

The Traumatic Loss Expert Treatment For Bereaved and Testimony for Trial

1. What is Traumatic Loss

When a family member dies there is grief. However in a traumatic loss the grief can be overwhelming and other symptoms of traumatic loss are often present that complicate and extend grief into emotional disorder.

Traumatic loss is described as a death that is sudden, unexpected, violent, mutilating, painful, untimely, unnatural. It is often perceived by the bereaved as something the deceased was innocent and not responsible for. It is viewed as preventable and unnecessary.

These perceptions create feelings of anger, mistrust, guilt, and rumination in contrast to sadness due to an "on time" loss, due to natural causes. Traumatic loss requires a close attachment to the deceased. It is said that any loss of a child by a parent meets the criteria

2. Symptoms and Effects of Traumatic Loss

The emotional symptoms of traumatic loss can be depression shown by irritability, sadness, boredom, lack of motivation, inability to initiate activities and emotional withdrawal. Other symptoms are anger, despair, anxiety, panic attacks worry about loss of others, and loss of meaning in life.

There are also Cognitive symptoms. Some are part of the Posttraumatic stress component of traumatic loss. These include memory impairment, difficulty focusing and concentrating, distractibility and inattentiveness.

Somatic symptoms may also be present. These include sleep problems, disturbing dreams, nervous stomach, nausea, vomiting , crying spells and loss of sexual desire.

The effect on relationships with others due to these symptoms can cause evident further destruction of self. Long term effects are significant. Even after decades have passed , most parents have memories and conversations about their lost loved ones that made them upset or sad.

Each missed milestone, weddings, graduations, birthdays, holidays will bear a bittersweet reminder of the fact that the deceased is no longer here to participate. Although some recovery is possible, there is rarely a complete resolution of the symptoms.

When one mother was asked what she missed most about the loss of her son she said, "Talking to him, not seeing touching or hearing him. I lost a piece of my life.'

3 Treatment of Traumatic Loss

Although some of the current treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder can be used, treatment regimens should have certain guiding principles applicable to traumatic loss.

A few of the underlying guidelines are:

- Find a psychologist well versed in traumatic loss treatment,**
- The therapist should orient the mourner to treatment**
- Provide the mourner with permission to mourn**
- Promote social support such as survivor groups**
- Ensure the mourner has appropriate medical evaluation**
- Do not just accept the surface**
- Work to enable acceptance of death**

- **Identify any unfinished business with the deceased and discover ways to create closure**
- **Work through all of the feelings aroused by the loss**

This list is not exhaustive by any means.

4. Testimony of a Traumatic loss expert

The many facets of the mourner's life are not readily seen by an attorney. Maybe it's too painful. Maybe it's just not our expertise. But if you want the jury to really see the total devastating effect that a traumatic loss has on a loved one a traumatic loss expert can tell the effect in human and clinical terms.

They will document their findings with testing and peer reviewed literature.

5. Pursue Help Please

If you have suffered a traumatic loss please know this is a lawyer's limited point of view and knowledge.

Please know that there is help that can decrease some of your symptoms.. I urge you to seek an evaluation with a traumatic loss expert. Life will never be the same again. The loved one you lost wants you to heal and have a life of meaning.

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