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Talking With Bereaved People

An Approach for Structured and Sensitive Communication

Dodie Graves

September 2009 208pp ISBN: 9781843109884 pb £17.99

'An excellent book which prompts development of existing knowledge whilst encouraging and inspiring new volunteers in their conversations with bereaved people.'

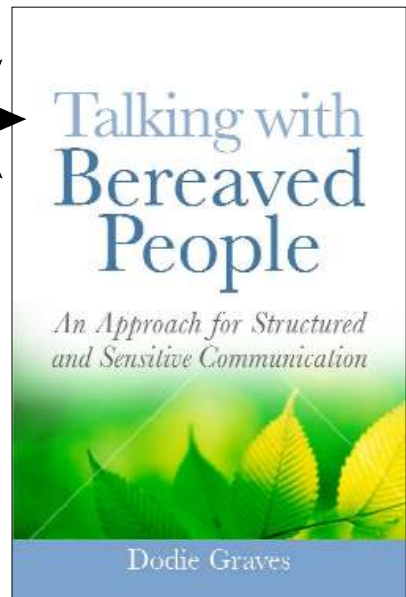
- Jane Murray, Bereavement Co-ordinator, Marie Curie Hospice, Solihull, Birmingham

It can be hard to know what to talk about with a bereaved person over a period of time once you have offered your condolences. This book shows how, by using good active listening skills, empathic exploration and a willingness to talk about the hard issues, you can embark on a process of sensitive conversation that helps the bereaved person to come to terms with their grief.

Dodie Graves outlines a practical framework of six elements for conversing with bereaved people in a structured but flexible way that avoids prescriptive instructions. The elements include talking about the story of the deceased, their relationship with the person, celebrating their life, discussing their legacy, strategies for coping and thinking about the journey undertaken. She shows how to use the elements in conversations with individuals and groups, and for each element suggests creative activities and open questions that can be used, provides anecdotes and case vignettes, and gives a brief summary of the theory pertinent to each stage of the conversation.

Talking with Bereaved People is an approachable tool for anyone working with bereaved people, including counsellors, voluntary bereavement agencies, church pastoral teams, hospice and hospital staff, trainers and social workers.

Dodie Graves has over 15 years' experience as a counsellor. She is currently a bereavement service co-ordinator for a hospice in the West Midlands, recruiting, training and supervising a team of voluntary bereavement visitors in active listening skills and bereavement issues.



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