The Therapist in Mourning
From the Faraway Nearby
Edited by ANNE J. ADELMAN and KERRY L. MALAWISTA

“Rarely does one come across a book that combines good writing, good thinking, and good feeling. Adelman and Malawista’s assemblage of reflections on loss of family members, patients, therapists, and institutions enhances our capacity for empathy and attunement. Their book mobilizes serious contemplation about human relationships that are simultaneously transient and everlasting. A bit of sadness follows, yet such ‘good’ sadness leads to psychic growth, maturity, and wisdom.”
—SALMAN AKHTAR, JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE

“Therapists have long felt required to keep their own emotional wounds and pain hidden from their patients. As finite human beings we are all subject to the traumas of death and loss, and I applaud this volume for bringing our existential vulnerabilities into a professional dialogue. Our patients can only benefit from this open and gripping acknowledgment of our existential kinship in the same darkness.”
—ROBERT STOLOROW, INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY PSYCHOANALYSIS

“For therapists whose life work is caring for others, this book is an essential read. Theoretically sophisticated, insightful, and moving, the contributors address experiences of loss in therapy that have barely garnered passing consideration. By drawing our attention to the dynamics of grief and loss in the clinical situation, the authors have also, with great poignancy, underscored the beauty and meaning of therapeutic relationships.”
—BRIAN RASMUSSEN, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, OKANAGAN

“In this remarkable volume, the authors reexamine critically psychoanalytic literature on depression and mourning and reveal their personal ways of dealing with experiences of death and mourning. A thought-provoking and moving work that will help mental health professionals deepen their clinical expertise in dealing with this unavoidable aspect of human experience.”
—OTTO F. KERNBERG, WEILL MEDICAL COLLEGE, CORNELL UNIVERSITY

“This book, often emotionally enriching, deserves to be on the reading list of every mental health professional’s training curriculum.
—ARNOLD RICHARDS, EDITOR OF INTERNATIONALPSYCHOANALYSIS.NET

ANNE J. ADELMAN is a clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst with the Contemporary Freudian Society and maintains a private practice in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

KERRY L. MALAWISTA is a training/supervising analyst with the Contemporary Freudian Society and is in private practice in Potomac, Maryland, and McLean, Virginia.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS | NEW YORK
CUP.COLUMBIA.EDU

Cover design: Julia Kushnirsky
Illustration: Gracia Lam
ISBN: 978-0-231-15699-8
9 78023 1156998
Printed in the USA.
THE THERAPIST IN MOURNING

Includes bibliographical references and index.


RC480.5.T5192 2012
616.89'17—dc23

Columbia University Press books are printed on permanent and durable acid-free paper.
This book is printed on paper with recycled content.
Printed in the United States of America

c 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
p 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Cover design: Julia Kushnirsky
Cover illustration: Gracia Lam
Book design: Lisa Hamm

References to websites (URLs) were accurate at the time of writing. Neither the authors nor Columbia University Press is responsible for URLs that may have expired or changed since the manuscript was prepared.
For my mother, Mary

In memory of my father, Stanley

—AJA

For my parents, Robert and Barbara, and my daughter Anna

In memory of my mother, Helen, and Sarah

—KLM
CONTENTS

Acknowledgments ix
List of Contributors xi
“Another Kind of Sorrow,” a poem by Judy Bolz xv
Preface xvii

Introduction 1

PART I. THE THERAPIST’S EXPERIENCE OF LOSS

1. From the Faraway Nearby: Perspectives on the Integration of Loss 17
   KERRY L. MALAWISTA AND LINDA KANEFIELD

2. Experiences of Loss at the End of Analysis: The Analyst’s Response to Termination 32
   JUDITH VIORST

3. Missing Myself 49
   SANDRA BUECHLER

PART II. WHEN A PATIENT DIES

4. The Hand of Fate: On Mourning the Death of a Patient 73
   ANNE J. ADELMAN

5. Little Boy Lost 93
   ARLENE KRAMER RICHARDS

6. When a Patient Dies: Reflections on the Death of Three Patients 107
   SYBIL HOULDING

7. When What We Have to Offer Isn’t Enough: Suicide in Clinical Practice 118
   CATHERINE L. ANDERSON
PART III. AT THE CROSSROADS OF THE THERAPIST’S PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL WORLDS

8. When the Frame Shifts: A Multilayered Perspective on Illness in the Therapist 137
   JENIFER NIELD

9. The Loss of an Institution: Mourning Chestnut Lodge 158
   RICHARD M. WAUGAMAN

10. The Death of the Analyst, the Death of the Analytic Community, and Bad Conduct 178
    ROBERT M. GALATZER-LEVY

11. The Analyst’s Death—Apprehension yet not Comprehension 198
    BARBARA STIMMEL

PART IV. WHEN DISASTER STRIKES A COMMUNITY

12. Broken Promises, Shattered Dreams, Wordless Endings 219
    SYLVIA J. SCHNELLER

13. What the Living Did: September 11 and Its Aftermath 237
    BILLIE A. PIVNICK

14. The Loss of Normal: Ten Years as a U.S. Navy Physician Since 9/11 255
    RUSSELL B. CARR

15. Time 277
    ROBERT WINTER

Conclusion 287
“The Five Stages of Grief,” a poem by Linda Pastan 291
Index 293
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are most grateful to all those who contributed their time and effort, with open minds and honest discourse, to this volume. It is their dedication to psychoanalysis and their creativity, skill, and persistence that make this book possible.

We would like to thank our editors at Columbia University Press, in particular Lauren Dockett, who deftly guided and supported this project from its inception, and Jennifer Perillo, who saw it to its fruition. We are truly grateful to all of the staff at Columbia, who lent this project their full enthusiasm and commitment.

This project would not have been realized without the support and encouragement of the faculty and participants of the New Directions Program and Winter Retreat. Their generosity and spirit have inspired us over the years.

We are deeply appreciative to Robert Winer for his wise and amazing editorial skills. He is a writer of uncommon erudition who can read a piece and find exactly what works and what doesn’t. Linda Kanefield lent her unflagging support, always ready to read our drafts and offer valuable insights and edits. Julie Eill and Elizabeth Thomas were generous with their feedback and input. Sara Taber offered her unflagging encouragement to keep writing. Paula Atkeson has been a consistent source of emotional sustenance.

We could not have completed this project without our husbands and children. They fed us, encouraged us, proofread drafts, and supported this endeavor.