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**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Course Number:** SW385R

**Instructor:** Barbara Jones, Ph.D., MSW

**Unique Number:** 64775

**Email:** barbarajones@mail.utexas.edu

**Semester:** Fall 2005

**Phone:** 475-9367

**Meeting Time:** Tuesday 2:30-5:30

**Office Room:** 3.122F

**Meeting Place:** SW 2.122

**Office Hours:** by appointment

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**LOSS AND GRIEF: INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES**

**I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will give students an opportunity to explore and understand their perceptions and beliefs of death and dying and how individual cultural differences influence that experience and prepare them for working with clients on grief and loss.

**II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the cultural factors involved in grief and loss.
2. Identify social work values and ethics involved in grief work.
3. Demonstrate a basic working knowledge of grief reactions experienced by children, adults, and elderly within a cultural context.
4. Demonstrate an increased awareness of their own grief reactions and how this awareness can help them to develop skills and tools in grief work.
5. Demonstrate an ability to manage feelings of personal loss and client needs in a healthy way.

**III. TEACHING METHODS**

This course is designed to include a variety of teaching/learning methodologies to achieve the course objectives. These activities will include readings, writings, discussions, lectures, speakers, videos, in-class group activities, student presentations, self-reflection and community experience.

**IV. READINGS**

**Required Text (at University Co-op)**

Berzoff, J. & P. R. Silverman (Eds.). (2004). Living with Dying: A Comprehensive Resource for End-of-Life Care. Columbia University Press: New York. Referred to as LWD on the syllabus.

**Optional Texts (at University Co-op)**

Irish, D. P., Lundquist, K. F., Nelsen, V. J. (1993). Ethnic Variations in Dying, Death, and Grief. Taylor Francis.

Rando, T. (1993). Treatment of Complicated Mourning. Champaign, Illinois: Research Press

## Required Readings

A course packet of required readings (Jones) will be available for purchase by enrolled students at Speedway Copies at Dobie Mall. (512) 478-3334.

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. The class experience is co-constructed and students are expected to attend class regularly and to participate in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor. Students are expected to **complete the readings prior to class** and should be well prepared to participate in discussions and experiential learning assignments. Failure to attend class and demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade.

Punctuality is an important professional practice. Class will begin promptly at 2:30. Students should make every effort to arrive on time. Late arrivals can disrupt the class process.

Students will be allowed **one unexcused absence**. If a student misses more than the allotted excused absence, the professor reserves the right to lower that student's final grade by one point for each class missed beyond the one allowed. If a student is going to be absent, efforts should be made to contact the professor in advance. Students are responsible for any material missed due to absence.

2. Except in the case of extended emergencies, and then only with the permission of the professor, **late assignments will not be accepted without penalty**. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the agreed upon due date **at the beginning of class**. Assignments turned in after class starts will be considered late.

If accepted, late assignments will be assessed point penalties at the rate of three (3) points each day late. If the due date is a problem, the student should see the professor and negotiate another due date well in advance.

3. If students are concerned about their class performance, the professor is more than willing to work with them to help improve their understanding of the class material of the assignments *prior to the end of the semester*. **Final grades assigned in the course are not negotiable.**
4. The ability to write in a professional manner is very important for social workers, particularly in the medical setting where they are working closely with physicians and other health care professionals. Written work must be typed, edited for grammatical, spelling and typographical errors. Work will be grade based on the American Psychological Association (APA- 5<sup>th</sup> edition) guidelines for references and citations.
5. Student feedback is welcome. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback during office hours, by phone, e-mail or appointment.
6. All students are expected to maintain confidentiality regarding all shared professional and personal information related to agencies, clients or the experiences of other students, as required by Section 1.07 of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.

**Special Accommodations for Students with a Disability**

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. Please notify the professor of any special accommodations that you may need prior to the end of the second week of class.

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty**

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students. (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs>).

**Safety**

As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings an/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practice related to agency and/or community safety. Students should also notify instructors regarding any safety concerns.

**VI. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA**

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Attendance and Participation                | 10%        |
| Loss History Graph/Personal Awareness Paper | 25%        |
| Disaster Relief Group Assignment            | 25%        |
| <u>Final Paper</u>                          | <u>40%</u> |
| TOTAL                                       | 100%       |

**VII. GRADUATE GRADING SCALE**

- 100 - 94 = A
- 93 - 90 = A-
- 89 - 87 = B+
- 86 - 84 = B
- 83 - 80 = B-
- 79 - 77 = C+
- 76 - 74 = C
- 73 - 70 = C-
- 69 - 67 = D+
- 66 - 64 = D
- 63 - 60 = D-
- 59 and below = F

**Tentative Class Schedule** (subject to change due to the need to reschedule guest speakers):

## **VII. COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **September 6 Topics:**

Introduction to the Course  
Personal Awareness  
Defining Loss

### **Readings:**

Rando (1993) Chapter 1 and 2: Introduction and definitions, myths and realities of loss.  
Irish (1993) Chapter 1: Cross cultural variation in the experience, expression and understanding of grief.: Chapters 2 and 3: Personal reflections  
Worden (1991) Chapter 8: The counselor's own grief. In *Grief counseling and grief therapy* (Subsequently referred to as GCGT). NY: Springer.  
Browning, D. (2004) Fragments of love: Explorations in the ethnography of suffering and professional caregiving. *Living with Dying (LWD)*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.

### **September 13 \*\*\*\*\*Theory/loss history paper due\*\*\*\*\***

### **Topics:**

Theoretical Perspectives/ Theories of Grief and Loss  
Frameworks for Coping with Loss / Practice Models  
Factors Influencing Reactions to Loss

### **Readings:**

Rando (1993): Chapters 3, 4, 5: Factors influencing grief and mourning; Theories of complicated mourning; Complicated outcomes of loss.  
Worden, J.W. (1991). Chapter 1 in GCGT: Attachment, loss and tasks of mourning.  
Doka, K. (2002). Chapter 1 in *Disenfranchised grief: New directions, challenges, and strategies for practice*: Introduction.  
Neimeyer, R. A. (2002). Chapter 1 in *Meaning Reconstruction and the Experience of Loss*, 2nd Ed. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association

### **September 20 *Special Event – His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the Frank Erwin Center 4 PM (Requires obtaining tickets on September 6 –see <http://dalailama.union.utexas.edu/>)***

### **Readings:**

Jacobs, C. (2004). Spirituality and end-of-life care practice for social workers. (pp. 188-205) In *LWD*.  
Dane, B. (2004). Integrating spirituality and religion. (pp. 424-437). In *LWD*.

### **September 27 Topics:**

Spirituality, Loss, Transformation and Hope continued (Shirley Haulotte )  
Cultural Issues in grief and loss

**Readings:**

- Del Rio, N. (2004). A framework for multicultural end-of-life care: Enhancing social work practice. (439-461), In *LWD*.
- Barrett, R. K. (1998). Sociocultural considerations for Working with Blacks Experiencing Loss and Grief (pp. 83-96). In K. Doka & J. Davidson (Eds.), *Living with grief: Who we are, how we grieve*. (LWG)
- DeSpelder, L. A. (1998). Developing cultural competency (pp. 97-106) In LWG.
- Murphy, P.A. & Price, D.M. (1998). Dying and grieving in the inner city (pp. 114-120). In LWG.
- Thompson, B. & Colon, Y. (2004). Lesbians and gay men at the end of their lives: Psychosocial concerns. (p. 482-498). In *LWD*.

**October 4**

**Topics:**

Assessment of Situations Involving Sudden and Traumatic Loss  
Coping with Public Tragedy  
Normal vs. Pathological Grief

**Readings:**

- Rando, T. (1993). Chapter 6 and the Appendix: Clinical Assessment of Grief and Mourning; Grief and Mourning Status Interview and Inventory (GAMSII).
- Weissman, S. (1993). Sudden death in the emergency room: Helping families cope. *Illness, Crises & Loss*, 3 (4). 41-47.
- Osmond, K. (1993). The value of viewing in grief work reconciliation: A psychotherapist's perspective. *The Forum Newsletter*. Association for Death Education and Counseling. November/December 1993.
- Thompson, D. and Holland, E. (2003). Meaning making in the wake of public tragedy. In *Living with grief: Coping with public tragedy*. ( M. Lattanzi-Licht and K.Doka, Eds.) Hospice Foundation of America.
- Armour, M. (2002). Meaning making in the aftermath of homicide. *Death Studies*, 27, pp.519-540.
- Aronson, L. (2004). Social Work Consultation to mental health workers serving children and families affected by disasters. (pp. 664-674). In *LWD*.

**October 11**

**Topics:**

Terminal and Chronic Illness; Hospice; End of Life Decisions  
Guest Speakers

**Readings:**

- Wesley, C.A. (1996). Social work and end-of-life decisions: Self determination and the common good. *Health and Social Work*. 21 (2) 115-121.
- Bern-Klug, M., Forbes, S. & Gessert, C. (2001). The need to revise assumptions about the end of life: Implications for social work practice. *Health & Social Work*, 26(1), 38-48.
- Haushalter, L. S. (1997) Adult Oncology: Helping a terminally ill woman to plan and cope. In Kerson, *Social work in health settings Practice in context*
- Csikai, E.L. (2004) Social workers' participation in the resolution of ethical dilemmas in hospice care. *Health and Social Work*, 29(1), 67-76.
- Enders, S. (2004). End-of-life care in the prison system: Implications for social work. (pp.609-627). In *LWD*.

Csikai, E. (2004). Advanced directives and assisted suicide: Policy implications for social work practice. (pp. 761-777). In *LWD*.  
Levine, A. & Karger, W. (2004). The trajectory of illness. (pp. 273-296). In *LWD*.

**October 18**

**Topics:**

Working with children and adolescents facing grief and loss/  
Pediatric palliative care

**Readings for October 18 and 25**

Boyd Webb, N. (2002): Chapter 1 and 2 in *Helping bereaved children: A handbook for practitioners*. New York: The Guilford Press.  
Cincotta, N. (2004). The end of life at the beginning of life: Working with young children and their families. In *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.  
Goldman, L. (2003). Talking to children about terrorism. . In *Living with grief: Coping with public tragedy*. (M. Lattanzi-Licht and K.Doka, Eds.) Hospice Foundation of America.  
Bouton, B. (2003) Schools, children and public tragedy. . In *Living with grief: Coping with public tragedy*. (M. Lattanzi-Licht and K.Doka, Eds.) Hospice Foundation of America.

**October 25**

**Topics:**

Children and Grief, continued  
Children's grief groups- Guest Speaker  
**Group presentation**

**Readings:**

Continue readings from October 18

**November 1**

**Topics:**

**Group presentations**  
Interventions with Individuals and Families  
Ritual as an Intervention

**Readings:**

Doka, K. (2002). Chapter 9 in *Disenfranchised grief: New directions, challenges, and strategies for practice: The role of ritual in the treatment of disenfranchised grief*. Champaign, Illinois: Research Press  
Imber-Black, E. (1991). Rituals and the healing process (pp.207-223). In F. Walsh & M. McGoldrick (Eds.) *Living Beyond Loss: Death in the Family*. NY: W.W. Norton & Co.

**November 8**

**Group presentations**  
**No new readings**

**November 15**

**Topics:**

Funerals and Aftercare through Funeral Homes  
Ritual, continued

**Note: Class is scheduled to meet at 6:00 PM at  
Cook-Walden Funeral Home - 6100 North Lamar Boulevard, 454-5611**

**Readings:**

- Bolton, C. & Camp, D. (1987). Funeral Rituals and the Facilitation of Grief Work. *Omega*, *17* (4). 343-352.
- Zulli, A.P. (1998). Healing Rituals: Powerful and Empowering. (pp. 261-275). *In Living With Grief: Who We Are, How We Grieve.*

**November 22 Topics:**

Social Support/ Support Groups

**Readings**

- Streeter, C.I., & Franklin, C. (1992). Defining and measuring social support: Guidelines for social work practitioners. *Research on Social Work Practice*, *2* (1), 81-98.
- Brabant, S., Forsyth, C., & McFarlain, G. (1995). Life after the death of a child: Initial and long term support from others. *Omega*, *31* (91), 67-85.
- Sutton, A.L. & Liechty, D. (2004). Clinical practice with groups in end-of-life care. (pp. 508-533). *In LWD.*
- Colon, Y. (2004). Technology-based groups and end-of-life social work practice. (pp. 534-547). *In LWD.*

**November 29 \*\*\*\* Final Paper Due\*\*\*\***

**Topics:**

HIV/AIDS  
Termination as a Loss

**Readings:**

- Nord, D. (1997). Chapter 5: Grieving Multiple Losses. *In Multiple AIDS-Related Loss: A Handbook for Understanding and Surviving a Perpetual Fall.* Washington, D.C.: Taylor & Francis.
- Richards, T. A. (2002) Spiritual resources following a partner's death from AIDS. *In Meaning Reconstruction and the Experience of Loss*, 2nd Ed. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Itin, C, McFeaters, S. and Taylor-Brown, S (2004). The Family Unity program for HIV-affected families: Creating a family-centered and community-building context for interventions. *In Living with Dying.* Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- Mitchell, C.G. & Linsk, N. L. (2004). A Multidimensional conceptual framework for understanding HIV/AIDS as a chronic long-term illness. *Social Work*, *49* (3). 469-477.
- Owens, S. (2003). African American women living with HIV/AIDS: Families as sources of support and of stress. *Social Work*, *48* (2). 163-171.

**December 6**

**Topics:**

Transcendence, Transformation and Hope  
Care of Self / Personal Awareness Revisited  
Course Wrap Up

**Readings:**

- Calhoun, L.G. & Tedeschi, R.G. (2002) Posttraumatic growth: The lessons of loss. In *Meaning Reconstruction and the Experience of Loss*, Neimeyer, R (Ed.) 2nd Ed. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association
- Figley, C. (1995). Compassion Fatigue as Secondary Stress Disorder: An Overview (pp. 1-20). In C. Figley (Ed.), *Compassion Fatigue: Coping with Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder in Those Who Treat the Traumatized*. NY: Brunner/ Mazel.
- Yassen, J. (1995). Preventing Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder (pp. 178-208). ). In C. Figley (Ed.), *Compassion Fatigue: Coping with Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder in Those Who Treat the Traumatized*. NY: Brunner/ Mazel.
- Schacter, S. (2003). 9/11: A Grief Therapists Journal *Living With Grief: Coping with Public Tragedy.* ( M. Lattanzi-Licht and K.Doka, Eds.) Hospice Foundation of America.
- Renzenbrink, I. (2004). Relentless self care. In *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- Clark, E. J. (2004). The future of social work in end-of-life care: A call to action. (pp. 838-847). In *LWD*.

## Required Readings

- Armour, M. (2002). Meaning making in the aftermath of homicide. *Death Studies*, 27, pp.519-540.
- Barrett, R. K. (1998). Sociocultural considerations for Working with Blacks Experiencing Loss and Grief. In K. Doka & J. Davidson (Eds.), *Living with grief: Who we are, how we grieve*. Hospice Foundation of America.
- Bern-Klug, M., Forbes, S. & Gessert, C. (2001). The need to revise assumptions about the end of life: Implications for social work practice. *Health & Social Work*, 26(1), 38-48.
- Bolton, C. & Camp, D. (1987). Funeral Rituals and the Facilitation of Grief Work. *Omega*, 17 (4). 343-352.
- Bouton, B. (2003) Schools, children and public tragedy. . In *Living with grief: Coping with public tragedy*. (M. Lattanzi-Licht and K.Doka, Eds.) Hospice Foundation of America.
- Boyd Webb, N. (2002): Chapter 1 and 2 in *Helping bereaved children: A handbook for practitioners*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Berzoff, J. & Silverman, P. (2004). *Living with dying: A handbook for end-of-life care practitioners*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Brabant, S., Forsyth, C., & McFarlain, G. (1995). Life after the death of a child: Initial and long term support from others. *Omega*, 31 (1), 67-85.
- Browning, D. (2004) Fragments of love: Explorations in the ethnography of suffering and professional caregiving. *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- Calhoun, L.G. & Tedeschi, R.G. (2002) Posttraumatic growth: The lessons of loss. In *Meaning Reconstruction and the Experience of Loss*, Neimeyer, R (Ed.) 2nd Ed. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association
- Cincotta, N. (2004). The end of life at the beginning of life: Working with young children and their families. In *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- Csikai, E.L. (2004) Social workers' participation in the resolution of ethical dilemmas in hospice care. *Health and Social Work*, 29(1), 67-76.
- del Rio, N. (2004). A framework for multicultural end-of-life care: Enhancing social work practice. In *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- Dane, B. (2004). Integrating spirituality and religion. In *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- DeSpelder, L. A. (1998). Developing cultural competency (pp. 97-106) In K. Doka & J. Davidson (Eds.), *Living with grief: Who we are, how we grieve*. Hospice Foundation of America.
- Doka, K. (2002). Chapter 1: Introduction and Chapter 9: The role of ritual in the treatment of disenfranchised grief. in *Disenfranchised grief: New directions, challenges, and strategies for practice*: Champaign, Illinois: Research Press
- Figley, C. (1995). Compassion Fatigue as Secondary Stress Disorder: An Overview (pp. 1-20). In C. Figley (Ed.), *Compassion Fatigue: Coping with Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder in Those Who Treat the Traumatized*. NY: Brunner/ Mazel.
- Gamino, L. (2003). Critical incident stress management and other crisis counseling approaches. In *Living with grief: Coping with public tragedy*. (M. Lattanzi-Licht and K.Doka, Eds.) Hospice Foundation of America.
- Goldman, L. (2003). Talking to children about terrorism. . In *Living with grief: Coping with public tragedy*. (M. Lattanzi-Licht and K.Doka, Eds.) Hospice Foundation of America.
- Haushalter, L. S. (1997) Adult Oncology: Helping a terminally ill woman to plan and cope. In Kerson, *Social work in health settings Practice in context*

- Imber-Black, E. (1991). Rituals and the healing process (pp.207-223). In F. Walsh & M. McGoldrick (Eds.) *Living Beyond Loss: Death in the Family*. NY: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Itin, C, McFeaters, S. and Taylor-Brown, S (2004). The Family Unity program for HIV-affected families: Creating a family-centered and community-building context for interventions. In *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- Jacobs, C. (2004). Spirituality and end-of-life care practice for social workers. In *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- Mitchell, C.G. & Linsk, N. L. (2004). A Multidimensional conceptual framework for understanding HIV/AIDS as a chronic long-term illness. *Social Work*, 49 (3). 469-477.
- Murphy, P.A. & Price, D.M. (1998). Dying and grieving in the inner city. In K. Doka & J. Davidson (Eds.), *Living with grief: Who we are, how we grieve*. Hospice Foundation of America.
- Neimeyer, R. A. (2002). Chapter 1 in *Meaning Reconstruction and the Experience of Loss*, 2nd Ed. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association
- Nord, D. (1997). Chapter 5: Grieving Multiple Losses. In *Multiple AIDS-Related Loss: A Handbook for Understanding and Surviving a Perpetual Fall*. Washington, D.C.: Taylor & Francis.
- Osmont, K. (1993). The value of viewing in grief work reconciliation: A psychotherapist's perspective. *The Forum Newsletter*. Association for Death Education and Counseling. November/December 1993
- Owens, S. (2003). African American women living with HIV/AIDS: Families as sources of support and of stress. *Social Work*, 48 (2). 163-171.
- Renzenbrink, I. (2004). Relentless self care. In *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- Richards, T. A. (2002) Spiritual resources following a partner's death from AIDS. In *Meaning Reconstruction and the Experience of Loss*, 2nd Ed. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Schacter, S. (2003). 9/11: A Grief Therapists Journal *Living With Grief: Coping with Public Tragedy*. (M. Lattanzi-Licht and K.Doka, Eds.) Hospice Foundation of America.
- Silverman, P.R. (2004). Helping the bereaved. In *Living with Dying*. Berzoff & Silverman (Eds.) Columbia University Press: New York.
- Streeter, C.I., & Franklin, C. (1992). Defining and measuring social support: Guidelines for social work practitioners. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 2 (1), 81-98.
- Thompson, D. and Holland, E. (2003). Meaning making in the wake of public tragedy. In *Living with grief: Coping with public tragedy*. (M. Lattanzi-Licht and K.Doka, Eds.) Hospice Foundation of America.
- Weissman, S. (1993). Sudden death in the emergency room: Helping families cope. *Illness, Crises & Loss*, 3 (4). 41-47.
- Wesley, C.A. (1996). Social work and end-of-life decisions: Self determination and the common good. *Health and Social Work*. 21 (2) 115-121.
- Wilder, R.E. (1998). Sexual orientation and grief (pp.199-206). In K. Doka & J. Davidson (Eds.), *Living with grief: Who we are, how we grieve*. Hospice Foundation of America.
- Worden (1991) Chapters 1 Attachment, loss and tasks of mourning and Chapter 8: The counselor's own grief. In *Grief counseling and grief therapy*. NY: Springer.
- Yassen, J. (1995). Preventing Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder (pp. 178-208). ). In C. Figley (Ed.), *Compassion Fatigue: Coping with Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder in Those Who Treat the Traumatized*. NY: Brunner/ Mazel.
- Zulli, A.P. (1998). Healing Rituals: Powerful and Empowering. In K. Doka & J. Davidson (Eds.), *Living with grief: Who we are, how we grieve*. Hospice Foundation of America.

Assignment #1  
Loss History / Personal Awareness Assignment

Each of us develops our own unique style of coping with grief and loss. Understanding your attitudes, values, reactions and any remaining grief issues or unfinished business will be an important part of the work that you will do with clients experiencing grief. The goal of this assignment is for you to describe how your own experiences and style of dealing with loss may influence your clinical practice.

**Due Date: September 13, 2005**

Maximum length: 5-6 double-spaced pages (excluding loss history graph). Length should not be a problem if you focus on the questions. Please label each section of the paper with the underlined heading.

**Part I:** Using a Loss History Graph as an Assessment Tool

Considering the broad definition of loss discussed in class, construct a loss history graph which represents the loss events in your life. It can be as simple as this:

Loss at age four                  death of significant person                  divorce  
\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
dates and any other significant information

If there are losses that you choose not to disclose, that is fine. The main goal is to learn to use the tool while thinking about how the losses in your life influence your clinical practice with individuals who are dealing with issues of grief and loss.

If you choose, you may be creative by adding symbols or graphics or anything you like! Use anything that you think will add meaning to this assessment tool. This is not required, but is encouraged.

**Part IIa:** Describe your personal style of dealing with loss

- \*How have you coped with these events?
- \*How have the following influenced your coping style:
  - people around you?
  - your cultural background, ethnicity, religion?
  - your personal values, attitudes, and beliefs?

**Part IIb:** Impact of Personal Experience on Clinical Practice

- \*How do you think that personal loss experiences (or the absence of them) have influenced your comfort level in working with others who are dealing with issues of grief and loss?
- \*How might your experiences have and impact on your work?
  - Do you think your experience will be helpful?
  - Do you think your experiences might hinder your work in some way?

\*How might your own coping style influence the way you work with others?

**Part III:** Potential Challenges or Dilemmas

Based upon your experiences or your personal belief system:

\*Are there any specific issues or situations that might be challenging or difficult for you?

\*Identify any value-oriented or ethical dilemmas related to grief and loss issues that may arise in your work.

**Part IV:** Coping Strategies / Identification of Resources

Identify coping strategies and / or resources that could assist you in dealing with the dilemmas or challenges identified in Part III.

Assignment #2 -Group Assignment  
Hurricane Katrina Disaster Relief and Disenfranchised Loss

**Due date:** TBD

Since the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, I have changed the group assignment to reflect the urgent need to respond to the evacuees and to understand the plight of disaster survivors and their unique grief and loss experiences. The events of the past week have many implications for social justice and social work. The issues of racism, poverty, oppression and power have been receiving national attention. As social workers, we are concerned with these issues daily. Our commitments to social justice and to helping those who are disenfranchised are the essence of our profession. According to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), “the primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty” (NASW, 1999, p.1). I believe that it is our ethical duty as a profession to respond at this moment. The needs of the survivors of Hurricane Katrina are paramount in my mind as we begin this semester and think about the issues of social justice, social work, and grief and loss.

The goals of this assignment are:

- 1) To encourage you to participate in the relief effort in an attempt to alleviate suffering and to assist in helping those who have been displaced.
- 2) To provide an opportunity for you to explore the unique needs of disaster survivors specifically in regard to disenfranchised losses.
- 3) To provide a forum for the class to benefit from the information and knowledge that you have gained.
- 4) To encourage all of us to remember that our social work values require our compassionate response to those who are hurt, marginalized, oppressed, or otherwise disenfranchised.

**Part I:**

Form a group of four students to work collectively on this assignment. Identify a way that you can participate in the relief efforts that are occurring in our community or create a new way to respond. You may decide to organize a food, fund, clothing or toy drive. You may decide to volunteer your time at The Convention Center, The Red Cross, The Capital Area Food Bank or The Salvation Army. You may participate in any of the following tasks: database entry of survivors’ information, providing transportation, making phone calls, reading to children, preparing apartments and homes for tenants, helping in relocation efforts, or any other community needs. You can find many organized efforts to join by looking on the various websites hosted by local newspapers, radio and television stations, the American Red Cross or you may call 211 to find out where you are needed. It does not matter *how* you decide to help, only that you *do* decide to help. Please follow the guidelines and structure of the coordinating entities such as The City of Austin and the American Red Cross. Please do NOT just show up somewhere. You must investigate what are the current community needs and how your group can best serve them. There any number of ways to help and this suggested list is not meant to be exhaustive. You may come up with a whole new way to assist that can be useful. You may be in touch with a group or organization that you can mobilize to be a part of your efforts. You will be required to meet outside of class to complete the assignment and will receive a grade as a group.

Group members will decide how to divide the assignment as well as how to divide responsibilities for the class presentation. Each group will have one hour for their presentation.

**Part II:**

Identify a group of survivors that are particularly disenfranchised such as the elderly, children, people living with HIV/AIDS, those living in poverty, women, racial/ethnic groups, gays and lesbians, the developmentally disabled, those suffering from mental health concerns, those suffering from addiction, etc.

**Part III:**

Research the ways in which the group you have selected might be particularly at risk during a disaster and in the weeks, months and years following. Think about how they are likely to experience disenfranchisement as grievers. Think about both the strengths of the group you are discussing and their potential vulnerabilities. Be prepared to discuss:

- a) Primary/secondary losses
- b) Disenfranchisement and disenfranchised grief
- c) Concurrent losses
- d) Particular vulnerabilities during a crisis
- e) Needs for support
- f) Strengths and capabilities
- g) Issues of social justice
- h) How social workers can help

You should look into the literature on disaster response and the literature on disenfranchised loss to frame your discussion. You may want to reflect on geographic or generational differences and issues of acculturation and social justice. Remember to use cultural humility throughout--recognizing that your age/gender/cultural/ ethnic/ spiritual background will inform your understanding of this group.

**Part IV:** Prepare a presentation for class on both parts of the assignment

- A) Your group's particular community relief efforts including what you did, why, how it helped, how it affected you and what else you might do in the future.
- B) Disenfranchised losses for a particular population.

You are required to hand in a detailed written outline of the information, including references. The outline should have enough information on it to communicate your key points in this presentation. Follow the content outline from the assignment. Bring copies of your outline and handouts to distribute to the class.

Include a list of references or sources of information in APA format.

As always, you are encouraged to be creative with this assignment. Feel free to include current news, photography, artwork, poetry, popular culture, videos, food, visual aids, music or anything that will illustrate your points about your relief efforts and/or the group you are representing. (Obviously, do not take any pictures of individuals who are affected by this disaster due to issues of confidentiality and dignity.)

Final Paper – Option 1  
Grief and Loss Assessment - Case Analysis

**DUE: November 29, 2005**

**GOAL:** To integrate the knowledge and skills gained in this course with work that you are doing in field. Specifically, you will be utilizing your assessment skills to conduct a grief assessment/loss history with a client.

**PROCESS:** Identify a client from your current or previous caseload for whom issues of grief and loss are relevant. When choosing a case, the loss event does not need to be the presenting problem or reason for referral. However, be sure that you select a case for which you already have some details of their loss history or have the ability to gather additional information. Also remember to protect client confidentiality; however, be careful not to change the client's age significantly if you are working with a child. You may want to share a copy of this assignment with your field instructor. This may enhance their ability to help you integrate course material with your field work. Notify me immediately if you have concerns about your ability to complete this assignment due to circumstances at your field placement.

**PRODUCT:** Using the following headings and guidelines, you will create a 15-20 page APA style paper that integrates your learning in this class. Be sure to use critical thinking, cultural humility, and an integration of grief and loss theory to prepare a comprehensive case analysis/loss assessment paper that includes:

**I. Field Agency**

Briefly describe your field agency and your role (s) within the agency (1-2 paragraphs maximum).

**II. Introduction to the Case**

Briefly describe:

- \* Your client system (individual, family or group; first name (s) and age(s); do not go into their history here - save that for section IV!)
- \* How long and in what capacity have you worked with this client?

**III. Assessment Strategies**

A. Describe the strategies and process of conducting a grief assessment/ loss history with this client. Be detailed and include agency strategies for assessment such as intake forms, client history, etc. Also include your personal/professional strategies such as awareness of verbal and nonverbal communication, setting, relationship, etc.

B. Identify a standardized instrument or questionnaire that would assist you in assessing grief and loss issues with this client. Include a copy of the instrument and be sure to cite the source. Describe how this instrument or questionnaire would be useful in your work. Discuss potential barriers to the use of standardized instrument with your client.

**IV. Client Grief Assessment/ Loss History**

Write a detailed grief and bereavement assessment/ loss history in narrative form ( i. e. , a psychosocial assessment that could be used as a freestanding document in a case file) that includes the following:

- \* Identifying information, referral source, and presenting problem;
- \* Brief social history;

\* A comprehensive grief assessment/loss history as described in the readings and class discussions; this should include previous losses, multiple losses, elements of disenfranchisement, reactions to loss, significance and personal meaning of the loss, impact of gender, race, culture, age, etc.

\*An assessment summary, highlighting your conclusions about the case; please insert the heading "summary" before this content in your narrative. Here you should integrate the facts of the case to critically reflect and provide clinical assessment of your client.

#### **V. Evaluation of the Assessment Process**

A. Do you feel that you were able to conduct a comprehensive bereavement assessment / loss history in this case? Describe client - related, worker-related , and situational factors that facilitated and / or inhibited the assessment process.

B. List specific categories or pieces of information that you feel are required for a comprehensive understanding of the case but were not available to you for inclusion in the narrative.

#### **VI. Support for your Conclusions**

Provide support for the assessment conclusions that you have reached in this case. In your discussion, you are required to:

Using course materials and at least 2 references not contained on your syllabus, link facts from your case to relevant information found in the literature.

Identify **grief and loss-related** theoretical / conceptual frameworks that influence your work with this client. How did the framework(s) assist you with the assessment process? How did the framework(s) assist you with your assessment conclusions? In your discussion, link components of the framework(s) with appropriate illustrations/ examples for the case (be specific).

#### **VII. Recommendations for Intervention**

Combine your comprehensive assessment of your client with the awareness of various strategies for helping that you learned in this class and design an initial clinical intervention plan for this client. Support your choice of intervention with information about your client and with readings from the course and the scholarly literature.

Final Paper- Option 2  
Intervention and Evaluation

**DUE:**            **November 29, 2005**

**GOALS:**        To design an intervention strategy and evaluation plan based upon clinical practice literature and theory to assist clients in coping with issues of grief and loss; to become familiar with the range of resources that are available for use with clients experiencing loss.

**PROCESS:**     Identify a grief/loss event of interest. IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE RELATED TO A CLIENT OR CASE FROM FIELD. You will be researching a potential intervention strategy and evaluation plan (hypothetical rather than based on an actual case) for use in your social work practice with clients experiencing this type of illness. You will also be identifying potential informational and supportive resources available to your clients.

**PRODUCT:**    Using the following headings and guidelines, you will create a paper (8-15 pages) using APA format that includes the following:

Section I.        **Loss Event and Rationale**

Identify the loss event that you have selected for this assignment. Use course materials and references from the literature that are not on your syllabus to inform your responses to a-c below:

a) Discuss the importance and relevance of this topic for social work practice. ( How common is it? How can social workers make a difference in the lives of those experiencing this grief or loss event? Why is social work a logical discipline to assist clients experiencing this grief or loss event?) Think about the values and philosophies underlying social work practice as well as social work's mission.

For b & c, please list or "bullet" the responses rather than writing about them in sentence / paragraph format; simply note the references used at the end of each list.

b) Based upon the literature ( and perhaps your personal or professional experience), list potential consequences of the loss and potential problems that might be faced by a person experiencing this loss event.

c) Based upon the literature ( and perhaps your personal or professional experience), list potential service-related and resource- related needs ( consider immediate needs as well as longer term needs).

II.            **Potential Intervention Strategy**

Using the practice literature to guide you ( at least 3-4 references that are not on your syllabus and any relevant references from the syllabus), describe an intervention strategy that could be utilized in session to assist a client dealing with this grief or loss event. Describe the intervention in enough detail that a reader could carry it out. If the reference contains specific instructions for implementing the intervention, include them and any supporting materials ( e. g., copy of an exercise, description of a videotape to be shown, etc. ) in an appendix ( excluded from page limit).

### III. **Treatment Planning / Evaluation Strategies**

Identify potential goals of the intervention that you have proposed in section II - be sure to stay focused on grief and loss-related goals. In other words, identify anticipated outcomes of this intervention. How might you and your client monitor the success of the intervention? Briefly describe strategies that you might use for evaluating progress toward these treatment goals.

Hints for success on Section III:

- Remember the criteria that facilitate communication about goals / outcomes: specific, concrete, measurable, observable, etc. Beware of goals / outcomes that are vague and not clearly defined.
- Be sure to consider a range of strategies for monitoring and evaluating progress - draw on what you learned in practice and research courses.
- Discuss ethical dilemmas that could present themselves in your potential intervention.

### IV. **Rationale for the Intervention Strategy**

Using references from your syllabus and at least 2 references from the scholarly literature that are not on your syllabus, find support for your intervention strategy. How does this intervention relate to the potential problems and / or treatment goals identified in Parts I and III? Be sure to discuss how the proposed intervention and the potential problem (s) / anticipated outcomes (s) of treatment are logically connected.

Identify at least one grief-related theoretical framework or practice model from the course readings that informs and /or supports this intervention strategy and discuss its relevance.

### V. **Factors Influencing Implementation of the Intervention**

Identify and describe factors that could hypothetically influence the implementation and success of this intervention plan.

Consider the following:

- \* client characteristics, resources , and/or circumstances, including issues of diversity, oppression and discrimination;
- \* your personal style, comfort levels, and skills;
- \* constraints created by agency context, policies, or guidelines.

### VI. **Potential Referral Resources**

Consider additional resources that might be useful to a client dealing with this loss event. Create a mini-directory with at least one resource in each of the following categories that might be appropriate as a referral resource to address the loss event you have chosen: 1) a community or national agency or organization - briefly describe the grief or loss-related services they provide; 2) a support group (based in the community or online) ; and 3) educational materials ( books, videotapes, pamphlets, online information). Include enough information about each resource that a client could access the resource if desired ( i.e. , copy of the resource or information about how to obtain it; name of contact person and telephone number, Web site address, etc).