

Participant Information Sheet

An interpretative phenomenological study exploring how a counsellor's lived experience of grief and their cultural background shape the therapeutic relationship when working with bereaved clients.

Invitation

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide if you want to take part, it is important to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully, and feel free to ask if you would like more information, or if there is anything you do not understand. Please also feel free to discuss this with your colleagues if you wish. We would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to.

What is the purpose of this research study?

The purpose of this study is to explore how counsellors' lived experiences of grief, their understanding of grief from a cultural perspective, as well as their education and training around grief, inform their practice and shape the counselling relationship when working with bereaved clients. The study aims to highlight the importance of self-awareness and reflective practice when supporting someone through their grieving process. Findings hope to benefit counselling as a profession, training and education, as well as inform ethical practice for counsellors and supervisors.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part because you have indicated a willingness to do so, and you have met the criteria necessary for this study. The necessary criteria for this research are : a counsellor/therapist with lived experience of working with bereavement in a professional capacity, actively engaging in supervision, and a member of an official organising body (BACP, IAC, BAATN, etc.).

What will happen if I decide to take part?

If you decide to participate, you will be contacted by the principal researcher to confirm your eligibility and participation in this study. You will be asked to read and sign a consent form stipulating your willingness to participate in this study. A time will be agreed that is suitable for both you and the researcher to complete an online video and audio interview via the Microsoft Teams platform. You will then be sent a link to the interview via email approximately 3 days before the interview will take place, as well as a reminder on the day of the interview. During the interview you will be asked a number of pre-determined questions designed to explore your lived experiences of grief, as well as how you work with bereaved clients professionally. The interview will take approximately 1 hour, and it will be recorded and transcribed.

Do I have to take part?

You are under no obligation to take part, and participation in this research study is completely voluntary. However, should you wish to participate, please keep this information sheet for future reference and complete the Informed Consent Form to show that you understand your rights in relation to this research study and you are happy to take part. If you are willing to participate, you are still able to withdraw from the study up to 7 days after the online interview has taken place, you are not required to give a reason, and none of your information will be used.

Are there any risks to taking part?

Whilst there are no significant risks involved in the participation in this study, the sensitive and personal nature of the topic of grief allows for the exploration of potentially uncomfortable memories and experiences. Should anything arise from the participation in this study that causes distress or discomfort, participants are advised to seek guidance and support from their supervisor. Support may also be found at various support organisations (Samaritans, Mind UK, etc.), as well as the participant's own registered professional body (BACP, IAC, BAATN, etc.).

Confidentiality and GDPR

All data will be anonymised and stored on the Bishop Auckland College's secure servers in line with GDPR guidelines. Paper copies of the transcripts will be anonymised and stored securely. All information will be kept for a period no longer than the time deemed necessary to complete the study, after which it will be deleted. There are currently no plans for the research to be published; however, should that change, all participants will be contacted.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation is completely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time up to 7 days after the completion of the research interview, after that any data collected will be used.

Who do I contact?

For any other information concerning the research study, please contact Christopher Clynes (details below).

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