

Initials

DEATH-TALK AND YOUR CHILD

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DIGEST

The purpose of this thesis is to help guide parents and teachers in talking about death and dying with young children. A contention of the thesis is that any guide for parents in this subject area is of little value unless the adult first sorts out his own religious and psychological feelings. The thesis is, therefore, divided into two sections.

The first section is directed at the adult reader. It is comprised of three chapters. The first chapter introduces the reader to the subject of death and dying. It points out that death-talk is still generally not acceptable as a subject to be discussed with young children. Neither is it easy. It also indicates reasons for changing this attitude. Particularly that it can be a means by which life can be lived more fully.

The second chapter deals with the subject of the "hereafter" in the Jewish Religious Continuum. It identifies the causes and development of the many beliefs of an afterlife in the Jewish Religious Continuum. It is hoped that by identifying these beliefs the reader can authentically express them to his child when talking about death and dying. It is further contended that if the beliefs expressed are unauthentic the child will sense this. Further, the child will not understand what appears to be a deception. The purpose of the chapter is not to prevent

expression of belief, but to express it authentically.

The third chapter identifies the psychological development of ideas about death and dying. This chapter points out that the development of ideas about death are connected to and parallel with the child's intellectual and psychological development.

The second section deals with approaches to talking with the child about death and dying. It is divided into two chapters. The first deals with talking to a child before an emotion-laden death occurs. The second deals with talking to the child after an emotion-laden death occurs.

This thesis is dedicated to a little girl who loved to skate on corn flakes spread out on a floor; and to the woman, friend, and wife she has become.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

If I might be naive for a moment, I was completely unaware of the enormity of writing a thesis. From a distance it appeared as just so many "term papers." But besides the emotional investment, which is draining, there is also a problem of sticking to a work which requires many months of research, writing, revising, and rewriting. These difficulties were assuaged by the help of many people.

I would like to thank Ms. "Nomi" Adelman of the University of Cincinnati Medical Library for easing the pains of bibliographic research in areas with which I was originally quite unfamiliar. My friend always, "Erev Rav" Michael Zedek, helped read through many pages of manuscript so that the job of a later rewriting was reduced and my ability to communicate simply improved. Mrs. Alvin J. Reines, I would suppose, could be called my "junior advisor." It was she who suggested both the format and style of this work--a style which I can recognize as "me." In this way could I write freely. My advisor, Dr. Alvin J. Reines, has done much more than advise. He taught me to think authentically, and to be authentic. To thank him for more would be superfluous. Rabbi Albert A. Goldman, by burdening himself, gave me the time to complete this work. But he has also been a true teacher. If I have a valid approach to my future Rabbinate, which I hope I have expressed in these pages, it is because I have his example to follow. And finally my typist--no, my dear friend--Gloria Wolfson

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FOR YOU

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AN INTRODUCTION

How To Read This Book

Most books usually begin with a preface. The preface generally includes the author's reasons for writing, and the extent of the field he is covering. Only after the preface does the author "get into" his subject.

In books whose nature it is to help parents or teachers respond to their children in difficult situations the tendency is for the parent to skip the preface and get right into the book, or even that particular section which is appropriate for an immediate crisis. For that reason, I have placed what would be the preface in the first chapter, in the hope that this information which immediately follows will not be passed over. For it is one of the contentions of this book that any of the advice or suggestions in the second part of this volume will be of little use (perhaps even harmful) if not preceded by the reading of the first section.

Let us be more clear. The purpose of this book is to help parents and teachers deal with the subject of death and dying with their children. But a basic assumption of this book is that it is impossible to be helpful to your child unless you, yourself, have resolved, begun to resolve, or at least identify your own feelings about death and dying. Thus, it is with the subject of identifying our own feelings that the first section will deal.

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In this first section we will look at our own feelings about death and dying from various points of view: from the view of the Jewish religious continuum: from the viewpoint of medical science; and from the viewpoint of psychology. Our hope is that as we view the subject of death and dying from these various points of view, we can find a place of reference for ourselves. So that when our child asks, "Where do YOU go when YOU die?" we can first, handle the question without our own anxieties getting in the way; second, be honest in our answer and thus be credible to our child; third, answer the question that is really being asked; and fourth, help our child develop a maturing attitude toward death and dying.

How We View Death and Dying Today

Do you remember how you learned about sex? The chances are that your information came from either or both of two sources: your parents or your friends. The more likely possibility was that whatever information you had, prior to your own experience, was given you by a tradition handed down from friend-to-friend, from brother-to-brother, or from sister-to-sister. Your parents probably avoided any open discussion of sex and if they did not it was in the most general of terms. Sex was a secretive affair whose mysteries would suddenly come into consciousness "when the time came." Sex-talk was a clandestine subject and sex-play was something you "got away with." (That is, of course, not to deny that there were and

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are parents who dealt openly and frankly with questions of sex). Sex was "dirty," or at least not proper before marriage.

It is probably the case that the majority of those who are reading this book found talk about sex at home to be secretive; and that when a parent did attempt to speak with you it was awkward at best. The generation of people who now have children up through pre-adolescence are aware of the shortcomings of THEIR parent's attitudes toward sex and their response to dealing with their children in that area. Thus, while these young parents--you perhaps--want to be frank with their children, they find themselves ill-equipped to handle the job. Thus, we have seen the transfer of this responsibility to other institutions. We encourage sex education in the schools and the Temples.

Talk about death and dying suffers from much the same problems of communication as sex-talk--it is not talked about, or if it is, it is with much anxiety and awkwardness--yet it has very few of the corrective benefits. Your own experience cannot help give you information because once you have died the information is of no use. It is not a subject that is liable to study, so at best it still remains a mystery. Sex, while at first may be frightening, is ultimately pleasurable and experiencable. Death is frightening and we cannot count on its being either pleasurable or experiencable. Sex, it seems, means life, living, enjoyment, immortality. Death, it

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seems, means an end. As our parents treated sex, so we treat death. Death has no socially redeeming value for us. It is obscene.

Is it absurd to state that death is inevitable? As obvious as that statement is, it is not absurd. For it is obvious to an individual--yourself--that the end of human beings is death. But not the end of ALL human beings. There always seems to be one human being whose end YOU do not see as death. YOU do not believe that YOUR end is death. Do you think that is impossible? Just say to yourself, "I am going to die, at any time, and that will be the end of me as I am." That was easy. Now believe it! Try to sit down and see if your mind can comprehend the fact of your own non-existence. The mind rebels at your attempts, doesn't it? Doesn't your mind say to you "No, I can live forever, I won't be nothing?"¹ Freud said that the individual's mind cannot conceive of its own mortality. It is like being involved in a car accident: our attitude is "it can happen to the other guy, but it won't happen to me." We seem to believe that we are indestructible, immortal.

Yet our mind betrays itself. For at some point (at some early point we shall soon discover) we have the nagging feeling that our turn, too, will come. It is to deal with that elusive reality² that the mind sets up various defenses³ against those attacks on our immortality. One alternative

is to completely deny the possibility of one's own death, or the end of one's own existence.

We often see religion functioning in this role. It either assures us that our bodies will be resurrected or that our souls are made of immortal stuff. This is the thrust given in the Jewish religious continuum by Orthodox Judaism and Reform Judaism. Death, in these two forms of Judaism, thus means a change from one form of existence into another form. We see these views institutionalized in the daily prayers of both Orthodoxy and Reform. In the Orthodox liturgy we note the M'hai-yeh benediction of the Amidah. This prayer praises God as the one Who revives the dead. As Hertz, in his commentary on this prayer, points out: "This emphatic statement concerning resurrection was directed especially against the worldlings who disputed the deathlessness of the soul, its return to God, and its continues existence after its reunion with the Divine Source of being."⁴ The theme of physical resurrection was untenable for most of early Reform. Thus while the Reform liturgy kept the Hebrew of the M'hai-yeh intact, "many of them...substituted the concept of Immortality in their vernacular translation or paraphrase." We, therefore, find in the Union Prayer Book: "...Who is like unto Thee, Almighty God, Author of life and death, Source of salvation? Praised be Thou, O Lord, who hast implanted within us eternal life."⁶ The Jewish religious

continuum resolves the conflict between the psychological wish for immortality and the real and present knowledge of imminent death by acknowledging that "death is a night that lies between two days--the day of life on earth and the day of eternal life in the world to come."⁷ It denies death as a bar to immortality.

While religion denies the end of one's existence, there is another form of denial which seeks to reject the possibility of death itself. This is the case where one does not think of death; where it is driven out of one's consciousness. Or so one believes. Thus, a person believes that thoughts about death do not concern him and that people who do have conscious thoughts about death are manifesting a death-wish or an abnormal preoccupation with death. Yet one study seems to belie those who would say they possess a "relative indifference and lack of concern about death."⁸ This study showed that in word-tests, the subjects reacted much more emotionally to death related words than to similar words taken from general language. While we may successfully deny death in consciousness, it is not at all evident that we do so in our unconsciousness. That this is true is indicated in the thesis of a study which said that the certainty of death has a pervasive influence on all of human behavior.⁹ Thus our conscious denials are of no avail and we are left with the paradox in the unconscious of a belief in self-immortality and a knowledge of inevitable and certain death.

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Just as this form of denial is of no avail, we are finding that the answers of religion, in general, and the Jewish religious continuum, in particular, are no longer sufficient to aid us in our dilemma. For while many people may utter the words of the M'hai-yeh, it is questionable how many truly believe the doctrines contained therein. As a belief in a personal God declines,¹⁰ as life becomes infinitely more desirable than death,¹¹ a belief in resurrection or immortality must surely decline also.

Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross¹² brought the question of how we treat our dying and our own attitudes toward death into public consciousness. Dr. Kubler-Ross believes that the consequences of our failure in denial is enormous. She believes that "if we cannot deny death we may attempt to master it."¹³ And the attempt to master death; to face it and conquer it has far reaching societal and individual results. She questions whether war is an expression of our need, as a society, to face death. By coming out alive we defeat death and master it. Thus she quotes a patient dying of leukemia who said: "It is impossible for me to die now. It cannot be God's will, since He let me survive when I was hit by bullets just a few feet away during World War II."¹⁴ Can it be that in an attempt to master death, our group identity will strike out in war to prove our invincibility?

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And what does this attempt at mastery mean for the individual who seeks to die in peace and dignity. Medical science has devised the technology by which machines connected to every and any orifice in the body will keep the person "alive." But what is that life the patient now has? Doctors, in THEIR inability to face death, must conquer it at the expense, perhaps, of the psychological health and well being of the patient.

And what of the children? What ideas do we convey to them by our attempts to master death? Do these ideas of ours prevent the inevitability of their death? We can quite easily communicate our fears to them, as easily as we convey our dislikes for certain foods. Even if they do not understand what we are thinking, they will be aware of our feelings. If we do not deal honestly with our children they will go elsewhere for answers: to their imaginations or those ill-equipped to handle their questions and fears.¹⁵ We need for ourselves and our children an understanding of our attitudes toward death, else nothing but these poor defenses will reoccur to aid us with each passing of a friend or loved one.

What Death Has to Teach Us About Life

Our attitudes toward death must surely color our attitudes about life and living. Too often we see death as the negation, the opposite, of life. We see it as the conclusion of a process begun at birth.¹⁶ Seen as a negation of life

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this view of death must surely be sad. But can we not view death in another light so that it can teach us of the value of life? Cannot death help us find the meaning of our life?

Viktor Frankl is a psychiatrist who survived the concentration camps of Nazi Germany. Out of his experience there he found what he considered the key to his survival. He said: "Suffering is an ineradicable part of life, even as fate and death. Without suffering and death human life cannot be complete."¹⁷ It is through this confrontation with suffering and death that man can find meaning for his life. And it is this search for meaning, according to Frankl, that is man's primary drive.¹⁸

Death is not something apart from life. It is a part of life. And as each moment of life adds meaning to the one before it, so can death add meaning to the moments that precede it.

II

AFTERLIFE IN THE JEWISH RELIGIOUS CONTINUUM

It is a view of this book that a child can sense, in the parent or teacher, an inauthentic belief; that the child, sensing an inauthentic belief in regard to death and dying, will respond either by doubting the credibility of the parent or by developing anxieties about the subject of death. (For why wouldn't a parent be honest with their child? There must be something to fear!) At the same time a parent can, by responding inauthentically, be trying to mask his own anxieties about death and dying and thus he communicates his own fears to the child.

For a Jew, an inauthentic belief about death and dying is a view which is expressed, not because it is believed to be true, but because it is thought to be the true "Jewish" belief and thus is used to satisfy the momentary demands of a crisis situation. An inauthentic belief is one which is not consistently believed to be true in all situations. Thus, the statement "Grandpa's soul has gone to heaven to stay forever" is inauthentic unless it is understood and believed that all souls go to heaven to stay forever. But if it is just to retrieve oneself from a difficult situation with one's child, it is an inauthentic belief.

If it is our purpose to help our children develop a maturing attitude toward death and dying, we cannot afford to take two steps backwards each time we want to move forward

a step. We must present the child with an authentic belief. This does not mean forcing a theological doctrine on the child, but it can mean encouraging the child's spiritual development.¹ This requires us to identify our own beliefs in order to promote the child's spiritual development--if that is what the parent wishes for his child.

The purpose, therefore, of this chapter is to identify the various concepts of continued existence after death in the Jewish religious continuum; to show the origins of these concepts and their development; and to see how these beliefs can be authentic.

The Body and The Soul

Before we look at the various notions of continued existence after death in the Jewish religious continuum, it is necessary for us to understand the concept of body and soul within that continuum. For most of the Jewish religious continuum, the dominant theme of body and soul was quite unlike the Greek or Christian notion. The notion in Greek and Christian thought is a body-soul dualism. That is, the body and the soul are separate and distinct entities. The body is the mortal portion of a human being. It is that part which is imperfect, irrational,² making man liable to sin. It is that part which perverts the goodness of the soul.³ The soul, on the other hand, is pure, and perfect,⁴ resembling the

divine,⁵ rational,⁶ and immortal.⁷ Death is welcomed by the philosopher, for in death his soul is released from the prison house of the body.⁸ This Platonic doctrine permeates Christian thought,⁹ to which was added the idea of resurrection.¹⁰

The idea of a dichotomy between body and soul is not quite so distinct in the Jewish Religious continuum. We shall see later how neo-Platonic thought influenced Jewish thought for a time. But, basically, the relation between body and soul in the Jewish Religious continuum was not one of separateness and distinctness.¹¹ The "Jewish" conception which antedated Greek and Christian thought conceived of body and soul as being made up of two parts so interrelated that both parts had to stand together after death as they did during life.¹² A midrash by the Rabbis indicates quite clearly this notion of interrelatedness:

In the time to come God will bring the soul and say to it, Why didst thou transgress the commandments? and it will say, The body transgressed the commandments; from the day that I departed from it, did I ever sin? Then God turns and says to the body, Why didst thou transgress the commandments? It replies, The soul sinned; from the time when the soul departed from me, did I ever sin? And what does God do? He brings both of them and judges them together. It is like a king who had a park in which were grapes and figs and pomegranates, first ripe fruits. The king said, If I station there a man who can see and walk he will eat the first ripe fruit himself. So he stationed there two keepers, one lame and the other blind, and they sat there and guarded the park. They smelled the odor of first ripe fruit. The lame man said to the blind man, Fine first fruits I see in the park. Come let me ride on your shoulders and we will fetch and eat them.

So the lame man rode on the back of the blind man and they got the fruits and ate them. After a while the king came seeking for the first ripe fruit and found none. He said to the blind man, You ate them. He replied, Have I then any eyes? He said to the lame man, You ate them. He replied, Have I then any legs? So the king made the lame man mount on the back of the blind man and judged them together.¹³

What further complicates the "Jewish" view of body and soul is the variety of Biblical terms used to describe the life giving force of human beings. This life giving force is alternately described as soul (Nefesh), and spirit (Ruach).¹⁴ It was when this life giving force left the body that death occurred.¹⁵ This life giving force was placed in man by God and upon death returned to God.¹⁶ Thus, the basic conception of the "soul" was one that had "no independent existence of its own, [being] a function of the material body when quickened by the spirit."¹⁷ We shall see how the notions of an afterlife are developed in the light of how people understood the relationship between body and soul, and the nature of the soul itself.

The Concept of Resurrection of the Body

The basic notion of resurrection of the body, according to "Jewish" interpretation, is that upon the death of a person his soul departs from the body. The body decomposes into its original earth-matter while the soul remains intact. The soul then awaits the coming of the Messiah. With the coming of the Messiah, the body is revivicated and joined with the soul to live an immortal life in the world-to-come (olom haBa).

To this basic concept we have a variety of interpretations which expand the notion. Thus we find the following interpretations: (a) at some time after death there will be an accounting of the righteousness (or lack thereof) of the person.¹⁸ Some hold that only the righteous will be resurrected while others hold that all will be resurrected.¹⁹ (b) there is a question as to the condition of the soul prior to resurrection. Some hold that upon death, the soul is sent to "Sheol" or a store chamber to passively await resurrection.²⁰ Others hold that immediately following death there is a judgment where the souls of the righteous are separated from the souls of the wicked. The wicked are sent to Gehenna (i.e. Hell), while the righteous souls are sent to special storehouses, or the Garden of Eden.²¹ In these various places all the souls await resurrection where the body and soul are joined to appear for final judgment,²² i.e., whether they will eternally reside in heaven or hell. (c) Another interpretation, less widely noted, is the doctrine of Gilgul, i.e., metempsychoses, transmigration of the soul, or in other words, reincarnation. According to this notion the souls of the wicked are given a chance to make restitution for their sinful nature (in a prior body) by being placed into a new body. It is in this new body that retribution is taken for past sins. Thus, a male soul is punished by entering a female body and becoming sterile; or an evil soul will be placed in a newborn and the newly born child dies. In this

way is atonement made. In these transmigrations the righteous may repeat this cycle three times, while the wicked might go through as many as one thousand transmigrations. But, in any event, the end process of this doctrine is still a resurrection where the soul splits apart to rejoin the resurrected bodies of all the soul's prior houses.²³

Thus, in summary, the doctrine of resurrection means that at some point in the world-to-come, the physical body and the spiritual soul are reunited to share in the reward or punishment which they together deserve. This view of the existence after death was the most prevalent view of Pharasaic Judaism and continues to be an essential doctrine of Orthodox Judaism.²⁴

The Concept of Immortality of the Soul

The Pharasaic/Orthodox Jew has no difficulty in affirming a notion of physical resurrection.²⁵ This is obvious, since the notion of resurrection required a soul which had continued, separate existence prior to the resurrection in the world-to-come. As we noted above in the parable of the king's orchard, both body and soul were inextricably tied to one another. However, when we refer to the notion of the immortality of the soul, we are referring to that doctrine in the Jewish religious continuum which unravelled the connection between body and soul and which spoke only of the soul, a non-material substance,²⁶ having continued, eternal existence after death. Resurrection of a physical body has no place in the notion of immortality of the soul.

The notion of the immortality of a soul which survived the base, material body is basically a product of Greek thinking. Chronologically the Greek influence on Judaic doctrine came after the solidification of resurrection into dogma. It therefore became the task of various Jewish philosophers, deeply committed to Platonic ideas, to reconcile the ideas of resurrection and immortality of the soul.²⁷ In this attempt at reconciliation there developed a number of interpretations of the meaning of immortality of the soul:²⁸ (a) one concept is that it is the nature of composed beings to ultimately return to their initial elements upon decomposition. The body, being formed from the dust of the earth, returns to its elemental form. The soul, which is substantially different from body, (i.e., spiritual substance as opposed to material substance), and created pure from God, returns to the world above of God.²⁹ (b) a second concept is that the soul is composed of a rational element and an irrational element. It is only the rational element which is pure and immortal. It is this part of the soul which death releases towards its reunion with the heavenly hosts.³⁰ (c) A third concept rejects the neo-Platonic basis of the preceding two concepts and replaces it with a neo-Aristotelian basis. That is, the soul, as a created element, has the potentiality to achieve the highest possible level of perfection (to become an actual thing) for a soul. The highest possible achievement for the soul is to release itself from

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the restrictions of body and bodily senses, so that it can achieve a state of pure thought, which is the contemplation of God. By participating in the act of pure thinking the soul acquires immortality.³¹ Immortality here is a state of pure and perfect intellectual activity. (d) A fourth concept is that immortality of the soul consists of a love for God. Such a soul enjoys continued existence by basking in the glory and splendor of the divine presence (Shekinah).³²

Other Kinds of Continued Existence

There are two other notions which are largely the product of Reform Judaism. These two notions speak of the immortality of man in terms of (a) the acts of goodness a man performs while alive; and (b) the memory of his existence which continues in the minds of those who knew him.³³ Thus a man's immortality lay in the legacy he leaves to the living: the example of his life.

The Origins and Development of These Notions in the Jewish Religion Continuum

A belief in some notion of the immortality of man has existed in the Jewish religious continuum for some two thousand years.³⁴ We find that the particular notions of continued existence have been subject to the various pulls of religious and intellectual history. Complicating this fact is that the most primary source of the Jewish religious continuum, the Bible, presents us with either silence or conflicting testimony as to the nature of continued existence after death.³⁵ Thus,

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one is able to use Biblical sources "to prove" the efficacy of resurrection³⁶ or the immortality of the soul.³⁷ Or as one writer said: "...there can be found [in the Bible] all the underlying philosophical patterns necessary for its eventual evolution."³⁸ We mean to say, therefore, that if we look at the Bible without presupposing a favored notion we find a position of "this-worldliness"; that death is, in fact, the end of existence in man's relation to God,³⁹ if not in all of man's relations; that man is rewarded and punished by God during his lifetime. Wherever we find conflicting data in the Bible, we will see that it represents post-Exilic authors who were beginning to solidify public opinion into the doctrine that appears in the period of the Apocrypha and later the Talmud.

The pre-Exilic writings of the Bible were used to state the official positions of the infant religion of "Yahwehism." These writings defined God's powers, the areas He controlled, and those with which He was not concerned. This budding religion of a semi-nomadic people had to undergo definition at some point in order to distinguish it from the other neighboring religions. Thus, we find in the Bible, many parallels to other religious beliefs, but we also find these beliefs altered in a significant way⁴⁰--dedicated to formalizing the religious relationship between man and Yahweh.

In the Bible man was made up of three elements: flesh (basar), soul (nefesh), and spirit (ruach),⁴¹ the latter two being at first a single element⁴² as noted above on page 13. The distinction between body and soul was not quite clear.⁴³ When a person died, his "life blood," i.e., soul/spirit, ebbed away.⁴⁴ The dead had no existence, but rather subsistence.⁴⁵ What is meant by subsistence is that the soul had existence as a concept rather than in fact. This idea is necessarily confusing because the Bible itself is unclear as to the existence of the soul and/or spirit after death.

What is clear is that this soul went down and resided in Sheol.⁴⁶ Sheol is similar to the Greek Hades,⁴⁷ or underworld.⁴⁸ Probably the concept of Sheol as an underworld developed from an original lack of distinction between it and the grave.⁴⁹ It was "...a place of darkness, dust, corruption...a 'land of no return'...of silence."⁵⁰

The soul that resided in this netherworld continued to have some form of existence which we have called subsistence. The soul was a mere shadow of its former existence.⁵¹ This existence is contrasted with the idea of death as nothingness; it does not mean the complete annihilation of the person.⁵² Yet the personality is extinguished and there is no self-consciousness.⁵³ In this "shadowy" existence the soul is cut off from the world⁵⁴ and cut off from God.⁵⁵

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In the earlier Biblical writings, Yahweh has no dominion or control over Sheol.⁵⁶ This is consistent with the God-concept of these writers. For first Yahweh was only a tribal God.⁵⁷ Before Yahweh could have any control over Sheol, He had to cross national boundaries on earth and become a universal God. Once a universalistic concept of God was accepted the Biblical authors could speak of Yahweh as having power over Sheol. Even though this power is placed under Yahweh's dominion He does not, generally, exercise that power.⁵⁸ The reason lay in the primacy of the living as God's concern. Ethics and morality are of concern in this world. Failures in morals will require punishment in this life, not in a life-after.⁵⁹ Thus, there was no intent or need to require Sheol to be a land of divine judgment.⁶⁰ Any retribution carried out during life, like differences in social status, were maintained in Sheol. But reward and punishment would take place during one's lifetime. The ultimate punishment is death.⁶¹ There is then a ratio between morality mortality.⁶² The time of one's death was under the control of Yahweh.⁶³

Thus, in summary, the doctrine of belief presented in the earlier Biblical writings was that death was inevitable and final. It was not to be sought after, for it was a form of divine punishment. This attitude was expressed to direct man's view to the living God whose interest was

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in life and right living; to the just God who would make life more meaningful by making the quality of life consistent with the quality of behavior.⁶⁴

With the Exile into Babylonia, the view that rewards and punishments are meted out by a just God in the present was brought into question.⁶⁵ For the individual righteous among Israel, suffering under the Exile, "failed to see a just equation of man's doings and his destiny in this life."⁶⁶ While "official Biblical doctrine" gave no support to a concept of future rewards and punishments in a life-after, the common folk must have been aware of such a doctrine. If Ezekiel's vision of the resurrection of the dry bones⁶⁷ was to have any meaning as national redemption, the people would have to possess an idea of personal resurrection in order to understand Ezekiel's parable.⁶⁸ It is indeed possible that the Persian doctrine of resurrection was being assimilated by the common people.⁶⁹ Yet the transformation from folk belief to official doctrine was slow. But we see this progress toward official acceptance in the post-Exilic Biblical and Apocryphal writings.

It is with the view of maintaining the just and righteous God in a personal relationship with man that we see the beginnings of a doctrine of future rewards and punishment.⁷⁰ in the book of Daniel.⁷¹ This theme of future reward and

punishment is more highly emphasized and delineated in the Apocrypha. Here, the souls that reside in Sheol are self-conscious. In a limited way the soul had a form of personality.⁷² Sheol, instead of being a final resting place, now becomes an intermediate stage where the souls await final judgment. It is a place of preliminary rewards and punishments.⁷³ For the wicked, Sheol can also be the final place of rest, thus bearing a similarity to Hell or Gehenna. But the righteous find their spirits going to blessed immortality.⁷⁴ Thus, during the time of the Rabbinic period (300 B.C.E.--500 C.E.) the concept of future rewards and punishments had developed so much that the idea of resurrection was ready to sprout forth into full blossom. This view of individual immortality was fully consistent with the idea of a just God and gave meaning to a sometimes unpleasant earthly existence.⁷⁵ What was now a very popular and widespread folk belief was transformed into an official doctrine enunciated by the Pharisees.⁷⁶ Thus did this doctrine find its way into the Amidah. But by far the strongest statement of the acceptance of the doctrine of resurrection was the position of the Mishnah which stated: "He who says that the belief in the resurrection of the dead is not founded on the Torah (and therefore does not accept it) shall have no share in the world to come."⁷⁷

From approximately the third century B.C.E., onwards the Greek influence was very strongly felt in "Judaism." The Greek emphasis on logical, analytical, metaphysical thinking pressed against every Rabbinic doctrine with which it came in contact. Once the idea of human immortality was recognized by official "Jewish" doctrine, it became easy for Greek thought to pierce holes in the particular doctrine while maintaining the larger concept of human immortality.⁷⁸ The result of this clash of Hellenic and Rabbinic thought was the "Jewish" concept of the spiritual immortality of the soul.⁷⁹ Yet this doctrine of immortality would have had little chance of acceptance if there were not already these ideas in the popular folk belief. We find parallel to the idea of the soul descending into Sheol, the idea of the soul soaring heavenward like a bird. The soul of man having entered him as the breath of life now flies upward to meet its Source.⁸⁰ We have then a source of popular belief for the idea of immortality of the soul. It was not until Philo, the hellinized Jew of Alexandria, applied Platonic doctrines to the Bible that the folk belief of immortality of the soul was transformed into an alternative to physical resurrection. What was most incomprehensible to those who accepted the idea of immortality of the soul was the superfluosness of resurrection; for if the soul achieved eternal reunion with God, what was the necessity

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of a material, impure, corrupt body?⁸¹ But the idea of Resurrection was so entrenched by the time of the Medieval Jewish Philosophers that their task became one of reconciling the two doctrines. Even Maimonides was forced into the position of saying resurrection had to be accepted on faith, whether he believed that doctrine himself, or not.⁸²

But the severest attack on resurrection came with and was parallel to modern philosophy's attack on God's justice and mercy and His ethical personality, science's attack on supernaturalism, and Higher Criticism's attack on the Bible. Newton was able to discover the laws of gravity and physical motion and he noted the regularity of the processes of nature. Schopenhauer looked at the world, found a quagmire of evil and corruption, and wondered where dwells the ethical God of justice and mercy. This then leads the Jewish theologian Kaufman Kohler to write: "However, the belief in resurrection of the body...is in such utter contradiction to our entire attitude toward both science and religion, that it may be considered obsolete for the modern Jew. Orthodoxy, ... regards it as a miracle which God will perform in the future, exactly like the many Biblical miracles which defy reason."⁸³ But if man seeks eternality and resurrection is denied him, there still exists the possibility of immortality of the soul. Thus, the Reform movement in its Rabbinical conference of 1869 resolved: "The belief in the

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resurrection of the body has no religious foundation (in Judaism), and the doctrine of Immortality refers to the after-existence of the Soul only."⁸⁴ Yet this notion, too, depends on the view that the soul is immortal because it was breathed into him by God. Thus, if one had a concept of God which did not allow for this type of relationship with man, the notion of immortality of the soul could not be supported. It is for this reason that Reform Judaism institutionalized the concept of immortality in terms of the memory which the dead leaves in the minds of his loved ones or in the good deeds he performed.

What Do I Believe and Can It Be Authentic?

When we look at beliefs of an after life in the Jewish religious continuum, we see four basic possibilities: (a) no existence after death; (b) physical existence after death; (c) spiritual existence after death; and (d) a denial of the first three which leaves an existence after death apart from the person but present in the memory of the living. Each of these beliefs are viable for the individual. No judgment can be made about the efficacy of any one of them for the individual who believes it. The question the individual must ask is whether it is efficacious for me or can I say "this is what I believe and it is true for me." We will leave it for the individual to choose his own evidence for ascertaining the truth of his belief. But essential to knowing whether a belief is true is understanding what the belief means and what it entails.

The first belief (a) acknowledge's one's mortality; one's finitude, and says nothing about the possibility of continued existence after death. It assumes nothing but present life. It is authentic if it can be maintained in the face of man's psychological need for immortality.

The second and third beliefs (b and c), we noted, were entertained because of a God-concept which saw God as possessing the attributes of justice, mercy and ethics. Because God had these attributes it was inconceivable that the righteous man should suffer on earth while the wicked man reaped rewards. This God had, somehow, to balance the scales. If it was not done on earth, while a man lived, it had to be accomplished elsewhere after death. Thus a belief in resurrection or immortality of the soul necessitates a particular view of God. If these beliefs in God and after life are consistent and one holds to these beliefs consistently, it could certainly be an authentic belief.

The fourth belief (d) appears to come out of a necessity to possess immortality (won't die and become nothing), while being unable to consent to the validity of the God concepts of "b" and "c". This belief can also be authentic if one understands the psychological motivation⁸⁵ behind it and the direction it is forced to take because of the individual's particular God concepts.

Knowing what you believe and understanding the implications of that belief are essential for honest communication

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with your child. It does not mean teaching dogma to your child. It does mean being able to speak out of conviction, with honesty, confidence and lack of fear. Thus will your child grow, and develop a maturing attitude toward death and dying.

III

DEATH IN THE HUMAN PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTINUUM

In the preceeding chapter we looked at the development of views of an afterlife in the Jewish Religious Continuum and the authenticity of those views for the individual. In this chapter we will look at the psychological development of our views and attitudes towards death and dying. We will point out that as a person progresses in chronological and intellectual age, he will also go through many different concepts or attitudes about death. Thus a four year old's concept of death and dying will be as different from a nine year old's concept as will the adult's concept. Each age, then, will have its own psychological attitude or concept of death and dying. The task of an adult is to not judge a child's concept as "foolish" or "silly." For from the child's viewpoint, his concept or attitude is valid and real. While a "bogey-man-who-comes-to-eat-you-up" may appear ridiculous to you, he may very well be real to the child. We must then look at the child's point of view as he develops. We will also look at how we first became aware of death; how we came to fear death; how we understand the nature of death and how early childhood events can determine or alter the course which a developing psychological attitude toward death will take.

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What is Death?

Before we look at our psychological conceptions of death, it will be helpful to return to the analogy made between the discussions of sex and death in Chapter I. Once it was realized that sex-talk had to be frank and open, some of the early proponents of sex education insisted on giving children the "whole truth and nothing but the truth." They felt that blunt honesty would prevent sex-related problems later in adult life.¹ Yet, it was soon understood that although honesty was necessary, the naked truth was at times too difficult for the child. We now face a somewhat similar problem in discussions with children about death. In parents' attempt to be honest with their children, they might tell a child that "when you die you are dead, never to return or be alive again"; giving them this answer in explicit detail. And this response to a child may be frightening or too difficult to understand. First, the child's concept of the words "death" and "dead" are different from an adult's concept.² But, second, what complicates such a simple blunt answer is the fact that adults, themselves, really do not know what death is.³

For a moment, let us turn away from the psychological level and ask yourself what evidence you would require if you were a doctor and you had to determine whether someone had died or not? Would you place a mirror before the person's

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face to see if it clouded with the vapors of his breath? Would you listen for his heart-beat or feel for his pulse? Fifty years ago, if you were a doctor (or today if you are a layman) and found these factors lacking, i.e., no breathing, no circulation, you would say that the person was dead. But in today's hospitals, we would say, at worst, that the person under consideration was only "clinically dead."⁴ This means it is possible for the "clinically dead" person to be resuscitated by various methods including indirect or direct heart massage, and electric stimulation of the heart.⁵ Or, in other words, the evidence we had in the past for certifying that a person died is no longer compelling because we find that we can cause those vital signs to reoccur (we can make a heart beat again after it has stopped). We also find that there are other sources of evidence now at our disposal; so that in addition to checking the heart beat by means of an electrocardiograph, we can also check for brain activity by use of the electroencephalograph.⁶ Thus, if we asked a doctor today what evidence he would require to say that someone was dead, he might require this: no independent breathing for sixty minutes; no reflex responses; no heart response for sixty minutes; no brain activity for sixty minutes; and the concurrence of other colleagues.⁷ Another medical authority has referred, though, to animal experiments where the brain was severed from the body and the body continued to function, unaided, for some time (although "death"

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did finally occur). This authority would require evidence that the brain was separated from the spinal cord and that there were sound scientific grounds for believing recovery was not possible.⁸ Even though this latter evidence is extreme, both requirements of evidence ask for one major ingredient: the irreversibility of death.⁹ It would thus appear that we have taken a very long route to show what we already know: for death to be death, it must mean that a person is never coming back; that death must last forever. But, at the same time, it must be recognized that even this is an assumption and a convention for today; for there are religionists (as we pointed out in Chapter II) who would say that death does not last forever, and certainly what was thought to be irreversible death fifty years ago is today reversible. With the advances in hypothermia (freezing a body), what is irreversible today might be reversible tomorrow.¹⁰ While this sounds a bit like science fiction, it is appropriate to point out that a good deal of yesterday's science fiction has today lost its fictional quality.

There are other problems in defining death once we accept the biological vagueness of its definition. It is entirely possible for a person to be "biologically alive," and yet be treated as if he were dead by the people around him. This is the case of "social death." That is, we might act the same way towards a living person as we would with

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a dead person.¹¹ It is in these cases that we most often hear the phrase, "he is as good as dead." Here, we shut off communication with that person. It is very similar to a child being given the "silent treatment" or the "cold shoulder." He is treated as persona non grata.¹² The person is biologically alive, but he is treated as if dead. Well, then, is he alive or dead?

Our attempt at stating a definition for death suffers from other problems. We very easily make use in our speech of the word "I;" "I go to the store," "I am a girl or a boy." But is the "I" of today the same "I" of your childhood or did it die when your childhood was over to give birth to a new, adult "I?" Let us look at the problem another way. We all know Bill to be a certain type of person. But for whatever reason, Bill goes through a change in personality so that you might say about him, "that's not the Bill I knew." You get the feeling that this new personality is quite another being. He does not act like himself or think like himself. If all this is true, did the "old" Bill die? If the personality of a person changes radically from what it once was, did that person die? If you are not the same person you were, what happened to that person? If he disappeared (went into non-existence) forever, we have fit a possible definition of death.¹³ But we resist this idea, because the biological person is still the same and alive.

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It appears that to say "Bill is dead," can mean many things. It can mean that Bill's vital organs have stopped functioning for a sufficiently long time for a team of doctors to say he is dead; it can mean that Bill (the body) is alive, but Bill, the person I knew him as (the personality) is dead; it can mean that Bill's body is functioning, but we treat him as if he were dead by isolating him and cutting off communication with him. All these definitions (and they do not by any means exhaust the possible definitions) do have one thing in common. This common element is that a person is defined as alive or dead according to OUR perception of that person. We are then left with the following possibilities when WE say about someone else that he is dead: either THAT person is dead, or WE, who perceive another person, are dead. Both are logical conclusions. Therefore, to avoid such confusing logic, one author suggests that "death occurred between person A and person B."¹⁴ After all this, it is quite reasonable for the reader to throw up his hands saying "this is not how I use the word death!" And there is a great deal of truth to this exclamation. For certainly there is, in our language, a common way in which we use the word "death." But this should not prevent us from understanding that there is a variety of ways in which we can honestly understand and use the word. We should avoid the notion that because we are not used to thinking of a thing in this way, it must be wrong or irrelevant. We

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will see that "death" as we commonly use it in our language is not the meaning that children might attach to the word; for it can mean separation, disappearance, and immobility for them. Further its meaning can change also for us in the future, as already it has in the past.

Psychological Development of Ideas About Death: Under Five Years Old

Even though we have spent many words trying to establish the difficulty of precisely defining death, let us assume that we do know what it means. What we want to look at now is the process which led us to the definitions and understandings we presently have.

To make the statement "I will die" requires the comprehension of no less than eight concepts according to one author. We have to know that an "I" exists as an individual being; that we belong to a group of beings which is mortal; that therefore personal death is inevitable; that an individual's death can be caused by one or more factors and while I can evade some, I cannot evade all; that death will occur in the future; but that exact future time is indeterminate; that death is final and the cessation of life as it is known on earth; and that it is the ultimate separation of the individual from the world.¹⁵ But to understand each of these concepts requires a certain intellectual development. Thus, it will be impossible to see the development of our own definition of death without also seeing the development

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of the intellectual and emotional tools necessary for comprehending these different concepts.¹⁶ We can note various influences on the child under ten¹⁷ which will direct the development of ideas as they progress towards a concept of death.

We can make certain statements about the child under three. From the moment of birth, the infant begins receiving impressions through his various senses.¹⁸ However, under the age of two months, the infant is believed to have no memory.¹⁹ Each impression, therefore, is separate and distinct from the ones both before and after it. For instance, if you see baby's bottle at the 6 P.M. feeding, you will make certain assumptions that allow you to recognize it as the same physical bottle used for the 2 P.M. feeding.²⁰ Yet, from the baby's point of view the bottle at each feeding is a different bottle; a separate and distinct bottle from the one before. The baby, having no memory, cannot yet identify the 6 P.M. bottle with the 2 P.M. bottle. It is only later that this connection will be made. We can observe the establishment of the memory when the baby begins to recognize mother with his first smile. The baby, through the repeated connection of mother-being-present when his needs are being satisfied, begins to establish a bridge between the separate (in time) impressions. This bridge

lays the foundation for the baby's memory. At the same time, the repeated satisfaction of his needs by mother provides the baby with a sense of security and protection.

By two months, with the establishment of the baby's memory, he can begin the road toward distinguishing between objects outside his own body and within his own body; between imagined objects and real objects.²¹ This is something we take quite for granted, yet it is something that does have to be learned. For instance, did you ever dream a dream and think it to be "as real as life?" Then you wake up with a start and still you were not able to distinguish your dream from reality until you "got your bearings?" For the baby, who has not yet the experience, there is no difference between the image formed by reality and the image formed from his memory.²² It is not until the memory-image-of-mother does not provide the same source of satisfaction as the real-image-of-mother that the baby is able to distinguish between the two. At this time also the baby cannot yet distinguish between his body and other bodies. The baby will hold and treat his own finger just as he would his mother's or father's finger.²³ The baby has to learn through repeated experiences that there are different sensations to be felt when he grasps his own finger than when he grasps mother's finger. Again, this is something that must be learned by the baby. It is not known automatically. To understand what the baby first senses, recall a time when your dentist had to give you

Novocain to deaden your tooth. After the dental work was completed it was likely that your cheek or lip was still numb. Did you ever feel the skin that was anesthetized? Didn't it feel "rubbery," as if it were not a part of you; something separate from you? Yet it is a part of your body. Just as you would be unable, with your eyes closed, to distinguish between your numbed cheek and a piece of rubber, so the baby does not yet differentiate between "me" and "not-me" until repeated impressions point out a difference. But, eventually, through this repetition, the baby will distinguish between "me" and "not-me"; between his inner and outer experience. With this discovery, although the baby does not have a "concept" of self, he has a feeling, an intuition, about his separate and personal existence. This then is the first step toward a comprehension of the first of the eight concepts mentioned above in order to understand the statement "I will die." This feeling of self is further strengthened when the baby is able to stand by himself and walk. For when the baby does this, he stands alone, completely separated from the "not-me."²⁴ Even the feeling of complete separation and independence develops slowly. This is apparent with the child who will hold tightly onto his own hand or a rattle as he takes his steps after having let go of tables and chairs for support. But with independent movement the baby is assured of his self identity and his independent existence.

During his first six to eighteen months, while the baby is assured of his own continued existence, he still has to learn about the continued existence of "not me," of external objects.²⁵ For when these objects, including mother and father, are removed from his sight, the baby has no evidence that these objects continue to exist. They disappear.²⁶ This point is of great significance when viewed through the complete dependence of baby on the parent. Throughout these early months, when baby was hungry he would cry and mother would come to satisfy his hunger. Through repetition of the mother satisfying baby's various wants and needs, he developed a complete dependence on mother or father. The baby assumed that his mere wish or desire would conjure up mother to satisfy his needs. But a crises occurs when the wish is made and mother does not appear. Baby's life seems to hang in the balance until mother arrives to satisfy the need. Now, until the baby has proof that mother exists when she is not in sight, the baby will assume that he is unprotected and be disturbed over this fact. This anxiety over separation from the parent/protector has to be overcome.²⁷ This is accomplished by learning that even though mother is out of sight, she is still near enough to offer protection and security. One author believes that the childhood game of "peek-a-boo" is very much more than a game in this regard. In this game the child learns about continued existence and thus gains a mastery over his separation anxiety. When the

parent covers the baby's face with a cloth the parent disappears. The baby believing the parent to have gone out of existence will become frantic, gasping and thrashing to remove the cloth. But when the cloth is removed and the baby finally fixes his eyes on the parent, he will smile and squeal with delight. What is occurring, we are told, is that the child has had a brush with the "death" of a parent and he is overjoyed at finding the parent, source of security, still there. Thus, through peek-a-boo is the baby able to understand the continued existence of "not-me" objects; and he is able to deal with the anxiety caused by separation which is the baby's definition of death.²⁸

Through the early years of childhood, separation will be the definition and prototype of death.²⁹ Separation or departure will elicit ideas of death in later childhood.³⁰ The idea of another person's separation can be interpreted in this manner by the child; you are absent and therefore I am abandoned. This is a complete separation which will go on forever. Thus you are dead and I will die for lack of protection and security.³¹ For the child whose concept of time is not yet developed, this separation will indeed seem limitless and thus it would fit even our criteria for death, i.e. absence (of vital signs or the person himself) which appears irreversible for an endless future. What is being stated here is that prior to the age of five, certainly, the separation of a parent from the child is the equivalent of the parent being dead in the eyes of the child.³² Further,

that the idea of death is conveyed with each separation.³³ It will then become a child's task to differentiate between separation and death.³⁴ That the idea of separation is central to the idea of death was carried to its extreme limits by Otto Rank. Rank saw the birth of a baby as a traumatic experience. It was a forced separation from the mother. Hence, this experience affects the individual's entire life by setting two desires in motion: an impulse to return to the womb and an impulse toward further separations from the mother. These are two competing impulses which produce anxiety. Thus, each later separation in life will set these impulses in motion toward one another with its accompanying anxiety.³⁵ While Rank's interpretation might appear far-fetched to some, certainly the importance of the identification of death with separation cannot be overstated. In trying to determine the origins of the idea of death, one can go back to the birth trauma, or at least to the notion of that first separation after the development of a rudimentary memory. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that a fear of death is coterminous with that first separation. The origin of an idea of death and the origin of a fear of death do not begin at the same point. Certainly there are anxious moments for the child as he awaits a return, but this cannot yet be called fear. The child still believes himself to possess some degree of control over the separation.

We mentioned earlier that when the infant was hungry he wished his hunger satisfied and then mother appeared on the scene to fulfill that need. For the infant this was cause and effect enough so that the mere wish would bring the desired result. In the various separations that the infant undergoes, there is the wish for mother to return (to come back into sight) which, in fact, she does. This begins to confirm the belief that the separation is reversible. Thus, we find that many children under five view death as reversible.³⁶ This is confirmed in a child's ability to come alive again after being shot dead while playing "cowboys and Indians." The game of cowboys and Indians presents to us other childhood conceptions of death in addition to the notion of reversibility. Have you ever noticed that the child who "plays dead" best is the one who can be perfectly still? For the child who has just learned the excitement of mobility, being able to walk around by oneself, the idea of death must carry with it the opposite notions for life; that of immobility.³⁷ The child while lying still may also hold his breath to give the appearance of not breathing. This is an attempt to negate those functions which the child believes important to life.³⁸ Thus, for the child, besides not breathing the dead also might not eat, or see, or eliminate waste, all of which are prime importance for the young child. What these notions appear similar to for the child is sleep.³⁹ Sleep duplicates all these ideas about death:⁴⁰ it is a separation (from consciousness and thus the ability to sense); there is immobility;

there is no perception of vital life functions; and it is reversible. The identification of sleep with death is even affirmed by the Orthodox Jew, who gives thanks to God upon wakening that this spirit has been restored to life.⁴¹

While the child under five recognizes death as something different he is still unable to formulate definite ideas about death, as something distinct from life.⁴² Thus death is often viewed as an altered state of life.⁴³ Some of the conceptions of this altered state can be the following: life and consciousness are attributed to the dead.⁴⁴ The dead can think and feel and know what is going on in the world.⁴⁵ Death is inevitable⁴⁶ but it is not due to natural causes.⁴⁷ Death is accidental⁴⁸ and therefore it is preventable.⁴⁹ (this seeming contradiction is resolved with the understanding that your death is inevitable but the child's death is preventable). The child under five then, often characterizes death as reversible, a departure or separation, a change of environment or a form of limited life.⁵⁰

Psychological Development of Ideas about Death: Five to Nine Years Old

Before the child was able to speak we could only make assumptions about how he perceived events. But with speech fairly well developed by this age, we can understand a great deal more about a child's perceptions of death.⁵¹ Many of the earlier childhood ideas about death are retained in this

period. So that death can still be something that happens, generally, to others; a remote possibility; associated with sleep, immobility and an absence of vital functions;⁵² and represented by separation. The reversibility of death is often maintained⁵³ until approximately the ages seven to nine.⁵⁴

A new idea about death may frequently enter at this age level. Now the child can see death in a personal form.⁵⁵ Death is represented either as a separate person or it is identified with the dead.⁵⁶ Death is, therefore, something outside the child which can happen to the child.⁵⁷ Death will come to a young child and kill him either because "death" is bad-hearted or because the child did something wrong or was bad himself.⁵⁸ Thus, death can be avoided by sleeping with the lights on so "death" cannot get near you (the child will see the bogey man before it gets him) or the child will repent his bad behavior. Thus, while death is possible, it becomes a remote eventuality which can be avoided.⁵⁹

In order to have come this far in his thinking about death a very important development had to take place in the mental development of the child. He had to develop a conscience. Whereas the child began to develop a notion of right and wrong around the age of two years, at four or five he begins seriously to internalize the rules for categorizing right and wrong.⁶⁰ If a child spreads corn flakes on the floor with which to play, it will now be his conscience,

something inside him which says his actions are wrong, not his mother, an external force. This internalized force, the child's conscience, will now also act as a control against the child's aggressive tendencies. And it is here that we have a possible origin for the child's fear of death.⁶¹ But we have skipped over many steps in order to make this statement. So let us backtrack for a moment.

We mentioned earlier that the child came to associate his wish for something with the fulfillment of that wish. The mere thought was enough to bring on the deed. Therefore, as far as the child could tell, he was all-powerful, without limitations, omnipotent. As early as fifteen months limitations on his physical activity would bring forth anger on the child's part.⁶² His unlimited nature brings the child pleasure, while imposed limits bring forth anger. Therefore, as the child gets older, he will look for areas in which to express his limitless nature, for this will bring him pleasure.⁶³ The ability to destroy, for the child, is a mode of his omnipotence, and it is often expressed in aggressive actions. A child may, without apparent reason, walk over to a stranger and kick him.⁶⁴ What we are viewing here is an attempt by the child to prove his omnipotence over the unknown stranger. Before the child has developed language his aggressive behavior is usually physical rather than verbal; before he has developed a conscience his aggressive behavior must be controlled through disciplining by a parent rather than through the

the self discipline of a conscience.⁶⁵ But with the development of a conscience, the child can punish himself for aggressive behavior on his part. Thus, in the child caught between two conflicting tendencies: the desire to do whatever he wants--to be limitless; and the drive to check his wants --to be limited.

How many parents have been shocked to hear their five or six year old threaten to kill them or say "I wish you were dead?" Usually this is a child's response when the parent places a limit on the child; when the parent imposes his will on the child's will. Thus the parent makes the child realize his limited nature. The child then responds aggressively with "I wish you were dead."⁶⁶ But very often this exchange takes place on a non-verbal mental level and the antagonists become the child and his conscience.⁶⁷ The child becomes angry with his parents and he wishes that they would die.⁶⁸ He then murders them in his mind, for the wish you will remember is equivalent to the deed. But his conscience rebukes him for his aggressive behavior and threatens the child with the same punishment.⁶⁹ The conscience of a child will retaliate in a primitive way by seeking "an eye for an eye."⁷⁰ Thus, with the wish for the parent's death will come a fear of retaliation in kind. The child brings about the possibility of his own death.⁷¹ Here then is where his fear can develop. For he is certain that he will be punished for his aggressive behavior (the death

wish will bring his own death).⁷² Here, too, is where the "bogey-man" will come to kill him for some wrong which he committed.⁷³

Another frequent characteristic of this period is that around the age of seven there is a gradual understanding that death is universal,⁷⁴ and the total cessation of life.⁷⁵ Insects will die, pets will die, relatives will die. With this realization of the universality of death, the second concept necessary for an understanding of the statement "I will die," the child may then begin to realize the third concept: that his own personal death is inevitable.⁷⁶

The child may also develop an interest in the details about death.⁷⁷ Insects are often killed to see what happens to them, and parents are asked difficult questions. But the child at this stage bounces back and forth between logical thought and infantile (primitive) thought. Even though the child hears the facts, they are new and not fully understood. So his imagination takes over in order to fill up gaps in the understanding of the new facts. Thus, even though something is explained to the child, he will still maintain his own interpretations of the facts. For while the child is beginning to think more abstractly, his concepts are not well formed. Therefore, when a child is told that a grandparent died because he was very old, the child might still understand the cause of death as being due to Grandpa not eating (a vital function).

To summarize, then, this age is often characterized by a personification of death. Death is a direct result of aggressive behavior or bad conduct. It can be avoided at present, but death is inevitable as well as universal. Death is now something to be reckoned with for it denies a child's limitless nature. It is therefore something to be avoided and feared.

Psychological Development of Ideas About Death: Nine Years and Up

The child of this age group has travelled a long road in a very short time. He has learned that his mere wishing for something will not automatically produce the thing itself; he has learned that he is a limited being and he has transferred the limiting authority from outside himself (the parent) to inside himself (conscience); and he has developed the intellectual tools which will allow him to take all the notions and ideas of these years and begin to integrate them into concepts and internalize them. Now the child can control his imagination, he can philosophize and understand how things work.⁷⁸ Thus, two ideas about death are now predominant.

The child sees life and death in biological terms.⁷⁹ A nine year old understands that things, including humans, work because of certain processes. A toy might have a spring that breaks or a battery that has lost its power. A human being dies because the heart stops, because of sickness, or because of old age. What is now understood is that death is a process which happens according to certain natural laws.⁸⁰

Thus, when you get old you die, and when the heart stops you die. This process acts on all life, including human life. He can now also integrate the concepts needed to understand and internalize the statement "I will die."⁸¹ Therefore the universality of death is fully realized.⁸¹ Once these biological functions cease the dead can never be revived and death is seen as final.⁸²

With the continued development of a child's self identity he can now integrate the fact of his personal existence in a species which has the attribute of dying, and the fact of the inevitability of death in the future. This leads him to the conclusion that death is final and the ultimate separation from the world. The child now knows what it means to say "I will die."⁸³ Having come to this realization we can note two ideas which raise a fear of death: one is the fear of non-existence,⁸⁴ and the other is the fear of "death before fulfillment."⁸⁵ And now to protect these fears, the child resorts again to imaginative psychological thinking and like an adult refuses to believe in the possibility of his self's non-existence.

Are These Views Real:

While the different childhood ideas about death are different from our own, they are nevertheless real for the child. They are real psychological beliefs because each idea is dependent on and consistent with a child's mental development. Thus, we should keep in mind for the next

section that each phase of development generally brings with it its own conception of death. And therefore the parent must take into account, not his own conception of death, but the child's concept of death in each particular stage.

One more notion should be kept in mind. Throughout this chapter we spoke of the child. Yet the person of whom we were speaking was YOU. YOU were the child who went through this development. YOU have developed YOUR own ideas and fears of death because of the way YOU reacted to the psychological environment outlined in this chapter. Now as a parent or teacher it will be your task not to rush the child through this development to reach an "adult" concept of death, nor to prevent fears of death.⁸⁶ A child must develop psychologically at his own rate. Further, it is impossible for the parent or teacher to prevent these and other fears. But what a parent can do is to help their child deal with his fears and be a support to the child as he comes to realize the inevitability of his own death.

II

FOR YOUR CHILD

IV

TALKING TO YOUR CHILD BEFORE A DEATH OCCURS

1. *Don't be surprised.* Questions about death will inevitably be asked by any child capable of speaking. Your child will hear you mention the word. He will see a dead bug and someone will tell him it is dead. Somehow, like all new words and ideas, your child will come across it and want to know what "dead" means. Since you represent (especially for the younger child) the source of all wisdom, your child will naturally come to you with his questions. So don't be surprised by your children's questions about death and dying. In fact, you should be prepared for these questions. Preparation means you being comfortable with the subject; knowing what questions will really be asked; and having an idea in your mind, ahead of time, so you can act and not react. That means discovering your own answers before the child asks them, rather than running to a child rearing book after the questions are asked.

2. *You have to be comfortable first.* That was the point of the first section. In the first chapter we tried to make clear that you ARE going to die. Therefore it is to your advantage and your child's advantage not to fight off the inevitable by denying its reality. Certainly it is not human nature to look forward to the time of one's death. But human nature does not justify the other extreme. Camus once wrote: "'Since men cannot cure death, they have made

up their minds not to think about it.' And another author added, '...and they try to stop children thinking about it.'"¹ It is this attitude against which we are trying to work.

But let us not fool ourselves by saying that just because we do not deny our own death we will not be uncomfortable. We ARE uncomfortable thinking about death. But we can deal with that. We can look at the sources of our uneasiness. That is the purpose of the third chapter. You were subject to many psychological and social influences which made you think and feel the way you do. We do not want you to deny your thought and your feelings. We just want you to understand some of the possible ways they could develop. The more you can think about death from a rational point of view, the greater will be your understanding. Understanding will breed an ability to have control of yourself and your emotions. With control you will be able to feel more comfortable about death-talk than you do presently.

Another source of our feeling of uneasiness is that precisely because we are not comfortable, do we resort to religious beliefs which are untenable for us. We find it strange to mouth ideas which we would not believe during less anxious moments. Thus, the second chapter was included to help you sort out the religious beliefs, if any, you COULD authentically affirm.

Therefore, when we say that you must be comfortable, first, we mean that you have to face the realities of the universe; that by knowing the sources of your uneasiness you can have more control over your feelings and thus be more comfortable; and that by knowing what your religious beliefs about death and dying are, you can be confident about what you will be able to honestly tell your child.

3. *How you talk about death is important.* In fact, it is just as important, if not more so, than WHAT you tell your child about death. Remember that you communicate many things non-verbally to your child. For instance, you might always tell your child how bad it is to smoke cigarettes. But if you, yourself, smoke it is likely that your child will also. Telling your child that you wish you could quit will never convince him of smoking's evils. Only the action of "quitting" will be convincing. The language of your actions, then, will set the tone for what you say. It will color what you say with either truthfulness or falseness. How you say it will also communicate your positive and negative feelings. If you are anxious, you will give cause for anxiety; if you speak with fear in your voice, fear will be heard and adopted; if you are cold and clinical, your child will associate those feelings with death. But if you are loving, your child will be reassured. If you are warm and gentle your child will adopt those feelings and bring them forth when he faces later death-

situations. So when you talk to your child about death touch him. Hold him in your arms and communicate your feelings--the feelings of love and warmth you have for your child.

4. *You cannot prevent fear.* No matter how protective you try to be by insulating your child from what you consider unpleasant experiences, he will somehow come to have "fears." You cannot protect your child from all fears--possibly by your over-protectiveness you can cause some fears. But no matter how hard you try, your child will be exposed to influences besides yourself. Therefore will he develop different fears. Thus, if you think that you will protect your child from a fear of death (or even death itself) by preventing him from coming into contact with death-situations or death-talk, you will be mistaken. For, at the very least, your avoidance of the subject will be interpreted by the child as "death is something that even my parents are afraid of, so I must be afraid too."

But why should we even want to prevent our children from fearing? If anything, fear is healthy. It acts as a warning system which tells us that there is a situation with which we are not yet capable of handling. Thus it needs our attention to be overcome. Could you imagine functioning if you were not able to feel pain? You could burn yourself or walk on a broken ankle and not even know it. You would aggravate the injury. But the body warns

you with pain, to protect you from further injury. So the mind will use fear. A child may fear the violence he sees in a movie. But later the child somehow "knows" he must overcome this fear. Thus do we see the child's sudden interest in "horror" movies. Our job, then, is not to prevent fears, but to help our children deal with and have control over the fears they will necessarily have.

5. *You can lessen the fear of death.* Even though you cannot eliminate it completely, you can lessen a child's fear of death. What the child fears is that which he cannot come to know or understand. Daily, the growing child will discover the "knowables" of life. But death is enwrapped in mystery. Children are aware of many things even if they cannot comprehend them. This awareness plus a lack of understanding sets an unknowable before the child. And what is unknown is to be feared. Thus, it becomes a prime responsibility to make what is unknown into something knowable. In this way will fear be lessened.

6. *Information can reduce the unknown.* This is just repeating what we have already said in another way. But we say it again to emphasize it. By talking openly about death and dying, you can give your child information which will reduce the mystery of death. With a reduction of the mystery element can come a reduction of your child's fears about death and dying.

7. *A lack of informations also causes mis-information.*

If you do not give your child authentic information and feelings about death and dying, he will have to rely on his own imagination to fill in the gaps. A child will sense changes in attitude and will catch bits of information. If these are not organized for the child his imagination will organize these bits and pieces for him. The result can be a body of inauthentic, incorrect knowledge. For instance, parents may discuss a subject thinking their child to be asleep. The child hears the conversation uttered in whispered tones. When the child overhears the parents discussing which one of them should go out of town to attend the funeral of a relative, he might interpret the secrecy and evasiveness of the parent to mean that one of them is going away to die. Adult behavior and conversation is often confusing for the child. It behooves us then to set straight the confusion when it is presented to us--either through direct questions from the child or severe changes in his behavior. Mis-information should be set right as soon as possible; not only with the correct information but with tenderness and love.

8. *Separation means death for the young child.* As we mentioned in the first section, for the child under five, separation can be equated with death. When the mother leaves the infant, he does not yet know that she still exists even though he cannot see her. And he has no evidence to

know that she will return. Therefore she went out of existence forever, or she died. This separation (or death) of the mother represents a loss to the child. The child in this separation has lost a love-object, for the parent is very much a recipient of the child's love. But a mother or father is not the only thing a child loves. A child may also love a particular toy, or a blanket, or a pet. And the loss of any one of these favorites--these love-objects--can create the same kind of feeling as the loss of (i.e., separation) a parent. The difference between the two losses of a love-object is not a difference in kind, but rather a difference of degree. Notice some time how your child reacts to the sudden loss of a very favorite blanket (the image of Linus' security blanket comes to mind). Your child will cry over its loss, appear disoriented for a time, and substitutes will not suffice. With this loss comes the feelings which accompany separation and death.

9. *Young children are susceptible to the feelings of loss.* The favorite objects of childhood are many. For this reason the opportunity to be subjected to feelings of loss will be great. But this should not lead you to think that the young child is going through constant periods of severe anxiety with the loss of every love-object. While the feelings are similar to the loss of a parent, let us say, they are not nearly as intense. For this reason, the loss of various love-objects can be used as experiences through which a

child can learn how to handle, as an adult, the loss of a person. You can aid your child by allowing him to follow his inclination and "grieve" over the loss of a favorite toy or a pet. The point is that these minor losses can be the training blocks for building an ability to cope with a death later in life.

10. Talk about death with your child before there is an emotional involvement. The time to talk about death with your child is not during the period of death of a relative close to the child. There are too many impediments at that point for you to be as helpful to your child as you can before such occurrences. First, the child will be undergoing an emotional shock and will not be prepared to understand the events taking place. He will be disoriented; he will want to know why daddy abandoned him; he will be in a state of shock. Second, you may not be emotionally ready to help handle your child's difficult behavior and questions. You, yourself, will be searching for answers to your own difficult questions. How will you be able to answer your child's questions without the pat, un-thought through responses we are seeking to discourage? Your child deserves to be prepared for such eventualities. It is to everyone's advantage to communicate in this area while it is not inhibited by emotional upheavals.

11. There are many non-emotional events which can be used to talk about death. Your child will see a dead or dying

flower. He may see an insect no longer moving. These are events which can be used as starting points for discussions about death and dying. Point out the differences between a live flower and a dead one. Talk about the natural process of birth-life-death of a flower, or a bird. Do it gently. Do it while holding your child. Do it with love. But do it. Do not avoid talking to spare the child an "ugly" experience for a few more years. You do not protect your child this way. Help him to deal with the inevitable.

12. Talk about death when the child wants to talk about it.

Just because you pass a dead flower does not mean that you should think: "Now is the time to talk to my child about death." Your child will see dead things--flowers, insects, birds--and when he is ready he will ask you questions about them. He will be ready sooner than you think. The questions will come. You will not have to worry on that score. Our point is that these opportunities will arise through your child. So use them. Answer your child's questions. Don't avoid the subject; for your child will want to understand why you are avoiding his perfectly reasonable questions. If a child brings a dead bug to you, don't react in horror (as much as you would like to). Your child will not understand it. Even worse, he will connect your horror for a dead insect with a horror of death. Show your child that the bug cannot be revived. Show him it is dead. But try to do this naturally, as a matter of course.

13. *Try not to give your child a whole lecture about death at the first question.* You should only give as much of an answer as the child needs at the moment. If a child brings a dead bug to you and asks "why doesn't it move," just say "it is dead, it is not alive anymore." If your child requires or seeks more information at that time he will ask another question as long as you are not "put-offish" in your tone. Let your child's questions be your guide. It may not be helpful to go too fast either. Give your child a chance to digest the information and the notions you have given him. And please don't sell religious beliefs through these discussions. Let your religious beliefs become evident to your child in the way you live and in the way you act. Let your beliefs come to your child that way, not through discussions on death. There is enough for the young child in understanding death itself, let alone integrating religious concepts with it. When questions or incidents about death and dying arise, answer your child's needs, not your own.

14. *When you answer, answer the right question.* If a child brings a dead insect to you and asks why it is not moving like the other insects, the child is asking a direct question and a direct answer is appropriate. But when a child asks "When are you going to die, Mommy?" he might be asking for an entirely different kind of answer. If you answer, "I won't die," you are lying in addition to not answering the question. If you answer only "not for a long time" you must

realize that "a long time" for a child can mean next week. What the young child is then asking for is reassurance that you will not separate from him--abandon him. At the age of language ability you might say "I love you very much and you and I will be together for a long time. You will be very old and I will still be with you." This type of response reassures your child of your love and continued presence. You will be speaking in terms he can understand and you will be responding honestly. But also remember that how you say it is just as important as what you say. So for both the pre-verbal and verbal child, hold him while you speak and let your feelings communicate reassurance.

15. Honesty and truth are not the same things. We frequently resort to the idea of "telling the truth" to a child once the doors have been opened to either discussions about sex or death. We speak of TRUTH as if it were some gigantic monolith, which once explained to the child will satisfy all curiosity and dilemmas. Yet, nothing is further from the truth. First I would ask, "whose truth?" Is a view of immortality truth? Is a view of complete annihilation of being truth? Is "I don't know" truth? Truth is for the individual. And an individual will arrive at his own truths, as will your child. And even granting (which we do not) that these are truths, are any of them helpful to your child in coping with and understanding death? We would contend that these, that truth, is not what a child needs. (Nor

are half-truths, or "little white lies," what the child needs. They are the equivalent of falsehoods. As you may have already discovered, children have built in lie-detectors. Your child will sense the difference between an honest response and a false response or an inauthentic response; between what a parent says and how he acts. The discrepancy will cause the child confusion. To a child who is told to "always tell the truth," half truths will be difficult to explain). What the child does need is honesty. Honesty is an authentic expression of belief and feeling. Honesty is not an opinion but an approach which will allow the child to find his own way toward dealing with death. An honest answer to a child might begin "no one knows yet." It leaves room for your child's free expression. It encourages him to find his own answers to life and death. Honesty reassures him of your credibility, your sensitivity and your sincerity. Honesty insures a search together with your child.

16. *When your child asks a question try to avoid philosophical or theological discourses.* Remember that neither you nor your child are philosophers or theologians. Philosophy is complicated enough for philosophers, let alone we layman who use non-technical language which can be understood in a variety of ways. Do you know what you mean precisely by terms like "ultimate reality," "the source of existence," or the "existential reality?" While it is possible that you might have a grasp of these terms, it is a certainty that your child will

have no comprehension of them at all. Even simple language is liable to be misunderstood by a child. For instance, a child was told that a neighbor had died in an accident. For several nights the child dreaded going to sleep. He would howl and protest to the point of hysteria. Upon examination it was found that the child was afraid of having "an accident" while he was asleep. And that, therefore, he would also die. The child's understanding of the term "accident" as bed-wetting created a deep fear in the child. So speaking in the more "high-class" language of philosophy or theology will be meaningless, at best, to the child. Using terminology and ideas he does not understand can only cause confusions and fear. When a child is ready for more philosophical or theological answers, he will transmit that readiness in his questions. Meanwhile, speak on the child's level, not your own.

17. What most children want and need are straight, simple answers. With very young, verbal children, a parent might try to point out the differences between living and dead things. Or a parent might speak about physical facts. For instance, a dead bird does not breathe; it does not move, it does not eat; while a live bird does all these things. But remember, even these ideas should be given in short, simple bits of information. For a child is still likely to understand, even these notions, in his own terms. For older children, speak of death in terms of a natural

process. Talk simply about aging or ideas like bodily changes. Tell your child about leaves of a tree dying which give way to new leaves later on.

18. *Listen to your child.* We may have given the impression thus far that all discussions between parents and children involve only a question or two by an inquisitive child followed by a short, direct statement by the parent. This, then concludes the matter until the next situation. While a discussion may very well be of this kind, remember that it is a DISCUSSION. That means giving your child the opportunity first to express his own theories about death and dying. While a child is expounding his own ideas, listen to him carefully. Try not to ridicule him or make him feel silly or foolish. Show your child that you respect his opinion. Having done this ask your child if he would now like you to explain your ideas. Then tactfully correct your child's ideas, giving him the information you possess. But remember to keep it simple and direct. Then why not ask your child if he has any more questions. Go over, patiently, points he would like repeated. But let your child and his questions be your guide on how far to continue. But above all, do not let yourself dominate the discussion. Let your child express himself.

19. *Let your child express his fears.* What was just said above in regard to your child's ideas applies equally well to your child's fears. Even though they might seem ill-founded, even silly, to you, your child's fears are real to him. Treat his fears with respect. Let him express them

and then deal with them. If your child is afraid to sleep without a light or with his door closed because the bogey man will get him, then let him sleep with a small light on or with the door open. He will grow out of these needs if attention is not drawn to them. He will be comforted by your concern and sleep more easily. At this point, you are not being an over-indulgent parent. Rather you are showing your child respect. But at the same time, give him your reassurances. It is this that will replace the light and the open door later.

20. *The death of a small pet or animal can be made into a positive experience.* If your child's pet dies, do not try to dispose of it before he notices and substitute a new one for it. All you will have accomplished is to put off the inevitable. At some time, your child will have to come face-to-face with the death of something or someone he loves. Don't tell your child that his pet has "gone to sleep" or been "put to sleep." It is not helpful for your child to equate sleep with death. Your child will fight you to the last inch to avoid bedtime if he thinks that by doing so he will die like his pet. There is nothing wrong with telling your child that his pet has died. If the pet was old you can again help your child understand the natural processes involved. Let your child grieve for his pet. He loved it and it deserves to be cried over if your child does so. Don't make him bottle up his emotions. Let them come out and share them with your child.

21. *There is nothing wrong with a burial ceremony for a pet.* Don't let it get out of hand or morbid. But if the child is old enough allow him to have this opportunity to work out his feelings. By having this chance to "practice," your child will begin to master a death-situation and be more competent to deal with such situations again in the future.

TALKING TO YOUR CHILD AFTER A DEATH OCCURS¹*22. Where much love is invested, the loss is even greater.*

While we said before that the difference between the loss of a favored toy and a parent is one of degree only, it is a very great difference in degree. For the young child his parents are his first love, his true love. He is completely dependent on his parents. Not yet separated, the child is truly a part of his parents. When one of the parents dies a child can feel rejected, abandoned, unwanted and unloved. The child will be disturbed and alarmed. He will be afraid. And all these emotions and feelings will be heightened by the upheaval in the family. The child will not understand the sadness and grief expressed by the other parent. Tensions will be built up in the child. He is not yet capable of finding a way to relieve these tensions and fears. It is at this time, more than any other, that the child cannot be put off with simple reassurances and evasive answers. These will only confuse him more and not relieve his tensions or anxieties. They will only be bottled up for a later day.

23. Let the child take part. If yours is a family that shares all kinds of happy moments, from the riding in a new car to a Bar Mitzvah celebration, then all your family members should share the sad moments as well. To exclude the child during this period of great emotional strain will only add to his distresses. His exclusion from the family circle will reinforce his feelings of loss of love; of

abandonment. He will feel less secure and safe. These will then be the feelings he will associate with all deaths and they will come back to plague him later.

24. *Why send the child away to a relative?* If you need help in managing, have a relative come to stay with you if at all possible. You will not be sparing the child sadness by sending him away. Give the child warmth and love during this crisis. Let him act as a part of the family. If you are sitting "Shiva" or receiving callers, let your child help by answering the door, by taking care of the coats or by helping with the food. He might be in the way, but he will be with his family during a time of need.

25. *Perhaps we protest too much.* Let your child speak. He will have many questions, some of which we will discuss later. Your child will want to express himself to work his way out of this puzzlement. Though your grief and shock will be intense, even more than you can bear, at least YOU will have the mental and emotional facilities for coping with the crisis. The child does not yet have that capacity. He needs you to help him. You will have your chance to grieve. Help the child have his chance also.

26. *Grief hurts--so let's talk about it.* Let the child talk it out. This is especially important if the child was a witness to the death. Only by reliving the experience, by going over it repeatedly with the support of his family, can the child begin to manage some control over his feelings. Needless to say that while we want a child to express his

felt feelings of grief, we do not want to force the child into an outward expression of grief that is either unwarranted or incapable of being expressed by the child. Forcing an outward expression of grief will only serve to confuse the child. Nor will it add to his mental or emotional health.

27. Children do express and work out their grief through their behavior. This will especially be the case before the child has a decent language ability. Thus, the child may not tell you of his grief nor necessarily manifest it in easy to understand actions. The grief can be acted out in a number of ways.

28. A child may grieve through anger. Because of the loss of a very precious love-object, the child will be stunned. And in his disbelief, the child may act angrily and aggressively. Not wanting to turn his anger inward, toward himself, the child might smash a toy. (It is also possible that because of guilt feelings, i.e., the law of Talion or retaliation mentioned in the first section, the child may identify himself with the toy. Therefore in smashing the toy, he is really punishing himself for his feelings of guilt.) It would be entirely inappropriate, therefore, for someone to punish the child for his outburst of aggressive behavior. Remember that in such traumatic times people, in general, do not behave "normally." Why should we then expect "normal" behavior from a child. So, before you think of punishing him, look at the circumstances and see if the

out-of-the-ordinary behavior is not connected with the out-of-the-ordinary events.

29. *Little children at times "play dead."* This can usually involve elaborate games in which the grieving child acts as if he is dead. This is in no way a mocking of the parent's death. The child is role-playing, trying to master the situation. Don't stop your child from this and make him feel ashamed. Again, this will only tend to confuse him and bottle up his feelings. Let him express them in his own way.

30. *A child might cling to the living parent.* Since the child feels abandoned and unloved because of the death of a parent, he will cling to the other living parent. He is attempting to reassure himself that he is still secure and still loved. So if your child hangs on to you don't tell him to "stop hanging on me!" You will only reinforce his feelings of abandonment. Let him know that you will be around. Reassure him of your continued presence with him.

This clinging can also be expressed in the child pestering you to read him a story or play with him. Your child needs the reassurance of your love. Don't deny it to him at the time of his greatest need. You will have your time alone later. Give him your full attention now.

31. *A child might express other feelings more easily handled.* Thus your child might laugh at things that are not funny to

you. Or he might play, or act cruelly. The key to understanding strange behavior is to remember the strange circumstances.

32. *Be aware of excessive, persistent grief.* It is emotionally healthy for all persons to grieve at the death of a parent. It is a natural way to relieve tensions, anxieties and feelings. So it is also natural for the child. But grief that is expressed for an unusually long period of time is a sign that the child is having a greater difficulty than he can manage. At this point he might need more help than you can give him. But this is not your fault. It is a time of stress for you also. But be on the lookout for signs of unhealthy behavior. And go to a person who can help your child. Do this, just as you would take your child to a doctor if you saw that he had signs of the flu.

33. *You CAN cry in front of your child.* You are a human being too. You have as much of a need to express your grief as your child does. So if you feel a need to cry--GO AHEAD. Crying is a safety valve for your emotions. Don't bottle them up or they will burst out of you. And don't be afraid of letting your child see you crying. When he does, explain that you are crying because of the sadness or hurt that you feel. Tell him it is normal or all right for a person to cry when they are sad; just as a person laughs when he is happy.

34. *Let's not be afraid to let your tears cause your child to cry.* Cry together. Hold each other tightly. Your child

needs you and you just might need him. Both of you will endure the pain better, together.

35. *Why prevent a child from crying?* Don't force the child to cry either. But by no means should you stop the child from crying if he wants to cry. Don't tell him to "act like a man." He is not a man, but a little child. His shoulders are not yet broad enough to stoically bear a "man's" burdens. Besides we should rid ourselves of the notion that men cannot openly weep out of real emotions. A man expresses his hurt and his sorrow. So let yourself cry and let your child cry. Share the experience together.

36. *A child can react to the death of a parent in a variety of ways.* Crying is just one of the ways a child can react. Rabbi Earl Grollman listed ten ways a child could react.

A. *Denial.* The child will refuse to believe that the parent died. He will pretend it did not happen. He might go right on playing. A parent might feel relieved that the child going back to play immediately "took it so well." But in reality the child may just be denying the death.

B. *Physical discomfort.* The child, or you for that matter, may feel a tightness of the throat or other physical problems. For instance, an inability to eat, sleep, or do work.

C. Reacting with hostility toward the dead person.

If the child felt abandoned, he will feel unloved by the dead person. He will be angry at that parent for not caring enough to say goodbye, or just for the act of abandonment.

D. Guilt. The child may have at some point either wished the parent dead or believed that some bad behavior on his part was the cause of the death. Therefore, the child will feel guilty. Here you can reassure the child that he had nothing to do with causing the death of his parent. Since the child will believe himself the cause, a mere denial of this will not work. You have to supply him with another more reasonable explanation.

E. Reacting with hostility to others. We mentioned this before when we said that the child will turn his anger and aggression to objects and people outside of himself. Don't punish him for this because it may already be an act of self-punishment (See #28).

F. Substitutions. A child may look to others to replace the loss he is feeling. He may ask another relative if he loves him. What the child is saying is "I need to be convinced of people's love for me, will you please do that." A wise aunt or uncle will hold that child and tell him "YES!"

G. *Mimicing.* The child might also take on the mannerisms and characteristics of the dead parent. He might put on daddy's slippers and read the newspaper. Again, he is role playing and trying to gain control over the situation.

H. *The parent is perfect.* The child will idealize the parent. By covering up any imperfections the child may be attempting to relieve his guilt feelings over things for which he hated the parent.

I. *Anxiety.* The child begins to fear his own death and may even adopt the symptoms he believed his parent to have had.

J. *Panic.* This is a state of confusion in which the child does not see a possibility for a way in which his life can be reorganized or go on without the dead parent. Everything appears disoriented without hope of normalcy.

37. *Reassurance is the key.* Your child may experience none of these or any combination. But what he needs most is the reassurance of your love and continued presence.

38. *Should the child attend the funeral?* No child should ever be forced to go when he does not want to attend. But certainly, any child from age seven should be allowed to attend. A younger child may not be able to sit still long enough. Further, the funeral setting may provide opportunities for questions, the answers for which will neither aid

nor comfort the younger child. The younger child can be given the feeling of taking part, however, in the business of the family by being given duties at home. For instance, he can help prepare the food at the house of mourning. But the older child should be allowed to participate fully. He is old enough to sit through the service. Questions will be raised by observing the funeral. He is now ready to understand some of the answers. Why not prepare the child before he goes, so he will not be shocked by what he sees? Have him go with a close relative if you do not feel capable. Tell him that you will answer any questions he will have when you get back home. All this will allow the older child to mourn with his family. He will be able to derive great comfort from his inclusion.

39. *The questions will arise.* So let us try to anticipate some of them and look at some of the possible answers.

A. *What is death?* Death is the end of life. It is natural and all people will die. Will you die? Yes, but not before both of us have lived for a long time together. A time long enough for us to do many things together; things we love to do. Or, biologically: death is when a person stops breathing and eating and moving. Don't they get hungry? No, dead people don't get hungry. They are dead so they don't need to eat anymore.

B. *What makes people die?* Dying is a part of life.

After a long time, people get old. And when they are very old they can die. You are old, will you die soon? I love you very much and we will have time to do all the things we want.

C. *What happens to people when they die? Where do they go?*

Where do you think they go? I think they go to heaven, that's what Bobby said. Do you want to know what I think? OK. No one knows yet if there is a heaven. But we take the person and bury him in the ground. Why? Because a dead person doesn't need their body anymore. So when it is put in the ground it can become part of the earth again.

D. *Does it hurt when people are dead?* No. Once you are dead you cannot feel anything anymore.

E. *Why are you sitting on that hard bench?* (In the house of mourning.) It is an old Jewish custom. What does it mean? Well, it is hard and it helps me to sit up and think about Mommy and how much we loved her. Would you like to sit on the bench with me and we can talk about Mommy?

40. *A few last remarks.* These were some attempts to not answer specific questions as much as to indicate approaches in answering. Do add your own words and your own feelings. There is no benefit in using other peoples answers in your mouth unless they really express you. You are an individual

and so is your child. You know your child best. So remember to be yourself and be honest. Your child will understand that. Why tell your child things you will have to repudiate later? That is lying and your child will not understand that. Don't make God into the "fall guy." Let's not say it was God's will or that Daddy is dead because God loved him. Even if you do believe these things your child will want to know why God doesn't love him. And if God does love him, does that mean he, too, will die? Do share both your joys and your grief with your child. Both of you need to share your feelings and each other.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

¹Sigmund Freud, Thoughts For The Times On War and Death, in The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. by James Strachey, et. al., XIV (London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1957), p. 289.

²Irving E. Alexander, Randolph S. Colley, and Arthur M. Adlerstein, "Is Death a Matter of Indifference?" in Death and Identity, ed. by Robert Fulton (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965), p. 88.

³I make no value judgements about these defenses. Any statements here are merely descriptive. But cf., Charles W. Wahl, "The Fear of Death," in The Meaning of Death, ed. by Herman Feifel (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), "'We flee from the reality of our eventual deaths with such purpose and persistence and we employ defenses so patently magical and regressive that these would be ludicrously obvious to us if we should employ them to this degree in any other area of human conflict.'" p. 18.

⁴J. H. Herte, The Authorised Daily Prayer Book of The United Hebrew Congregations of The British Empire (Rev. ed.; London: Shapiro Valentine & Co., 1959), p. 133.

⁵Jakob J. Petuchowski, Prayerbook Reform in Europe (New York: The World Union for Progressive Judaism, Ltd., 1968), p. 215.

⁶The Central Conference of American Rabbis, The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship, Vol. I, Rev. ed.; (New York: The Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1956), p. 18.

⁷Maurice Lamm, The Jewish Way in Death and Mourning (New York: Jonathan David Publishers, 1969), p. 1.

⁸Alexander, Colley, and Adlerstein, "Indifference," p. 87.

⁹Frank S. Caprio, "A Study of Some Psychological Reactions During Pre-Pubescence To the Idea of Death," Psychiatric Quarterly, 24 (1950), p. 495.

¹⁰Theodore I. Lenn and Associates, Rabbi and Synagogue in Reform Judaism (West Hartford, Connecticut: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1972), pps. 98, 108, 253.

¹¹Marjorie Editha Mitchell, The Child's Attitude To Death (New York: Schocken Books, 1967), p. 31.

¹²Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, On Death and Dying, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1969).

¹³ibid., p. 12.

¹⁴ibid., p. 13.

¹⁵Edgar N. Jackson, Telling A Child About Death (New York: Channel Press, 1966), pps. 9-13.

¹⁶Carl G. Jung, "The Soul and Death," Trans. by R.F.C. Hull, in The Meaning of Death, ed. by Herman Feifel (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959). p. 4.

¹⁷Viktor E. Frankl, Man's Search For Meaning, Trans. by Ilse Lasch (New York: Washington Square Press, 1963), p. 106.

¹⁸ibid., p. 154.

CHAPTER II

¹Earl A. Grollman, "The Ritualistic and Theological Approach of the Jew," in Explaining Death To Children, ed. by Earl A. Grollman (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), p. 223.

²Abraham A. Neuman, "A Jewish Viewpoint," in In Search of God and Immortality, the Garvin Lectures, 1949 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 19.

³Plato Phaedo, in The Dialogues of Plato, ed. by Benjamin Jowett, Vol. I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), pps. 390 ff.

⁴ibid.

⁵ibid., p. 408.

⁶Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 19.

⁷Plato Phaedo, p. 436. cf. also A. Seth Pringle-Patherson, The Idea of Immortality (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), p. 35.

⁸Plato Phaedo, pps. 390-391.

⁹Harry A. Wolfson, "Immortality and Resurrection in the philosophy of the Church Fathers," in Immortality and Resurrection, ed. by Krister Stendahl (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1965), p. 57.

¹⁰ibid., p. 55

¹¹Levi A. Olan, Judaism and Immortality (New York: The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1971), p. 52.

¹²Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 20.

¹³I. Epstein, The Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nezikin, Vol. III: Sanhedrin (London: Soncino Press, 1935), pps. 610-611 (91a-91b). cf. also Tanhuma Buber, Vayikra, 12.

¹⁴Robert Henry Charles, A Critical History of the Doctrine of A Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity (2nd ed; London: Adam and Charles Black, 1913), pps. 44-46. cf. also, D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1964), p. 149.

¹⁵Kaufman Kohler, Jewish Theology: Systematically and Historically Considered (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1918), p. 287. cf. also, Russell, Jewish Apocalyptic, p. 287.

- ¹⁶Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 44.
- ¹⁷ibid., p. 42. cf. also, Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 9.
- ¹⁸Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 301
- ¹⁹Daniel Boyarin and Sidney Steiman, "Resurrection," Encyclopedia Judaica, 1st ed., XIV. p. 99 cf. also, Russell, Jewish Apocalyptic, and, George Foot Moore, Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era: The Age of the Tannaim (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1927), II, pps. 387-389.
- ²⁰Moore, Judaism, II, p. 390. and Boyarin and Steiman, "Resurrection," p. 100.
- ²¹Moore, Judaism, II, pps. 390-391
- ²²ibid., pps. 391-392.
- ²³Gershom Scholem, "Gilgul," Encyclopedia Judaica, 1st ed. VII, pps. 574-576.
- ²⁴Moore, Judaism, II, p. 393; cf. also, Lamm, Jewish Way, p. 221; and Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 22.
- ²⁵Lamm, Jewish Way, p. 228.
- ²⁶Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 287.
- ²⁷Olan, Judaism and Immortality, pps. 27; 56.
- ²⁸Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 24.
- ²⁹"Afterlife," Encyclopedia Judaica, 1972, II, pps. 176-177. cf. also, Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 58.
- ³⁰Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 19
- ³¹ibid., p. 25. cf. also, Kohler, Jewish Theology, pps. 307-308, Olan, Judaism and Immortality, pps. 61-62; and "Afterlife," p. 178.
- ³²Isaac Husik, A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1946), p. 400. cf. also, Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 65; and "Afterlife," p. 178.
- ³³Central Conference Union Prayerbook, pps. 72; 74; 76.

³⁴Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 4.

³⁵A. Seth Pringle-Patterson, The Idea of Immortality (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), p. 19 cf. also, Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 6; and Alexander Heidel, The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Phoenix edition, 1963), p. 222.

³⁶Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," pps. 5; 10-11.

³⁷Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 286.

³⁸Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 8.

³⁹Pringle-Patterson, Idea of Immortality, p. 16.

⁴⁰E. A. Speiser, Genesis, Vol. I: The Anchor Bible edited by William Albright and David Freedman (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1964), p. 11.

⁴¹Charles, Doctrine of Future Life, p. 42; Olan, Judaism and Immortality; and Pringle-Patterson, Idea of Immortality, p. 20.

⁴²Charles, Doctrine of Future Life, p. 45.

⁴³Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 10.

⁴⁴Charles, Doctrine of Future Life, pps. 37, 42.

⁴⁵ibid., p. 36. cf. also, Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 11.

⁴⁶Andrew F. Key, The Concept of Death in the Old Testament (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1961), p. 17; also Moore, Judaism, II, p. 289. However, The Spirit Returned To God Who Gave It. See, Charles, Doctrine of Future Life, p. 47; and Olan, Judaism & Immortality, p. 11.

⁴⁷Pringle-Patterson, Idea of Immortality, p. 19; and Charles, Doctrine of Future Life, p. 144.

⁴⁸Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 279; and Moore, Judaism, II, p. 289.

⁴⁹Charles, Doctrine of Future Life, p. 34; Key, Concept of Death, p. 17; and Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 11.

⁵⁰Key, Concept of Death, p. 16; and Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 9.

- ⁵¹Charles, Doctrine of Future Life, p. 39; Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 279; and Russell, Jewish Apocalyptic, p. 354.
- ⁵²Key, Concept of Death, p. 17.
- ⁵³Charles, Doctrine of Future Life, p. 43; and Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 11. Also Ecclesiastes 9:5.
- ⁵⁴This is in spite of Saul and the Witch of Endor.
- ⁵⁵Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 9. cf. also Isaiah 38:18-19.
- ⁵⁶Key, Concept of Death, p. 38. But see Heidel, Gilgamesh, p. 222, who disagrees.
- ⁵⁷Charles, Doctrine of Future Life, pps. 35-36; and Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 13.
- ⁵⁸William Oscar Emil Oesterley, Life, Death and Immortality: Studies in the Psalms (London: John Murray, 1911), pps. 156-157; and Key, Concept of Death, p. 41.
- ⁵⁹Key, Concept of Death, p. 21.
- ⁶⁰Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 279.
- ⁶¹Key, Concept of Death, p. 47.
- ⁶²ibid., pps. 47-48.
- ⁶³ibid., p. 54
- ⁶⁴Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 281.
- ⁶⁵Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 15.
- ⁶⁶Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 282.
- ⁶⁷Ezekiel 37
- ⁶⁸From an unpublished analysis of Ezekiel's Vision by Jakob J. Petuchowski.
- ⁶⁹Key, Concept of Death, p. 61; and Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 283.
- ⁷⁰William Oscar Emil Oesterley, Immortality and the World: A Study in Old Testament Religion (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1921), pps. 204-206.
- ⁷¹Daniel 12:2

⁷²Russell, Jewish Apocalyptic, pps. 357-359.

⁷³ibid., p. 361; and Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 283.

⁷⁴Russell, Jewish Apocalyptic, p. 363.

⁷⁵Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 45.

⁷⁶Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 22.

⁷⁷Mishnah Sanhedrin X, 1.

⁷⁸Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 23.

⁷⁹ibid., p. 19.

⁸⁰Kaufman Kohler, "Birds As Souls," Jewish Encyclopedia, 1902, lll, p. 219; and Jewish Theology, p. 287; also Olan, Judaism and Immortality, p. 97.

⁸¹Neuman, "Jewish Viewpoint," p. 24.

⁸²Kohler, Jewish Theology, p. 293.

⁸³ibid., p. 395.

⁸⁴ibid., p. 297, N. 1.

⁸⁵These psychological motivations are discussed fully in Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

¹Selma Fraiberg, The Magic Years (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), p. 210.

²Helene S. Arnstein, What To Tell Your Child About Birth, Death, Illness, Divorce and Other Family Crises (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1960), p. 161.

³Claiborne S. Jones, "...In The Midst of Life..." (Reflections on Some Biological Aspects of Death)," in Explaining Death to Children, ed. by Earl Grollman (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), pps. 127ff. also Lauretta Bender, Aggression, Hostility and Anxiety in Children (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1953), p. 42.

⁴Vladimir A. Negovskii, ed., Acute Problems in Resuscitation and Hypothermia, trans. by Basil Haigh (New York: Consultants Bureau, 1965), p. 1; also Robert Kastenbaum, "Psychological Death" in Death and Dying ed. by Leonard Pearson (Cleveland and London: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1969), p. 7; and also Robert Kastenbaum and Ruth Aisenberg, The Psychology of Death (New York: Springer Publishing Company, Inc., 1972), p. 477.

⁵Negovskii, Resuscitation and Hypothermia, pps. 1-27.

⁶H. Hamlin, "Life or Death by EEG," Journal of the American Medical Association, 190 (October, 1964), p. 112.

⁷ibid., p. 114.

⁸H. Hillman, "The Biology of Dying and Death." Archives of the Foundation of Thanatology, II (Winter, 1970), pps. 195-196.

⁹Negovskii, Resuscitation and Hypothermia, p. 1; also Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 114.

¹⁰Negovskii, Resuscitation and Hypothermia, pps. 43-87; also Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 183.

¹¹Kastenbaum, "Psychological Death," p. 15.

¹²Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 121.

¹³Kastenbaum, "Psychological Death," p. 12.

¹⁴ibid., p. 24.

¹⁵Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 8; also Robert Kastenbaum, "The Child's Understanding of Death: How Does It Develop?" in Explaining Death to Children, ed. by Earl Grollman (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), p. 93.

¹⁶Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," p. 94.

¹⁷Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 9; also Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," pps. 94, 97; Sylvia Anthony, The Child's Discovery of Death (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1940), pps. 81-99; and Arnold Gesell and Frances Ilg, The Child From Five to Ten (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1946), p. 489.

¹⁸Fraiberg, Magic Years, p. 37.

¹⁹ibid., p. 36.

²⁰This example is based on an analysis of Hume by Dr. Alvin J. Reines in an unpublished lecture. See also W. T. Jones, A History of Western Philosophy, Vol. III: Hobbes to Hume (2nd ed.; New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1952), pps. 298-311.

²¹Fraiberg, Magic Years, p. 44.

²²ibid., p. 43.

²³ibid.

²⁴ibid., p. 61.

²⁵Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 15.

²⁶Fraiberg, Magic Years, p. 51.

²⁷Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 18; and Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," p. 96.

²⁸Adah Maver, "The Game of Peek-A-Boo," Diseases of the Nervous System, 28 (February, 1967), pps. 118-121; Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," pps. 94-96; Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 16; and Fraiberg, Magic Years, p. 82.

²⁹John Schowalter, "The Child's Reaction to his Own Terminal Illness" in Loss & Grief: Psychological Management in Medical Practice, ed. by Bernard Schoenberg, et. al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 53.

³⁰Anthony, Child's Discovery, pps. 134-136; and Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," p. 99.

- ³¹Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 7.
- ³²ibid., pps. 7-8.
- ³³ibid., p. 177.
- ³⁴Fraiberg, Magic Years, p. 32.
- ³⁵Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 176.
- ³⁶Majorie Editha Mitchell, The Child's Attitude to Death, (New York: Schocken Books, 1967), p. 61; H. D. Dunton, "Child's Concept of Grief," in Loss and Grief: Psychological Management in Medical Practice, ed. by Bernard Schoenberg, et. al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), pps. 355-357; Gregory Rochlin, "How Younger Children View Death and Themselves" in Explaining Death to Children ed. by Earl Grollman (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), p. 74; Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," pps. 98-99; Bender, Aggression, p. 56; and Theodor Reik, Curiosities of the Self (New York: Farrar, Straus & Girovy, 1965), pps. 67-68.
- ³⁷Mitchell, Child's Attitude, pps. 55-56.
- ³⁸Rochlin, "Younger Children," p. 61.
- ³⁹Maria Nagy, "The Child's View of Death" in The Meaning of Death ed. by Herman Feifel (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), p. 83; and Reik, Curiosities, p. 67.
- ⁴⁰Mitchell, Child's Attitude, p. 57.
- ⁴¹J. H. Hertz, The Authorised Daily Prayerbook of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Empire (Rev. ed.; London: Shapiro Valentine & Co., 1959), pps. 19, 23.
- ⁴²Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," p. 100; and Nagy, "Child's View," p. 81.
- ⁴³Nagy, "Child's View," p. 83.
- ⁴⁴ibid., p. 81.
- ⁴⁵ibid., p. 83; and Matilda S. McIntire; Carol R. Angle and Lorraine J. Struempfer, "The Concept of Death in Mid-western Children and Youth," American Journal of Diseases of Children, 123 (June, 1972), p. 529.
- ⁴⁶Rochlin, "Younger Children," p. 62.
- ⁴⁷ibid., p. 54.

⁴⁸ibid., p. 78.

⁴⁹ibid., p. 80.

⁵⁰Nagy, "Child's View," p. 97.

⁵¹Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," p. 94.

⁵²Wayne Gartley and Marion Bernasconi, "The Concept of Death in Children." The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 110 (1967), p. 75.

⁵³Throughout this chapter, when we refer to the reversibility of death as a childhood notion, we are speaking of clinical terms only. We do not wish to imply that notions of Resurrection are infantile beliefs.

⁵⁴McIntire, Angle and Struempfer, "Midwestern Children," p. 529; Gartley and Bernasconi, "Concept of Death in Children," p. 83, and Nagy, "Child's View," p. 95.

⁵⁵Nagy, "Child's View," p. 80. But compare Gartley and Bernasconi, "The Concept of Death in Children," pps. 583-584, for a contrary view.

⁵⁶Nagy, "Child's View," p. 88.

⁵⁷ibid., p. 95.

⁵⁸ibid., p. 89

⁵⁹ibid., pps. 95-97; and Gartley and Bernasconi, "The Concept of Death in Children," p. 83.

⁶⁰Fraiberg, Magic Years, p. 242.

⁶¹Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 21.

⁶²Gesell and ILG, Child-Five To Ten, p. 293..

⁶³Bender, Aggression, p. 61.

⁶⁴Gessell and ILG, Child-Five To Ten, p. 293.

⁶⁵ibid., pps. 279-280; and Fraiberg, Magic Years, p. 242.

⁶⁶Gesell and ILG, Child-Five To Ten, p. 282.

⁶⁷Reik, Curiosities, p. 42.

- ⁶⁸ ibid., p. 44.
- ⁶⁹ Anthony, Child's Discovery, p. 59; and Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 22.
- ⁷⁰ Anthony, Child's Discovery, pps. 50-51.
- ⁷¹ ibid., p. 147.
- ⁷² ibid., p. 58; Reik, Curiosities, p. 37; and Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 23.
- ⁷³ Fraiberg, Magic Years, p. 243.
- ⁷⁴ Perry Childers and Mary Wimmer, "The Concept of Death in Early Childhood," Child Development, 42 (1971), p. 1300; Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," p. 101; and Helen Parkhurst, Exploring the Child's World (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951), p. 202.
- ⁷⁵ McIntire, Angle and Struempfer, "Midwestern Children," p. 530.
- ⁷⁶ Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," p. 101; and Mitchell, Child's Discovery, p. 62.
- ⁷⁷ Mitchell, Child's Discovery, pps. 559, 561.
- ⁷⁸ Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," p. 104.
- ⁷⁹ Mitchell, Child's Discovery, p. 62.
- ⁸⁰ Nagy, "Child's View," p. 81.
- ⁸¹ ibid., p. 96.
- ⁸² Schowalter, "Child's Terminal Illness," p. 58; McIntire, Angle and Struempfer, "Midwestern Children," pps. 529-530; and Childers & Wimmer, "Early Childhood," p. 1300.
- ⁸³ Dunton, "Concept of Death," pps. 358-359.
- ⁸⁴ Mitchell, Child's Attitude, p. 72; and Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, p. 45.
- ⁸⁵ Schowalter, "Child's Terminal Illness," p. 62.
- ⁸⁶ Kastenbaum, "Child's Understanding," p. 108.

CHAPTER IV

¹Marjorie Mitchell, The Child's Attitude to Death (New York: Schocken Books, 1967), p. 78.

CHAPTER V

¹In this chapter we will be referring specifically to the death of a parent or a very close grandparent. Although the principles involved can very well be applied to helping your child with any death that touches him.

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