

Bereavement care

Psychology



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Bereavement care What impact do historical, sociological and legal events have on our understanding of grief and loss?

Historical Events

Most people who have previous encounter (numerous or multiple encounter) with death for example having close friends and family members dying have a bit of experience and even tolerance towards death. These people are able to grieve more comfortably and handle bereavement in an accepting manner without much denial. For those who have not had such previous history or death happened when they were really young and could not understand grief for them becomes “ heavy” and unbearable as they go through the denial period for long. With the 9/11 bombing however, most people came to terms with being bereaved and grief after a massive number of people lost their lives.

Religion comes in handy as one of the historical events relating to grief and death in general. Religion teaches people to have faith and cope with death in the same way Christ did. With these prior grief management techniques, people become open-minded as they see death not as a bad thing but just a passage to a better afterlife. Religion also provides a psychological approach of dealing with emotions that arise with death such as denial and disbelief (Leming and George 23).

Sociological Events

On a sociological front, issues surrounding death have been shielded and shielded away from children from when they are at a tender age as they tend to create disequilibrium as suggested by the conflict theory (Leming and George 29). Children are “ protected” or “ denied” the knowledge about death and they grow up with the information that death and the issues

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surrounding death including bereavement should not be discussed openly. This shielding of death from the children is what has made the society so afraid of discussing matters surrounding even immortality in general as this is considered a “taboo” of some sort or just generally in layman’s language ‘weird.’

With most deaths occurring in institutions and fewer on the home (unless for those living in farm areas), it is not a wonder therefore that people do not have first-hand information of how to handle death and bereavement. The situation is however somehow different for those who have been raised on farms. This is so because issues of birth and death are an everyday affair with the farm animals delivering and dying every now and then (Leming and George 4). These people are therefore at a more comfortable position to not only handle death but also bereavement and grief issues in general than those living in cities.

Legal Events

The legal events include the ethical issues surrounding death, dying, grief and bereavement. These legal issues surrounding death were not previously rampant like they are today. Currently, the media has been reflecting on the legal aspects of death including really following the cause of the death (like medical error) and then taking legal actions if it was not “natural” (Leming and George 6). The other legal event about death includes handling of the body where permits are sought before burying the death (even in one’s own land) and looking for a death certificate to verify the death of that individual (Iyer, Barbara and Mary 880). All these legal actions add up on the grief of the bereaved as many feel that they are being forced to come to terms with the death and relive the painful moment all over again. Having a social

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support system of for example friends and accepting death as suggested by the sociological approach will make the legal events surrounding death less cumbersome and painful (Leming and George 26).

Work Cited

Iyer, Patricia, Barbara, Levin and Mary, Shea. Medical legal aspects of medical records. Arizona: Lawyers & Judges Publishing Company, 2006. Print.

Leming, Michael and George, Dickinson. Understanding Dying, Death, & Bereavement. New York: Cengage Learning, 2010. Print.