

The Order of Things

"A nobleman once asked a Chinese Philosopher to grant his family a blessing. [He] thought for a moment, then said, 'Grandfather dies, father dies, son dies.' The nobleman was horrified, but the philosopher shrugged his shoulders. 'What other way would you have it?'"

A. McCracken & M. Semel
A Broken Heart Still Beats

A Task Model of Parental Grief

Grief can be seen as tasks that parents take on:

1. To live with the reality of our loss.
2. To live through the intensity of our pain.
3. To work through our sadness.
4. To restructure our values and beliefs.
5. To integrate our love of our lost child into our lives.

We work at these tasks for the rest of our lives. They are our grief work "job description."

Another Concept of the Parental Grief Process

Facets of grieving that parents experience:

- The cry of pain
- The cry of longing
- The cry for supportive love
- The cry for understanding
- The cry for significance

Merton & Irene Strommen
Five Cries of Grief (1993)

Future Grief

"When your parent dies you have lost your past. When your child dies you have lost your future."

Dr. Elliot Lutz
Quoted in Harriet Schiff,
The Bereaved Parent