

DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF

Disenfranchised Grief: Grief experienced when loss cannot be openly acknowledged, socially sanctioned or publicly shared.

Reasons:

Relationship is not recognized – lovers, friends, co-workers, ex-spouses, etc.

Loss is not recognized – perinatal loss, abortion, pet loss, etc.

Griever is not recognized – very old, very young, developmentally disabled, etc.

Disenfranchising deaths – murder, suicide, AIDS, etc.

Problems of Disenfranchised Grief:

Intense negative affect.

Exclusion from care and support of dying.

Lack of social support.

Exclusion from funeral rituals.

Practical and legal difficulties.

The paradox of disenfranchised grief is that grief is often intensified while normal supports are lessened.



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