800-265-7058;  
e-mail: [hwatson@von-me.on.ca](mailto:hwatson@von-me.on.ca)*

## **N3 Region**

Great news! We have a new regional rep. for N3 Region. A warm welcome to Doug Brown who can be reached at 46 Bell Drive, Lurgan Beach, R.R. #1, Kincardine, ON N2Z 2X3, phone: 519-395-0757, E-mail: [d.b.brown@hurontel.on.ca](mailto:d.b.brown@hurontel.on.ca).

# THE DEATH AWARENESS MOVEMENT: 35 YEARS LATER

John D. Morgan, Ph.D.  
Coordinator, King's College Centre for  
Education about Death and  
Bereavement

While most people would consider the 1969 publication of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' *On Death and Dying* (New York, Macmillan) as the start of the modern death awareness movement, her work was pre-dated by many years by Herman Feifel's panel on "Death and Behaviour" at the 1956 meeting of the American Psychological Association. Saint Christopher's Hospice in London, England was founded in 1963, the Connecticut Hospice in 1976, and the Palliative Care Unit of the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal in 1973.

I began teaching about death and bereavement in 1968 at Loyola College (now Concordia University) in Montreal. For me, it was an academic exercise; a new way to introduce students to, and interest them in, basic ideas about what it is to be human. When I came to King's College in London Ontario in 1975, there was an interest in starting an interdisciplinary course. Since there were a number faculty whose work touched areas of dying and bereavement, an interdisciplinary course on death and bereavement developed quickly. In 1983, we held our first International Conference on Death and Bereavement, a series which continued until its end this year. In 1994, in cooperation with the Faculty of Part Time and Continuing Studies at the University of Western Ontario (now the Western Centre for Continuing Studies), we established a Certificate in Palliative Care and Bereavement. In 2000, the focus of this certificate program was changed to a Certificate in Bereavement and Grief Studies.

As one can see from this very brief history, the movement has been dynamic—changing as knowledge deepened, and as practice became more precise. At first the emphasis was on care of the dying. The hospice programs established in England,

Canada and the United States were a direct response to the fact that the bio-medical model had forgotten the primary principle: dying persons are living persons. The second principle that hospice reminded us of is that living and dying are not medical problems: they are experiences to be lived fully. It is the business of the medical community to be SOME of the facilitators of these experiences. As Herman Feifel often said, dying is too multi-splendored to be left up to doctors and nurses alone. This awareness of the truly human aspect of experience was, until budget cuts intervened, the greatest contribution of the death awareness movement to the entire health care system. Many, almost all, hospital departments became more patient-focussed, and less procedure-focussed as a result of the popularization of hospice principles.

Care of the family as a unit has been a part of hospice since Dame Cecily Saunders established Saint Christopher's Hospice. Bereavement care was a natural outgrowth of hospice philosophy. Colin Murray Parkes, one of the foremost researchers in the field of bereavement, began his work through his consultation practice at St. Christopher's. Dr. Parkes was a colleague of John Bowlby whose attachment theory is the foundation of our modern understanding of grief. As children and as adults we attach to others because they provide us not only with safety but with the sense of meaning that carries us through life's turmoils. Dr. Parkes combined John Bowlby's work with that of the Canadian researcher Hans Selye (fight/flight response to stress), developing his theory that a grief response is stressor-specific as well as person-specific. That is, a grief reaction will depend on one's own personal make-up as well as the particular stresses of the death.

In 1982, J. William Worden published *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health*

*Practitioner* (New York, Springer). The four tasks of the grieving person listed there were quickly adopted by most grief counsellors and therapists. Worden's work became almost as well known as the work of Kübler-Ross. The re-formulation of the fourth "task" listed by Worden, "to withdraw emotional energy and reinvest it in another relationship" (p.15) is a way of indicating important changes in our understanding of grief and mourning. In the second edition of his work (1991), Worden states the fourth task as "to emotionally relocate the deceased and to move on with life" (p.16). There are important differences in the two formulations. First of all, and most importantly, we now accept what grieving people have been telling us, that grief does not end. Grief resolution does not mean decathecting, but rather developing Continuing Bonds (Klass, D., Silverman, P.R. & Nickman, S.L. Washington DC, Taylor and Francis, 1996). Secondly, grief resolution may not mean a new relationship. There are other ways of moving on.

The last 35 years have seen greater understanding of Disenfranchised Grief (Doka, K.A., Lexington, MA, Lexington Books, 1989), the *Treatment of Complicated of Mourning* (Rando, T.A., Champaign, IL, Research Press, 1993), and the relationship between trauma and grief (Kauffman, J., *Loss of the Assumptive World*, Washington, DC.: Taylor and Francis, 1997). One of the most fruitful paradigms has been the development of the two-track model of grief (Stroebe, M.S., Stroebe, W. & Hansson, R.O. (Eds.). *Handbook of Bereavement: Theory, Research and Intervention*. New York: Oxford, 1999).

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People in grief often fear grief resolution since they do NOT want to “get over it.” They do not wish to forget their loved one and the relationship that was so meaningful to them. The two-track model of grief separates the relationship that the grieving person has to the deceased from the relationship that the grieving person has to daily life and responsibilities. Recovery in one area does not diminish the loss in the other area. I have found this a very helpful insight to share with grieving persons. We also now have clearer definitions of terms we have always used such as “grief work” and “recovery.”

Another very important aspect of helping grieving persons has been the emphasis on and understanding of telling one’s story. Thomas Attig’s work, *How We Grieve: Relearning the World*, New York, Oxford, 1996; *The Heart of Grief: Death and the Search for Lasting Love*, New York, Oxford, 2000) indicate examples of this method and the success of his books is indicative of the success of the method. The method is shown more theoretically in Robert Neimeyer’s work, *Lessons of Loss: A Guide to Coping*, New York, McGraw Hill, 1998.

We have deepened our understanding of children’s knowledge of, attitudes toward, and behaviours with reference to death. The editor of the BON Newsletter, Eleanor Deveau, has made important contributions in this area, as have other BON members such as David Adams (McMaster University) and Steven Fleming (York University). While many of us still use Maria Nagy’s words to demarcate the adult concept of death by which we evaluate children’s knowledge and attitudes, we now know that while the words have remained the same, the ideas behind them have not. Those who wish in-depth knowledge in this area should look at the three volume set by Adams and Deveau, *Beyond the Innocence of Childhood*, Amityville, NY, Baywood, 1995.

We have learned to care for the physical and psychosocial needs of the dying and bereaved over the last thirty years. Today, as people and as professionals, we are ready to look at the cultural aspects of dying and grieving as well as the spiritual quests that define the way we die and grieve. These trends are not new, but they are now getting the emphasis that they

deserve. We die and grieve as we are taught to do by our culture and by our life experiences. Important parts of our culture are our religious traditions and values, but we are also ready to look at the human quest for spiritual meaning that underlies all religious traditions.

We have accomplished much, but our work is not done. There is a greater willingness to talk about dying and grief in public, but we still live in a culture that believes that “it can always be fixed.” Death still seems to be a thief in the night. How often have we heard since September 11, 2001 that our world has changed. Yet, it has not changed. The world has always been dangerous. It is still important to stress that we have no guarantees as to when we might be able to tell others how much they mean to us. Grief in the school and workplace does not get the care that it needs. Our work needs to become more public, political if you will. We need to take our case to the public arena to make sure that dying and grieving persons receive the care that they need and that children receive balanced education about death and grief.



## What is Spiritual?

*Perhaps ultimately, spiritual simply means  
experiencing wholeness and interconnectedness directly,  
a seeing that individuality and the totality are interwoven,  
that nothing is separate or extraneous.*

*If you see this way,  
then everything becomes spiritual.*

*Jon Kabat-Zinn,  
Wherever You Go There You Are:  
Mindfulness Meditation in Every Day Life.  
Hyperion: New York. 1994*