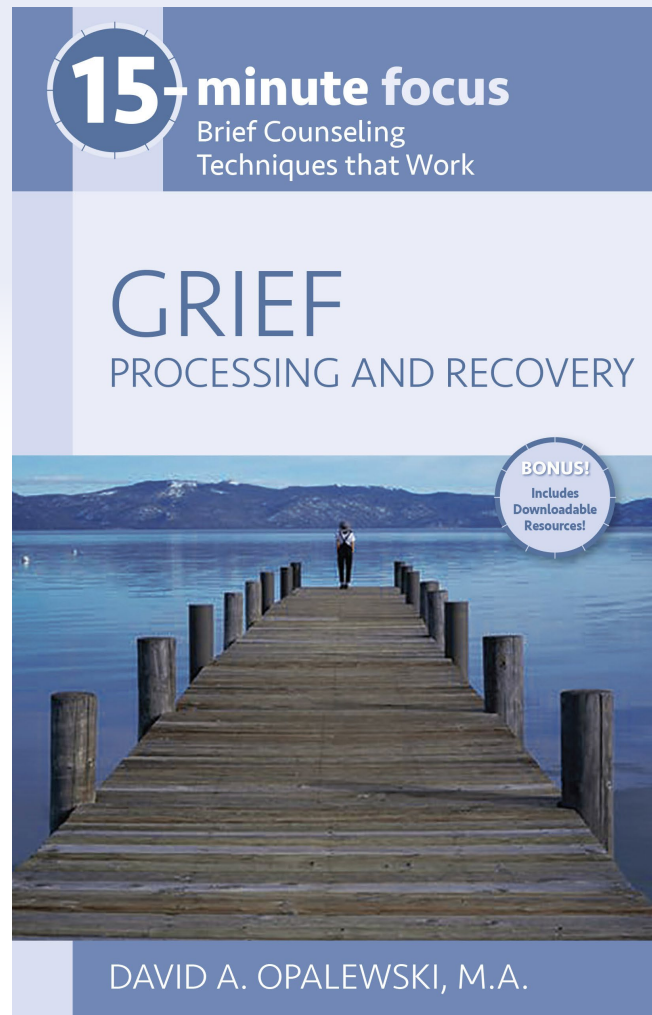


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15-Minute Focus
Grief: Processing and Recovery
Written by: David A. Opalweski
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Grief Myths and Facts

MYTHS	FACTS
The pain will go away if you ignore it.	Acknowledging the pain is best. If we don't hurt, we won't heal.
If we don't cry, we aren't grieving.	Crying isn't the only response to grief.
Time will heal.	It is what we do with time that heals.
Grieving is dysfunctional.	NOT grieving a loss is dysfunctional.
I must protect my child from such pain.	I must help attend to my child's pain.
Grief is a mental illness.	Grief is a normal response to loss.
People go through predictable stages.	Grief is an individual unique journey.
It's okay to "fudge" a few facts to my child.	Honesty is the best policy.
With time, we can get back to "normal."	There now will be a new "normal."
My pain is due to a lack of faith.	People of faith also grieve.
I have to be strong for my child.	It is okay to let the child know you are grieving too.
I don't feel anything. Something is wrong.	Usually, numbness sets in at first.
A child's grief is short in duration.	A child's grief may be long, possibly longer than many adults.
I can help my child get over her grief.	Grief is an experience you never get over, but you can get through.

Normal Versus Abnormal Grief for Children and Adolescents

NORMAL	ABNORMAL
Responds to comfort and support	Rejects comfort and support
Uses play to express grief	Resists play
Connects depressed feelings with death	Doesn't relate feeling to life events
Often open and angry	May not directly express anger
Still experiences moments of joy	Projects a pervasive sense of doom
Caring adults can sense a feeling of chronic sadness and emptiness	Projects hopelessness and emptiness
May express guilt over some aspect	Has overwhelming feelings of guilt about the loss
Self-esteem temporarily impacted	Deep loss of self-esteem

Grief Support Group “Thinking of You” Fact Sheet

YOUR NAME

NAME OF DECEASED

DATE OF DEATH

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent | <input type="checkbox"/> Sibling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent | <input type="checkbox"/> Godparent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close Friend | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt/Uncle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Significant Person | |

DECEASED'S BIRTHDAY

PARENTS' WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

YOUR BIRTHDAY

Days that are especially difficult for you:

Support Group Statement of Beliefs

1. We understand that grief is a unique experience to every individual.
2. We will respect each other's differences and also what is unique to you.
3. We won't set a timetable on how long it should take you or others to heal.
4. We do respect a person's preference to listen without sharing during our meetings.
5. We will make every effort not to interrupt when someone is sharing with the group.
6. We will respect all members' right to confidentiality.
7. We will not use names of fellow participants in discussions outside our group.
8. We believe that the only advice given should be asked for by a participant.
9. The group facilitators believe each person should have equal time to express their feelings.
10. The group facilitators believe that no one or few persons should monopolize group time.
11. The group facilitators are committed to creating an atmosphere of calm, trust, and sharing of feelings in a safe environment.

Grief Support Group

Session One Participant Discussion Format

1. Give a handout to each participant and have them fill out the following information about their deceased loved one:
 1. This person was my _____.
 2. The thing I liked best about my _____ is _____.
 3. The thing I miss most about my _____ is _____.
 4. When I feel sad and lonely without my _____ I can _____.
 5. When I want to talk about my _____ I can _____.
2. Place participants in groups of two.
3. Participants will share with a partner what they wrote in the blanks. Facilitator should then ask for participants to share with the entire group.

I have found this activity very valuable in breaking the ice and opening the door for deeper sharing in the following group sessions.

End of Support Group Evaluation

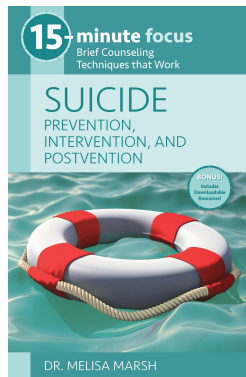
At the end of the last meeting, the group facilitators should hand out a survey to assess how the group's sessions helped the participants in their grief journey and how they may be able to enhance the quality of future groups. The following is a list of items that may prove to be helpful:

1. Participant Name_____ (optional)
2. The support group meetings helped me.
☐ strongly agree
☐ agree
☐ disagree
3. Our support group meetings helped me better understand my grief process.
☐ strongly agree
☐ agree
☐ disagree
4. Our support group meetings helped me understand the unique grief processes of others.
☐ strongly agree
☐ agree
☐ disagree
5. I feel comfortable that the things I shared in the group will remain confidential.
☐ strongly agree
☐ agree
☐ disagree
6. The group facilitators did a good job of running the meetings.
☐ strongly agree
☐ agree
☐ disagree
7. Please share any thoughts you have about making a future grief support group more helpful to the participants:

15-minute focus

Brief Counseling Techniques that Work

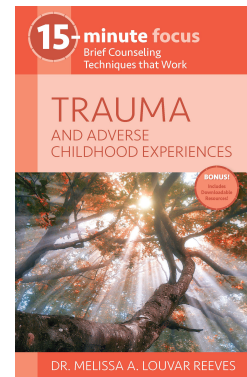
Other titles in this series



SUICIDE **Prevention, Intervention, and Postvention**

Dr. Melisa Marsh

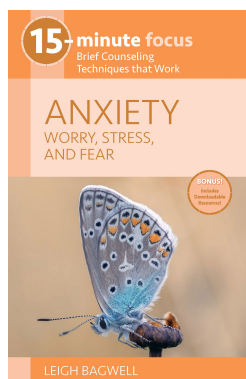
In this book, Marsh unpacks the stigma and data associated with suicide, and provides school counselors, educators, and administrators with ways to implement a suicide-safer community.



TRAUMA **and Adverse Childhood Experiences**

Dr. Melissa A. Louvar Reeves

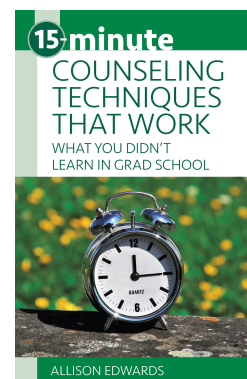
In this book, Reeves explains trauma and the overlap with anxiety, and provides understanding for behaviors associated with trauma and why they occur, along with a variety of strategies for school mental health professionals, educators, and administrators.



ANXIETY **Worry, Stress, and Fear**

Leigh Bagwell

In this book, Bagwell explains the physiological progression from a trigger to a full-blown anxiety attack, and provides a variety of prevention and intervention strategies for school counselors, educators, and administrators.



15-Minute Counseling Techniques that Work

What You Didn't Learn in Grad School

Allison Edwards

Children come to us with a variety of problems, searching for answers. While these solutions may work temporarily, we really never help children until we give them tools—or techniques—to manage thoughts and feelings on their own. The techniques in this book will help children feel empowered to face everyday challenges and equipped to manage their stress and emotions.