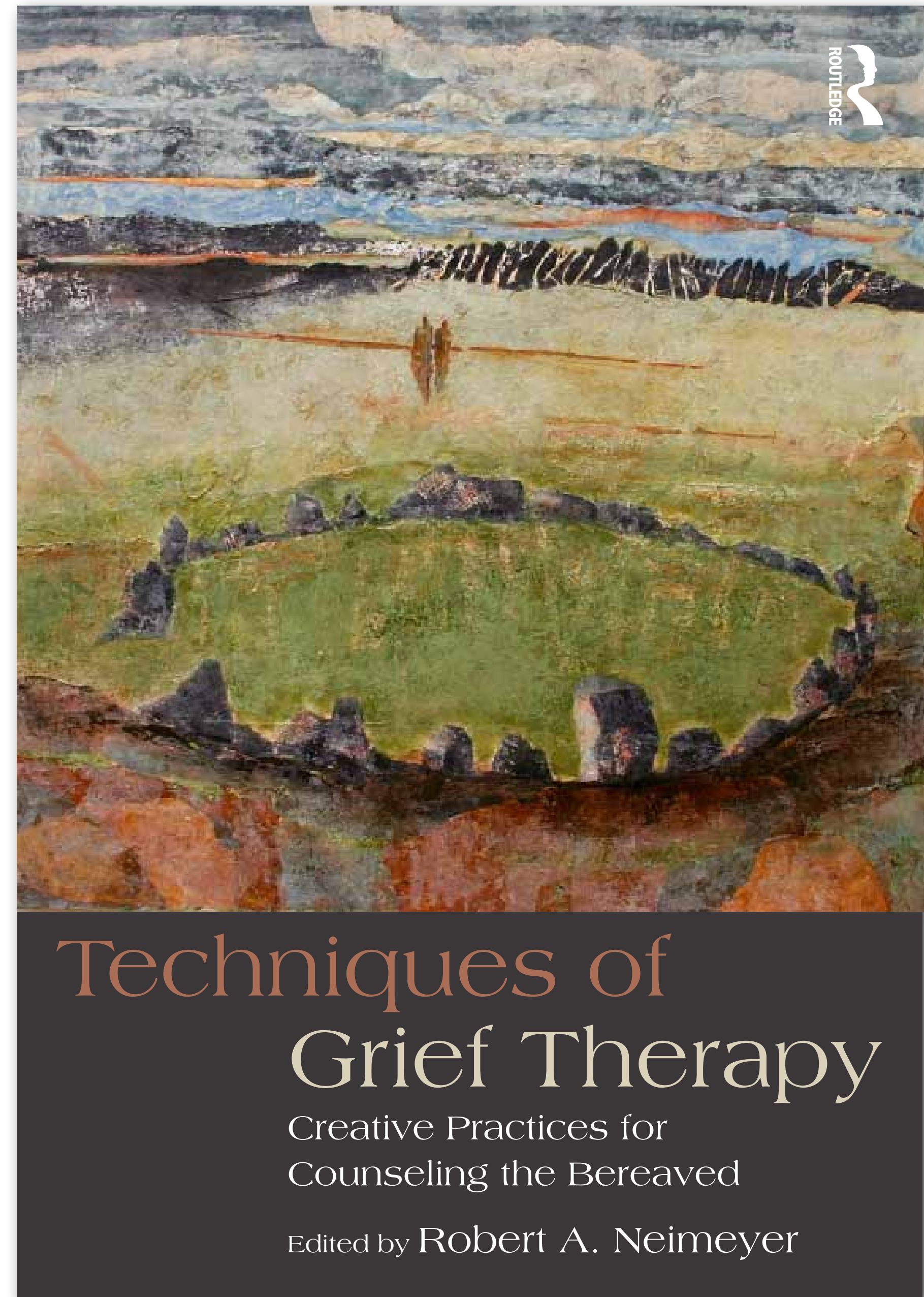


Grief Therapy as Meaning Reconstruction:

A Trauma-informed Approach (Part 2)

Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD



Adaptive Grieving

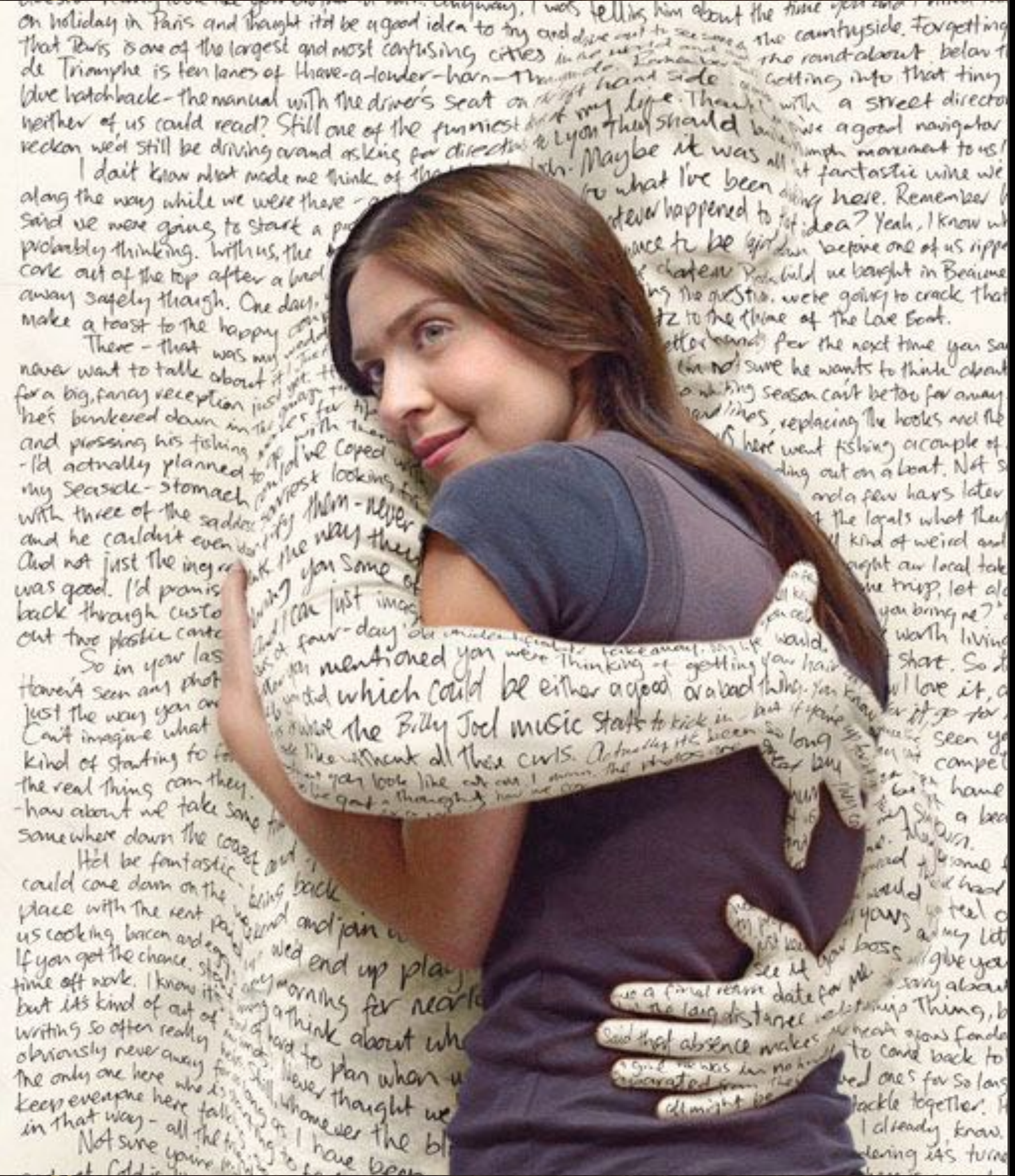


Acute Grief Processes

- Process the “event story” of the death and its implications for our ongoing life
- Access the “back story” of relationship to restore attachment security and resolve unfinished business

Integrated Grief

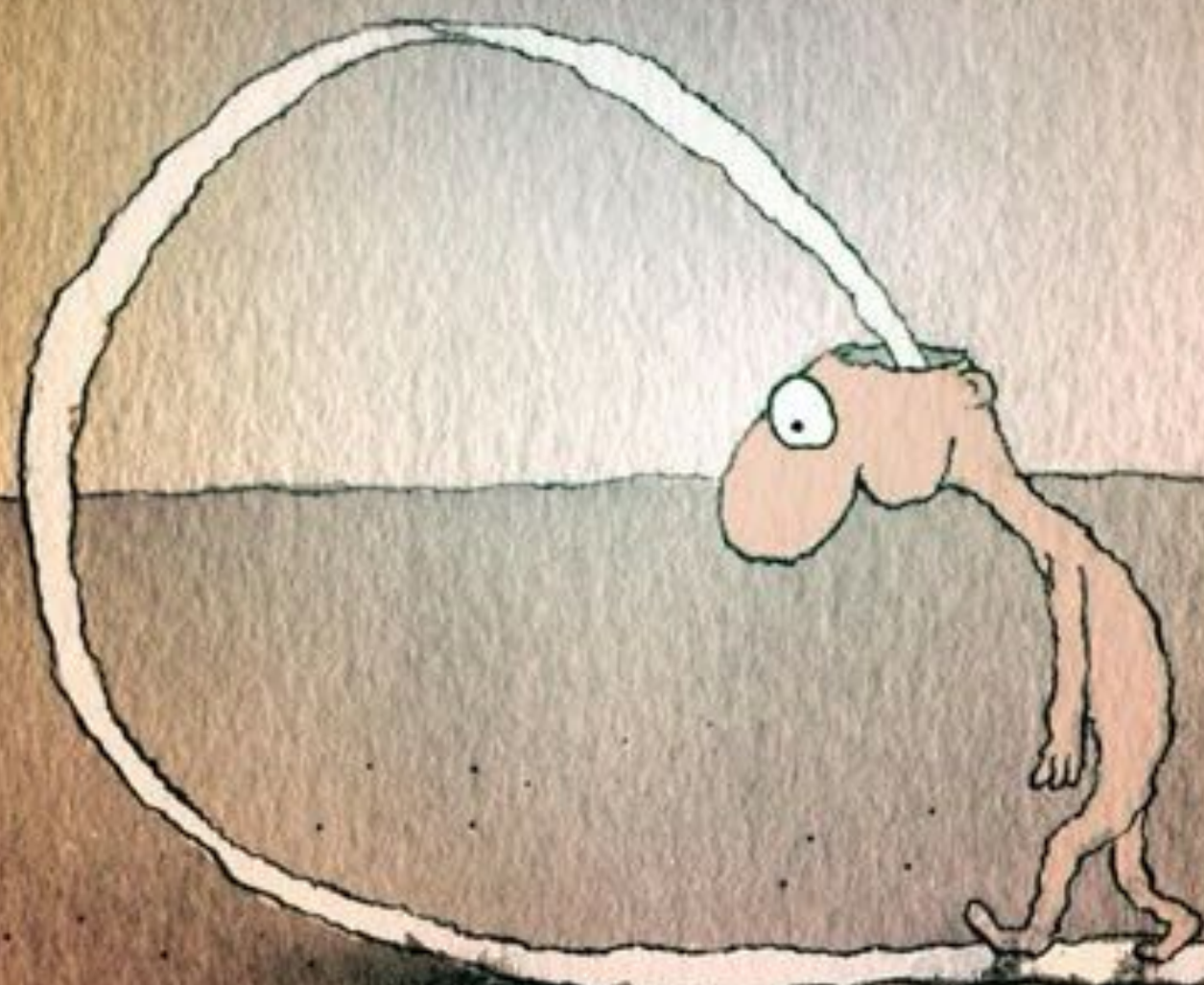
- Finality of death acknowledged
- Bittersweet emotions accessible & changing
- Mental representation of deceased revised
- Coherent narrative of loss formulated
- Life goals redefined



***Directed
Journaling***

***Integrating
the Loss***

Let it go. Let it out.
Let it all unravel.
Let it free and it can be
A path on which to travel.



Leunig

Narrative Techniques

- Event narratives
- Personal journals
- Correspondence with others
- Biographies & eulogies
- Musical memoirs
- Loss characterizations
- Memory books
- Poetry
- Reflective reading



Guidelines for Journaling

Focus on a difficult experience of death or loss

Ignore grammatical structure or spelling

Journal a minimum of 20 min./day

Construct conditions of safety

Explore emotional salience

Plan post-writing

transition

(Neimeyer, van Dyke & Pennebaker, Narrative Medicine)

Guidelines for Sense-Making

Lichtenthal & Neimeyer



- How did you make sense of loss at the time? Now?
- What spiritual or philosophical beliefs contributed to your coping? How did they change, in turn?
- Are there ways this loss has affected your direction in life?

Guidelines for Benefit-Finding

Lichtenthal & Neimeyer



- Have you found any unsought gifts in grief? If so, what?
- How has this experience affected your sense of priorities?
- What qualities in you contribute to your resilience?
- Has this transition deepened your gratitude for anything you've been given? If so, how might you express it?



Deepening Reflection

when I find myself trapped
mind, it's like being trapped
unescapable labyrinth seem alone
afraid. It might my filter +
dramatic, and telling me that
is always, stupid, child
being a weak trapped in this maze
is torture and very real task
is very real and want to
Even doing the simplest journey
actually enjoy and want to
like writing in this journal
the battle wages on... and on
AND ON AND ON, AND
is unbearably exhausting
inside this internal
obvious but
mach

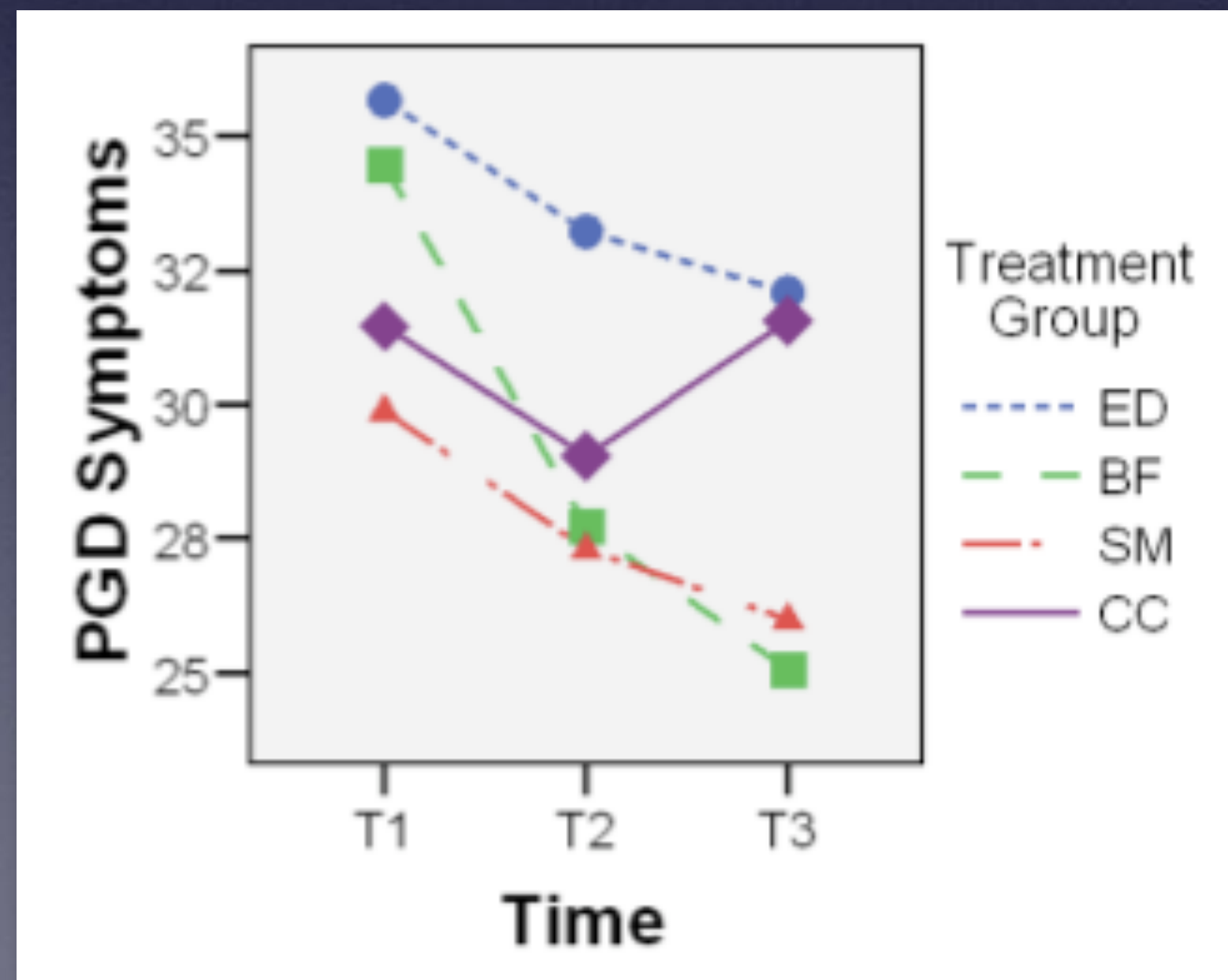


Chaos to Creativity

A Narrative Intervention

Lichtenthal & Cruess, *Death Studies*

- Assigned 68 bereaved adults to journal 3 times, 20 minutes per time, about loss, focusing on:
 - Emotional disclosure (ED)
 - Benefit-finding (BF)
 - Sense-making (SM)
 - Room (control condition)





Journaling Practicum