

Supporting Men

Helen Butlin and Peter Byrom

**Why is it important to
think about supporting
men?**

Sands Awareness Month – Finding Your Way

- ▶ 30% of men who responded were offered no support
- ▶ Only 13% of men said they were offered support for their own
- ▶ 54% of men saw role as telling adult family members
- ▶ 49% of men saw their role as protecting their partner (compared to 4% of women)

Sands Awareness Month – Finding Your Way

- ▶ 21% of men said they needed to put on a strong front (compared to 10% of women)
- ▶ 89% believe men and women deal with grief differently
- ▶ 62% feel it is more socially acceptable for women to talk about baby loss

Sands Awareness Month – Finding Your Way

Feelings not shared:

- ▶ Anger (Men 46%, Women 25%)
- ▶ Guilt (Men 54%, Women 35%)
- ▶ Isolation (Men 59%, Women 47%)
- ▶ Depression (Men 55%, Women 39%)
- ▶ Suicidal feelings (Men 62%, Women 59%)

Quotes from survey:

‘I felt a duty to both protect my partner and yet to talk about what happened so as to reduce stigma. I felt shame, however, at being a victim of tragedy. I knew I had to be the stronger partner at this stage of our relationship as my partner - the mother - needed me most. In some ways, this helped me. In others, not so much.’

Quotes from survey:

‘Every individual person deals with grief differently. I don't like the stereotypes that come with 'men do this' 'women don't do that' kind of attitude. How we deal with grief depends on hundreds of factors, and only one of those is gender expectations.’

Quotes from survey:

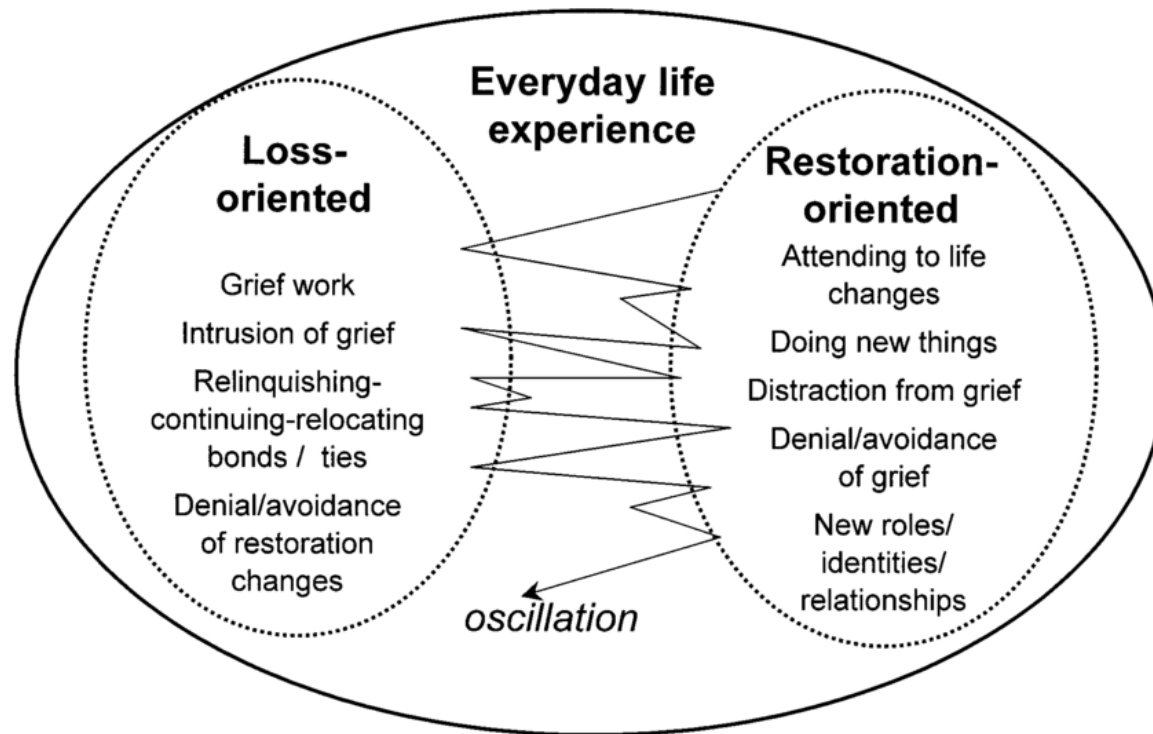
‘The men don’t know what to do with their grief. I found my husband sobbing on his own. He couldn’t always reach out to me because he knew how it affected me. He felt his role was to protect and he couldn’t protect our daughter, her husband and their child.’

Quotes from survey:

‘Everything was directed towards either my wife or together as a couple. I didn’t want to ask for solo help on my own at the time as I know my wife would have just worried more at an already extremely tough time. From my experience it would have definitely helped if we could have had an ‘obligatory’ solo conversation so I could have expressed my thoughts and feelings at the time whilst not sat next to my wife. Instead, I just brushed them under the carpet and hid them which hasn’t helped me at all in the longer term.’

Dual Process Model

Margaret Stroebe and Henk Schut (1995)



Growing around Grief

Lois Tonkin (1997)



Supporting Men

- **How can we do it better?**
- **Key messages**