

# LYNNE HALAMISH

MH 2019

## Grief, Loss and Death for Professionals

By Lynne Halamish

[lynnehalamish@gmail.com](mailto:lynnehalamish@gmail.com)

2019

### Course Objectives:

1. Providing knowledge and understanding regarding the barriers between ourselves and people mourning for themselves or others.
2. Providing practical tools for overcoming these barriers.
3. Dealing with our own grief, as well as with the grief of those whom we wish to help.
4. Learning skills necessary for accompanying and helping the mourners.
5. Talking and listening about death and grief in a practical way.

The course will take place on Tuesdays between 10am - 1pm.

### Session outline:

I. *November 5th - General course description and content breakdown.*

**Death as a Taboo - identifying our own fears: Body language and communication +**

Ira Byock's parting model (interactive). (interactive exercise: "The Desired Death")

\* **First Paper:** Interviewing a colleague about their first encounter with death as a professional, or about the most significant death on the job.

The paper will include interviewer's feelings upon approaching the subject, a description of the setting throughout the interview (including interruptions), the duration of the interview, questions asked and answered (with an emphasis on both the interviewee's and the interviewer's body language), the interviewer's feelings after the interview and lessons learned.

**Body language and communication +** Ira Byock's parting model (interactive).

II. *November 19th - Two participants will present their papers (5 minutes each)*

**Bereavement (including pre-death grief): Listening Actively** (exercise: "Do Not Listen")

What to say & what not to say.

\***Second Paper:** Interviewing three children under the age of 8 about death.

The interview will include the following questions:

- a) What is death?
- b) What causes death?
- c) Where are the dead?

The paper will include interviewer's feelings upon approaching the subject, a description of the setting throughout the interview (including interruptions), the duration of the interview, questions asked and answered (with an emphasis on both the interviewee's and interviewer's body language), the interviewer's feelings after the interview and lessons learned.

III. *December 3rd, 2018 - Two participants will present their papers (5 minutes each)*

**The Dying Child:** "Meushara"- a film by Yael Mass.

# LYNNE HALAMISH

Song - Lawrence and Halamish, Abigail's song.

What defines a "good death"?

**\*Third Paper:** Writing Advance Directives with your family physician or spouse.

The paper will include interviewer's feelings upon approaching the subject, a description of the setting throughout the interview (including interruptions), the duration of the interview, questions asked and answered (with an emphasis on both the interviewee's and interviewer's body language), the interviewer's feelings after the interview and lessons learned.

**IV. December 17th - Two participants will present their papers (5 minutes each)**

**Death and Disease Through the Eyes of a Child:** Children's books, the function of "truth", grief over a sibling, the influence of a parents' grief on their children.

**\*Fourth Paper:** Legacy - writing a moral will.

**V. December 31st - Two participants will present their papers (5 minutes each)**

**Suicide: A Permanent Solution to a Temporary Problem**

**\*Fifth Paper:** "Breaking Bad News" - interviewing a widow/er.

The interview will include the following questions:

How did you receive the news about your spouse's death or imminent death? Where were you? What were you doing just before receiving the news? What were you wearing? Who broke the news to you? What words did they use? What was the most difficult thing for you then? What is the most difficult thing about widowhood now?

The paper will include interviewer's feelings upon approaching the subject, a description of the setting throughout the interview (including interruptions), the duration of the interview, questions asked and answered (with an emphasis on both the interviewee's and interviewer's body language), the interviewer's feelings after the interview and lessons learned.

**VI. January 14th - Two participants will present their papers (5 minutes each)**

**Special Needs of Grievors who have Experienced a Violence-Related Loss** (Murder, terrorism, kidnapping, car crash, workplace accident, natural disaster, etc).

**Roleplay:** *Breaking the news about a sudden death to the family* (breaking bad news)

**Reading material:** The factors affecting the response to grief and investigation after a critical or traumatic event.

**\*Sixth Paper:** Grief in Your Own Culture.

Interviewing an elderly in your family or community about grief in your cultural background.

The interview will include the following questions:

What are some of the customary things people say to mourners? What are the culturally accepted grieving customs? Special foods, differences between grief over a child and grief over an adult, when and whom can one marry after the death of a spouse? What are the burial customs in this culture? How long is the mourning period?

Write down your personal wishes regarding your own death.

The paper will include interviewer's feelings upon approaching the subject, a description of the setting throughout the interview (including interruptions), the duration of the interview,

# LYNNE HALAMISH

questions asked and answered (with an emphasis on the interviewee's body language), the interviewer's feelings after the interview and lessons learned.

**VII. *January 28th - Two participants will present their papers (5 minutes each)***

**What to Do and Expect in the Final Moments**

**\*Seventh Paper:** The Five Things.

Use the exercise: Ira Byock's "5 Things" with a patient or friend.

The paper will include interviewer's feelings upon approaching the subject, a description of the setting throughout the interview (including interruptions), the duration of the interview, questions asked and answered (with an emphasis on both the interviewee's and the interviewer's body language), the interviewer's feelings after the interview and lessons learned.

*Giving feedback about the course.*

**VIII. *February 11th - Participants will present their papers + feedback***

**Widowhood: Special Issues**

Coping strategies.

Blessings and curses: identifying and choosing last wishes.