Using Web Design to Facilitate the Grieving Process

Abstract

An unexpected loss can leave loved ones with a sense of confusion, grief, anger and sadness. When these emotions become overwhelming or don't become manageable over time, the need for therapy may become apparent, leading the loved one to seek professional support (Neimeyer, 1998).

While grief counseling has been discussed within art therapy literature (Wadeson et al., 1989; Ferszt et al., 1998; Bertman, 1999), the use of new technology, specifically web design, as a way of facilitating the grieving process has not been explored.

The goal of this presentation is to discuss my personal experience of using web design as a therapeutic tool after experiencing the sudden loss of one of my closest friends in September of 2010. The idea of using a website as a virtual mural will be explored, which can be built and contributed to by one person or by numerous people across various geographic locations. The website as a tool to eternally memorialize the deceased will also be considered, since once material is posted on the internet it lives forever.

Reference

Bertman, S. L. (1999). *Grief and the Healing Arts: Creativity As Therapy*. Amityville, NY: Baywood Publishing Company.

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Neimeyer, R. (1998). *Lessons of Loss: A Guide to Coping*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Wadeson, H., Durkin, J., & Perach, D. (Eds.). (1989). *Advances in art therapy*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons.