

GRIEF & BEREAVEMENT

Holding the Sun (Video 1570) 1999: 40 min

Audience: adult

Synopsis: This is a profile of one Canadian family's failed attempts over a two-year period to get appropriate treatment for their son. The story took a tragic turn when Aaron Millar killed his mother. The grief of the surviving Millar family forms the background as Christine, Aaron's sister, narrates her family's story through her mother's letters. Ruth Millar stated her profound helplessness with her son's illness and her frustration with a health care system that failed them both.

How I Coped when Mommy Died (Video 2360) 2000; 26 min

Audience: adult; youth; family

Synopsis: Created by 13-year-old Brett Hardy Blake, after losing his mother to breast cancer when he was ten, this film presents his story in a moving and engaging way. Original music, animated video sequences, photographs and artwork illustrate his experiences, thoughts, and feelings, while his narrative takes the viewer on a personal journey through several years of his life. Brett talks about his feelings, from his fears during his mother's illness to his feeling of numbness after her death. The video illustrates a grief program for children who have lost parents. The principle is that with support, individuals can survive and grow through the most tragic of circumstances.

Isn't She Lovely (Video 1582) 2003; 23 min

Audience: adult; family

Synopsis: When the filmmaker of this documentary was twelve, Lynn, her mother, began showing signs of mental illness. Kerry remembers the usual visits, to model new outfits and make dinners and cookies together. Then her mother stopped answering the phone. This personal documentary is an attempt to understand a childhood profoundly affected by a parent's severe mental illness. Refusing any kind of talk therapy and rarely staying on medication, Lynn was able to use her knowledge of the mental health system to avoid long-term institutionalization. The filmmaker struggles to reach the person behind the shifting diagnoses, but ultimately has to accept that she "can't fix it." This is less a film about Lynn's mental illness than it is about the resilience that have enabled Kerry and her brother Rob to respond creatively despite their feelings of loss and abandonment.

Kuper Island: Return to the Healing Circle (Video 1308) 1997; 45 min

Audience: health professionals; recovery programs; residential school survivors

Synopsis: Dubbed "Alcatraz" by its residents, the former Kuper Island Residential School left a mark on generations of the Coast Salish community. For almost a century, children were sent to this secluded island school off the coast of British Columbia. There, many were sexually abused, beaten and degraded. Denied their language, their culture and contact with their families, the children suffered emotional scars that many carried into adulthood. This video was filmed 20 years after the school closed, when a group of former residents returned to Kuper Island to begin to heal the wounds inflicted there. The now-deserted buildings serve as the backdrop for many poignant recollections. Central to recovery is the healing circle, where survivors share their experiences, their fears and their hopes. Says one such survivor: "healing means coming face-to-face with the whole residential experience." This insightful video gives viewers a powerful glimpse of that experience.

Life Passage in the Face of Death

Audience: counselling professionals; post-secondary students

Note: CAMH and Institutional loans only

Each video has an accompanying workbook.

• **Brief Psychotherapy** (Video 1644.1) 84 min

Synopsis: This video presents the process of a brief psychotherapy with a patient who seeks help in coping with the care and anticipated loss of her terminally ill husband. Documented here is an array of therapeutic interventions and their impact in three sessions. A follow-up session is included, after her husband's death. Divided into two main parts: covering the psychotherapy sessions with the patient interwoven with instructive comments and insights, discussion and demonstration of the therapeutic engagement. Then focus shifts to the experience of grief and change in the patient's life after her husband's death.

• **Psychological Engagement of the Physically Ill Patient** (Video 1644.2)

Synopsis: After an introduction by author Milton Viederman, following segments illustrate the development of specific psychodynamic interventions with the patient. Highlights the technique of active psychotherapeutic engagement, focusing on the narrative structure of the patient's life as a context that gives meaning to the current situation: how present experience relates to emotional responses in early life. The therapist's interactions with the patient from initial consultation through to, often dramatic, revelations along the way are illustrated.

Remembering Tom (Video 2269) 1992; 24 min

Audience: general adult; families

Synopsis: Tom committed suicide when he was eighteen. He had been using illicit drugs and lived on the street, but came home and seemed to turn his life around. In this program his parents, brother and sister, talk about how they began to cope and live with the fact of his death. The variety of feelings, denial, anger, simply dealing with the reality of the event. His sister, Rachel, reveals her own suicidal thoughts in the months after Tom's death. What we see is a resilient family dealing with bereavement and in a way presents a model for others, while giving due regard to the grief process.

Short Term Group Psychotherapy for Loss Patients (Video 1336) 1992; 55 min

Audience: counselling professionals; post secondary students in professional programs

• CAMH and Institutional loans only

Synopsis: An introduction to short-term psychotherapy, this video is illustrated with alternating therapist consultations and group sessions. There are four therapist consultations and three therapy sessions. Issues presented include theoretical orientation (in this case psychoanalytic), group composition strategies, patient preparation, and termination strategies.

Talking Cure: Case Studies in Psychotherapy, 1999

This series of case studies highlights work done at the Tavistock Clinic in the UK. Founded after the First World War to deal with Shock-Trauma, the Clinic is a major treatment and training center. The following forty-minute therapy sessions offer insight into the healing dialogue.

• **2322.1 When Grief Gives Way to Healing** Ken and Sue Green lost their only son in a traffic accident. Their angry focus on exact details has become a way for them to avoid the reality of the loss. Excerpts from four sessions are shown here as the Greens attempt to confront their true feelings

• **2322.3 Jan: Facing the Feeling of Guilt** For years Jan has been haunted by a traffic accident where another man died. Through therapy session he learns to break down the defensive mechanisms he has developed out of guilt and deal with the reality of the accident.

Tu as crié - Let Me Go (Video 2225) 1998; 97 min

Audience: adult

Synopsis: Cinematographer Anne Claire Poirier's daughter used illicit drugs and worked as a prostitute; she was murdered at the age of 26. This film is an elegy to Yanne, and expression of grief and loss. Poirier's camera takes us through laneways, a morgue, the frozen streets, parks and cemeteries of Montréal. The journey moves forward as if expecting that Yanne will be encountered in some way, by retracing her path some sense can be made of the fatal trajectory of her last day of life. Included within this film are interviews with parents who have lost children to drug use, a female drug user and commentary on the 'war on drugs' mentality that turns users into criminals. Available in French: Déchirée par la pire douleur qu'il soit: le meurtre de sa fille à la

dérive sur les chemins de la drogue et de la prostitution, une femme lutte pour survivre et comprendre. Cette femme, c'est Anne Claire Poirier, cinéaste majeure et réalisatrice engagée de Mourir à tue-tête. Le film qu'elle signe ici est un poème et un cri. Par -delà la mort, elle adresse à sa fille disparue un bouleversant message 'amour. En marchant sur ses traces, elle recompose les derniers instants de sa vie et recueille les saisissants témoignages. Une histoire authentique qui nous concerne tous, un film à voir de toute urgence!

Understanding Grief (Video 1130.7) 35 min

Audience: adults

Synopsis: Aaron is a middle age man who works as a shipper at an industrial plant and has been called into the front office by his supervisor. Because his work performance has been deteriorating, the supervisor has insisted that Aaron seek help through the company employee assistance program. We learn that Aaron is not responding well to his recent divorce. He is initially resistant to dealing with his feelings, but comes to realize, with the help of a counsellor that unresolved grief could lead to many consequences that effect daily life. With several commentaries throughout the dramatic sequences the grief process is outlined as natural, but also something that takes time to get over. A cognitive-behavioural model (RET) of therapy is demonstrated.