



Grief and Loss in an acute Paediatric Intensive Care Unit

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Exceptional People. Exceptional Care.

Setting

- Acute = sudden, short, sharp, intense
- Intensive Care Unit = technologically sophisticated intervention aimed to cure illness and minimise disability
- Paediatric = Somebody's child

What can you offer



My Aim

- Support the grief journey
- Minimise regret
- Make meaning

Time

- This may be one event in a day of your life but for families this is a life event.

Presence

- Sitting with the intensity of the grief

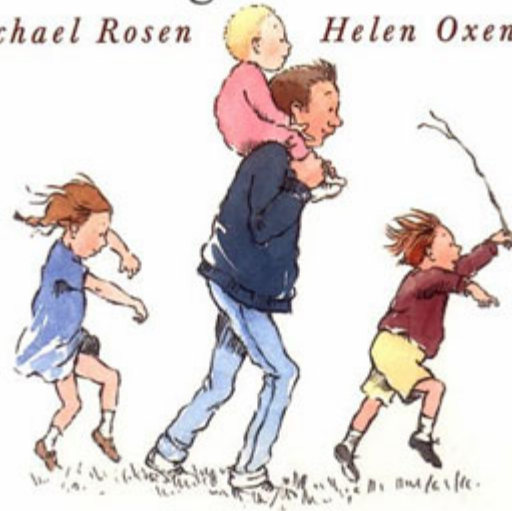
Intensity of the grief

- When attachments are broken or threatened the strong emotional reaction occurs automatically all geared toward retrieving the loss (Bowlby 1969)
- Resist the need to move people past the intensity

My Mantra

- You Can't go over it
- You Can't go under it

We're Going on a Bear Hunt
Michael Rosen Helen Oxenbury



You Have Got to SIT in it...



Empowering the parental role

- Although bereavement may be a choice less event, the grieving experience understood as an active coping process, is permeated by choice (Attig 1996)

Our role is to Guide

- How to parent in a crisis and grief
- How to comfort and support their child
- How to strengthen not sever bonds
- How to minimise regret
- How to start their grief journey

Choices

- Take photos/prints
- Give music
- Provide books
- Use arm chair/double bed
- Mattress on floor
- Bath and dress
- Religious/spiritual ceremony

Human Need

To hold onto and love what they know whilst learning their new reality

Parallel thought



Parallel Thought

- Hoping for the best
- While planning for the worst

Hope is not denial

- Hope is an intense desire in the face of an unwanted reality
- You can not hope for something different if you do not understand the alternative

With Time and Presence:

- Assess and understand
- Empower parenting
- With understanding guide through choices
- reduce fear with knowledge
- Create memories
- Minimise regret

Theories:

- Attachment Bowlby 1969
- Stages of Mourning Kubler-Ross 1969
- Tasks of Grieving Worden (2002)
- Phases of Grief Colin, Murray Parkes
- Continuing Bonds Neimeyer (2010)
- Dual Process Stroebe, Schut(1987)
- Resilience Bonanno (2002)

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