

**The art of grief:  
Creative practices for men counseling**

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**Background**

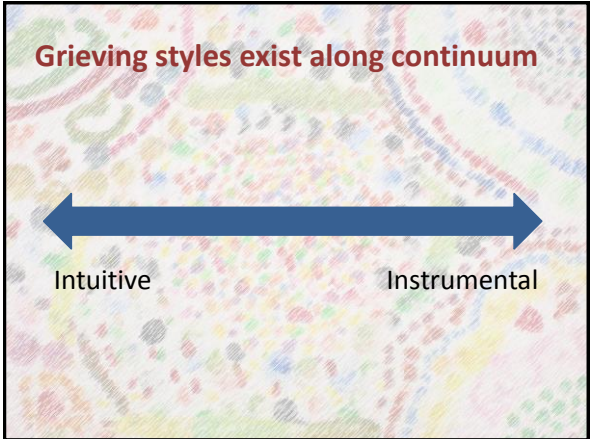
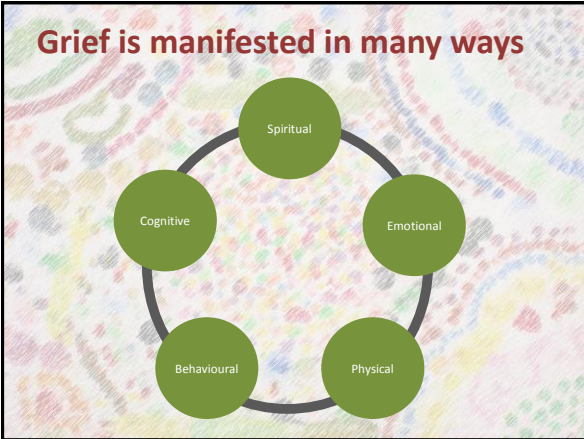
- 31.9% were widowed in older population, the ratio for widowers and widows is 1:4 (Census and Statistics, 2008)
- During bereavement, men are relatively more vulnerable to health risks than women (Margaret S Strobe, 1998)
- The higher death rates in older widowers and higher likelihood of committing suicide in the first months after the death (M. Osterweis, F. Solomon, and M. Green, 1984)

**Grieving Men**

- Traditional masculine gender role norms of men, “big boys don’t cry”
- Inexpressiveness as the epitome of masculinity
- Men focus on guilt and anger
- Men don’t expect to be left alone
- The loss of a mates in man, created the loss of caretaker and social connector

**Grieving Men**

- Many men only true intimate in their lives is their mate
- Value self-reliance, problem-solving, and immersion in work
- Instrumental grievers, grief often expressed cognitively or behaviorally
- Women grieve and men replace
- Widowers have it easier than widows



## Restriction in seeking help

- Restrictive emotionality
- Success, control, power
- Restrictive affectionate behaviour

(O'Neil, 1982)

## Group Approach

- Men find it easier to join the groups because they are able to move out of the role of recipient into that of helper
- Many things can go unspoken because everyone there understands
- Mutual help leads to greater positive change than professional help
- Peer with a palpable sense of the pain-passionate observer
- Journey of grief can be projected through the peer

## The tasks of Grief

- Accepting the reality of loss
- Working through the pain of grief
- Adjusting to a changed environment, externally, internally and spiritually
- Emotionally relocating the deceased and moving on with life

(Worden, 2009)

## Creative connection – the use of expressive art

- Expressive art therapy uses various arts- movement, drawing, painting, sculpting, music, writing, sound, and improvisation-in a supportive setting to facilitate growth and healing.
- It express inner feelings by creating outer forms.
- The arts for self-healing purposes, it is not concerned about the beauty of visual art, the grammar and writing style or harmonic flow of the songs.

## Creative connection – the use of expressive art



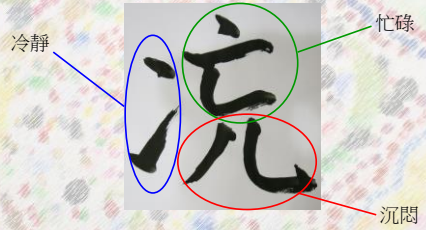
## Creative connection – the use of expressive art



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## Creative connection – the use of expressive art



## Sharing

- Exploring the different media
- Providing the safe and supportive environment
- Respect for creation
- Healing in creative process
- Respect the progress of each others

## Reference

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THANKS