



# **WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT THE MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

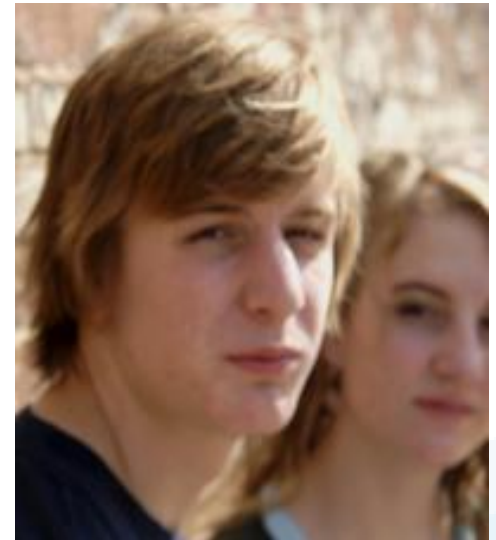
**Julie Stokes OBE**

**Consultant Clinical Psychologist**

April 27<sup>th</sup> 2011

# “VULNERABILITY”

- Pre existing social, behavioural and emotional difficulties?
- Multiple previous losses?
- Looked after children?
- Young offenders?
- Learning differences?



# “VULNERABILITY”

- Age?
- Gender?
- Type of death?
- Nature of relationship?



$$P = C \times A^2$$

**Performance = Capabilities x Attitudes<sup>2</sup>**

Attitude is the biggest driver of your capacity to help a vulnerable child build a resilient narrative



“I might / will say  
the wrong thing”

“This is highly  
specialised work”

“I couldn’t possibly do  
it as well as people  
who really know what  
they are doing”

“It’s not my job to  
meet the emotional  
needs of children”



“They are so  
vulnerable I could  
make them break –  
they might cry”

“They could get really  
upset and that  
wouldn't be  
OK here”

# A<sup>2</sup> – Great Attitude

“I really want to understand the **meaning** of this death for this child, and the key people who will be around to support them”

# A<sup>2</sup>

“I will form a  
thinking partnership  
with those involved to  
understand what the  
child/family really wants to  
happen”

# A<sup>2</sup>

“I will be **curious** and **creative** in my thinking to enable the young person to generate **solutions** that take them to a more productive place”

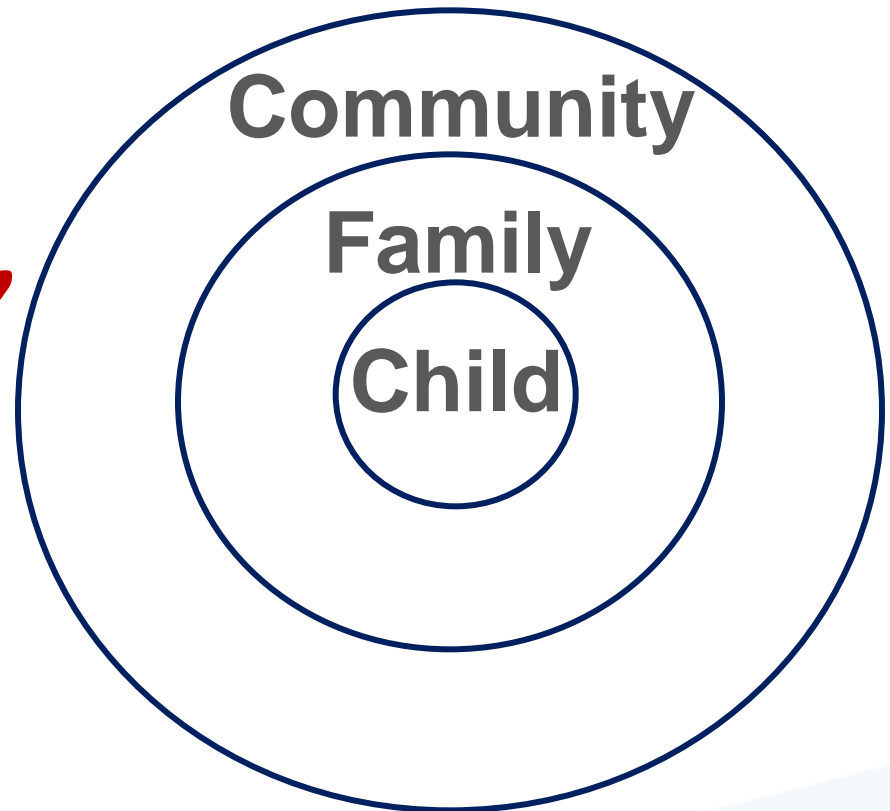
# A<sup>2</sup>

I will work really hard to increase their sense of **belonging**, reduce their isolation and construct the scaffolding of **peer support** so that they can meet others who have been through similar situations”



# ASSESSMENT

**What this  
bereavement  
means to this child,  
in this family,  
at this time,  
within this  
community?**



# Family Assessment

Guidelines for  
Child Bereavement  
Practitioners



**Winston's Wish**  
the charity for bereaved children



The Parenting Fund

**Winston's Wish**  
Help for grieving children and their families

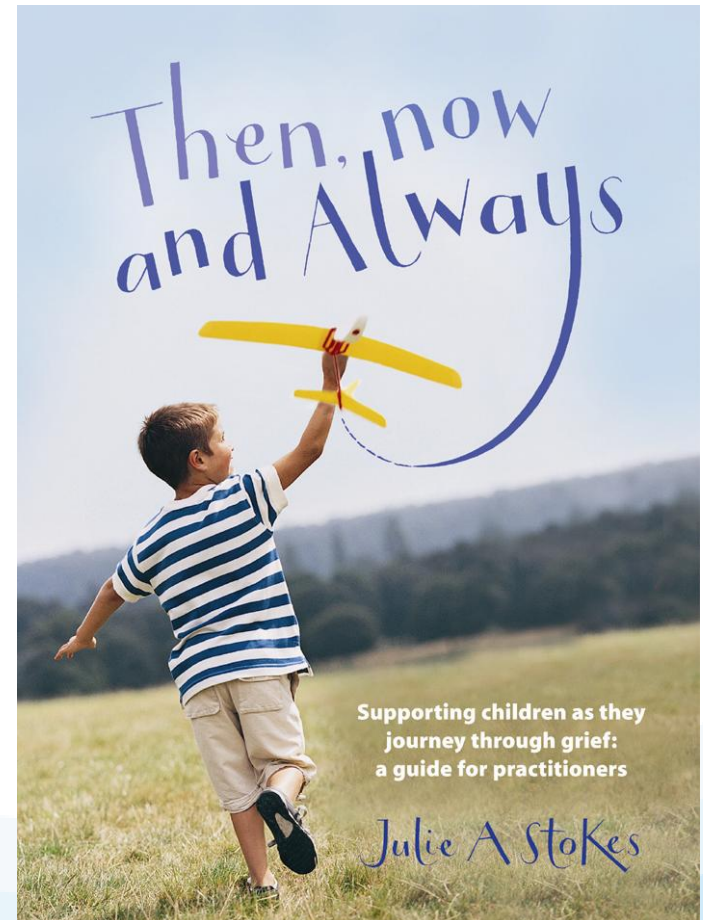


# Happiness is not what we have actually experienced...



## ...it is what we remember

How can we all work together to help children who feel vulnerable to tell their story in a way that promotes resilience?



# SUDDEN, TRAUMATIC DEATHS

“I killed my mother”

Natasha aged 14



A resilient child is not only  
a child in a certain set of  
circumstances,  
but ultimately a child with  
a certain set of  
**ATTITUDES**

Coaching a bereaved child to rehearse a narrative that promotes resilience



# CBT

I regret.....

That we had an  
argument on the day  
you died – stupid, silly  
thing – it doesn't matter,  
what matters is we loved  
each other



When times get tough.....

I will look at the photo of  
you and me on the beach  
in Devon and keep your  
spirit in me. I will  
remember your strength  
and borrow it for a bit to  
help me through



You shine when.....

You dance to  
"I've got a feeling" by the  
Black Eyed Peas.



Always know that.....

I am your only daughter  
and that I will remember  
the good advice you gave  
me and get to do the  
course we talked  
about



# SOLUTION FOCUSSED SCALING

If you had to give a score out of 10 for how comfortable you feel telling your story about (mum/dad) to a friend you really, really trust, what would it be?

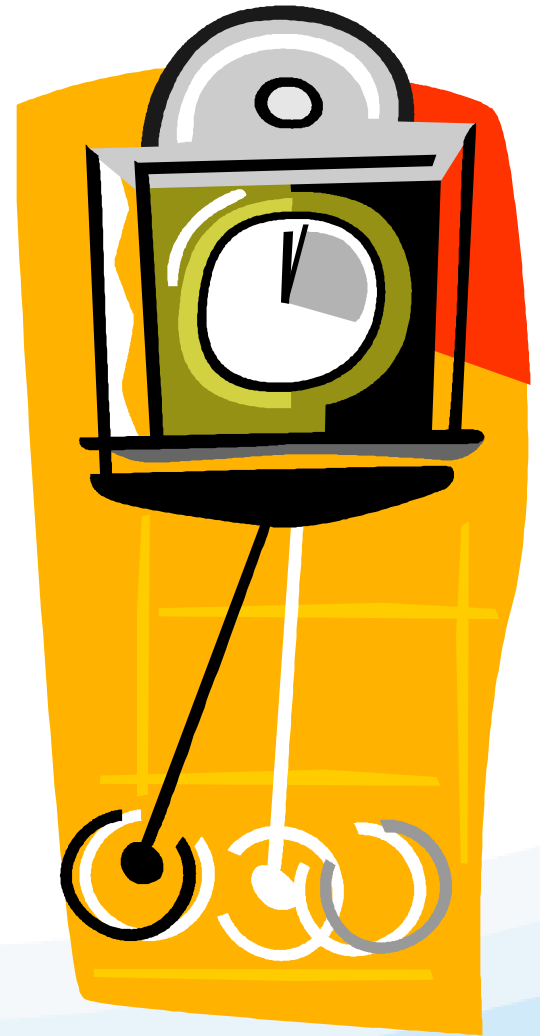
- **WHAT'S** getting in the way of that being 8 out of 10?
- **HOW** can we help a great mate understand how you really feel about your dad's death?

**WHY?**



# AMBIVALENT GRIEF

I love you, I hate you,  
I love you, I hate you,  
I love you, I hate you,  
Why?





## **Bill (52)**

Bill's letter to his son (15),  
3 days before his death from liver failure.

Dear Mark,

I know that I haven't been a reliable father and I regret so much all the violence that you and mum grew up with especially after I had been drinking. I never managed to live without the drink and now I think I may have only a short time left – I want you to know I am so sorry – try to remember the good times we did have together, forget the rows, I said many stupid things I didn't mean – I AM REALLY PROUD OF YOU SON, ALWAYS HAVE BEEN.

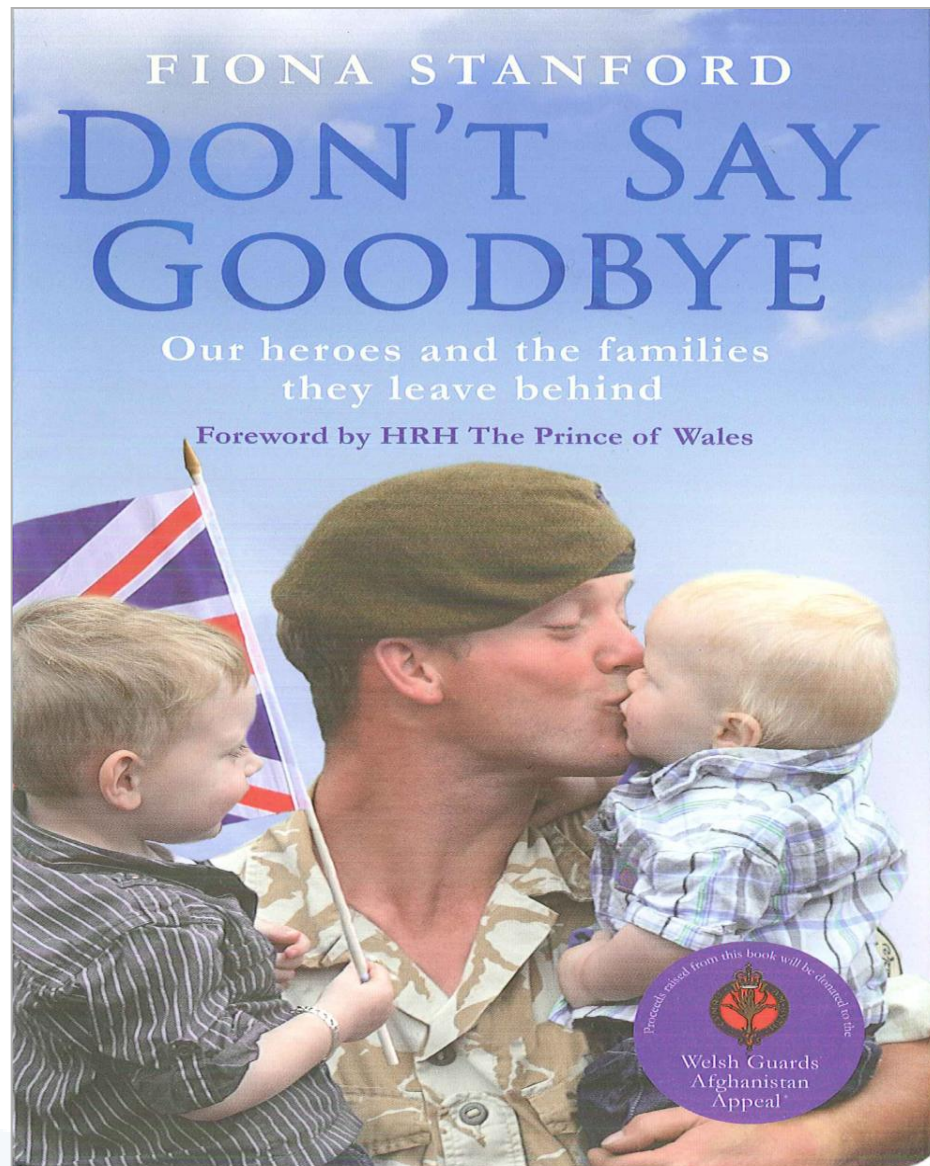
Live your life doing the things you love and with the people who matter most. Look after mum and good luck with the football.

Love Dad xx

**Dictated on 21/06/03 – signed at 3pm in the hospice by Bill. He died on 23/06/03.**

# PEER SUPPORT FOR TRAUMATIC DEATHS





**Winston's Wish**  
the charity for bereaved children





# **The Evaluation of a therapeutic residential intervention for traumatically bereaved children and Young People**

**Trickey and Nugus 2010 –  
Bereavement Care.**

# **The long journey of a Palliative diagnosis - The child's perspective**





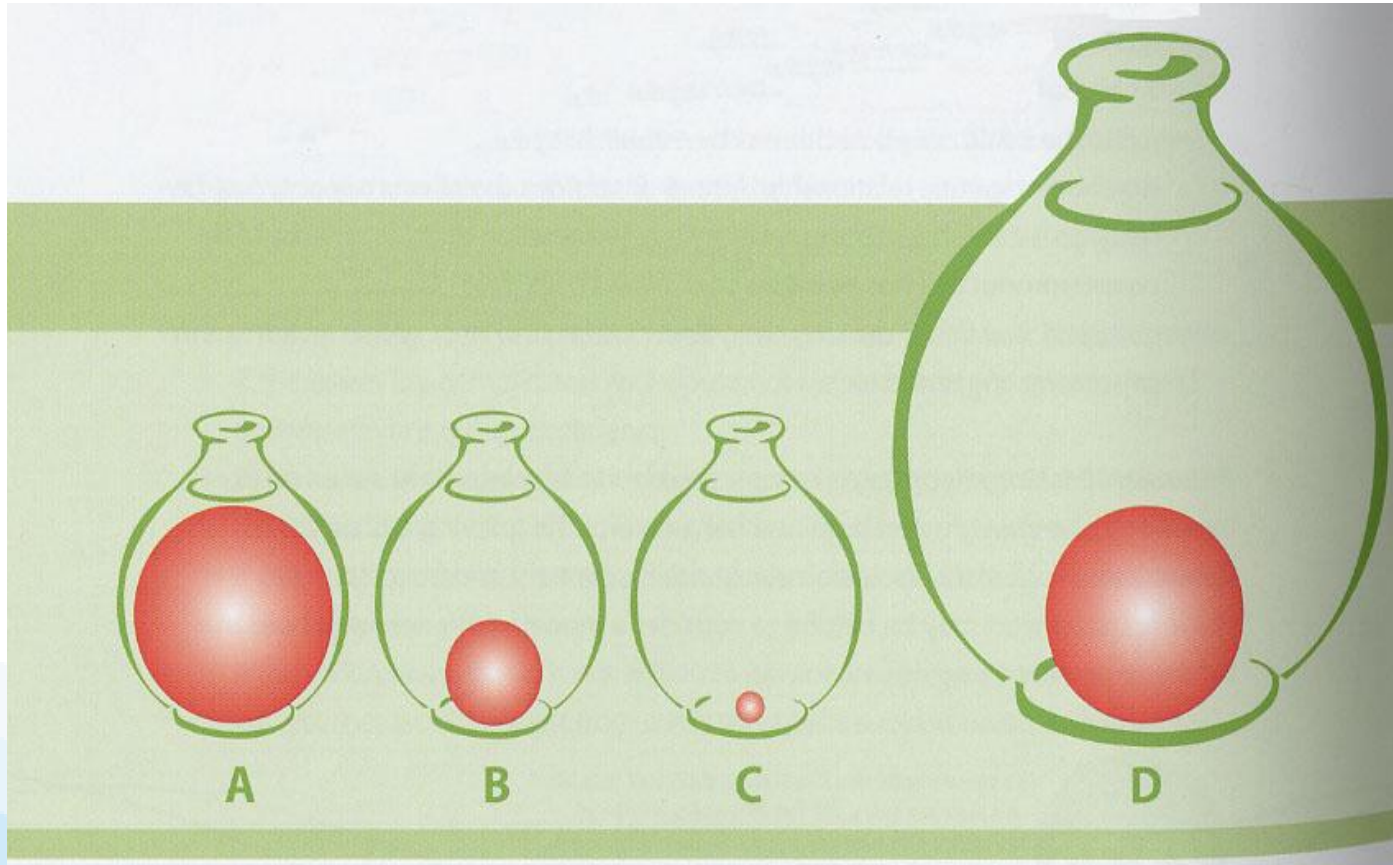
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**The challenges of  
delivering  
HOMOGENEOUS  
PEER SUPPORT -  
working together to make  
this happen**



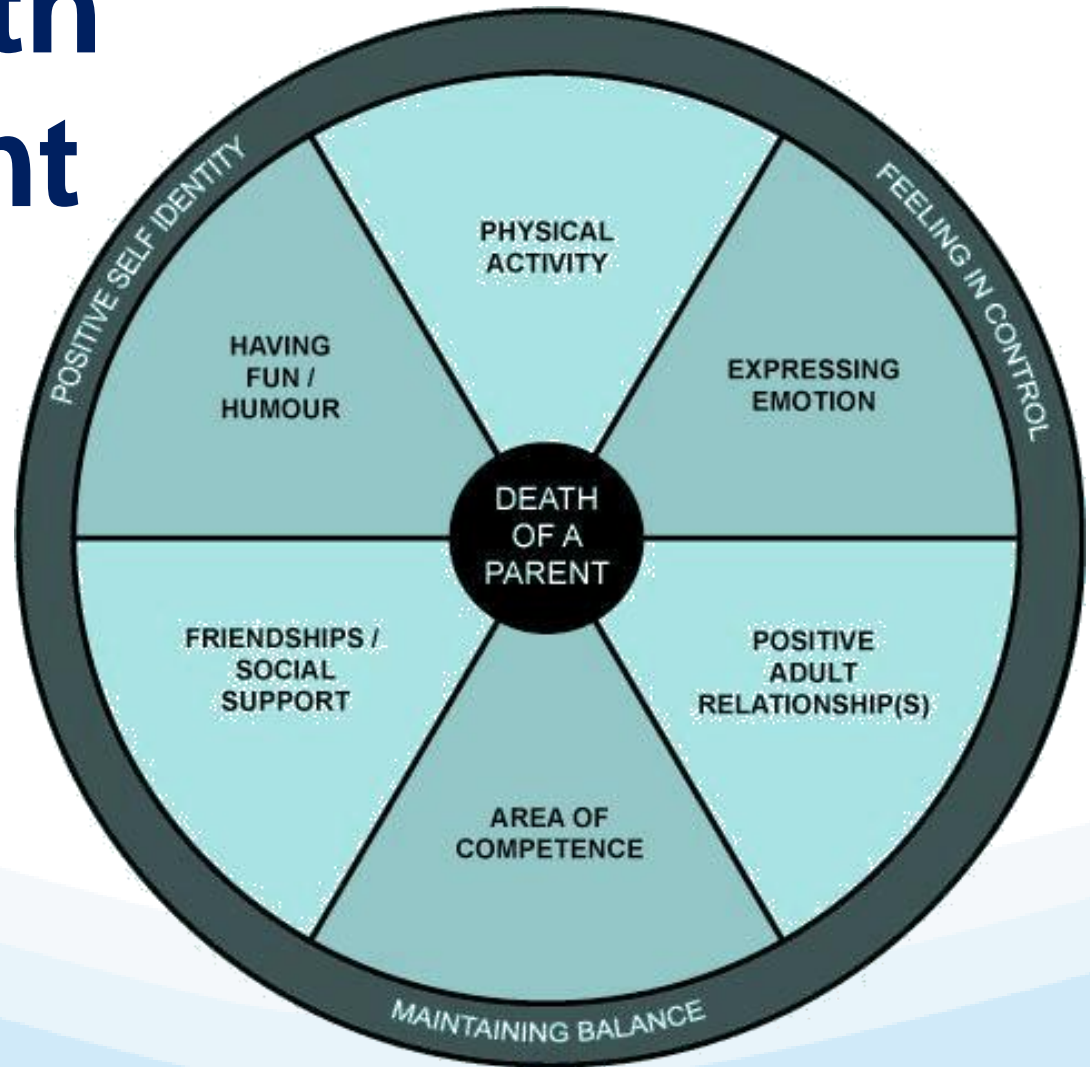
# ‘Growing around grief’

Tonkin, 1996





# Moving Wheel Model of Living with Bereavement





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# Good to Great - LEADERSHIP

By the end of today you will have a **contagious belief** that children can be guided through the swampy ground of complicated grief and trauma.

You will be confident to initiate a conversation with a child and parent directly and your confidence will also help you to work out who you need to help you.





# Helpline: 08452 030405

- Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm
- Staffed by qualified and experienced practitioners
- Available to anyone supporting a bereaved child, including carers, family members, professionals and schools
- 30% of all calls are from professionals
- In 2009 we spoke to 4,000 people and helped around 8,000 children



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