

## **Five ways, bereavement and the creative power of art and metaphor**

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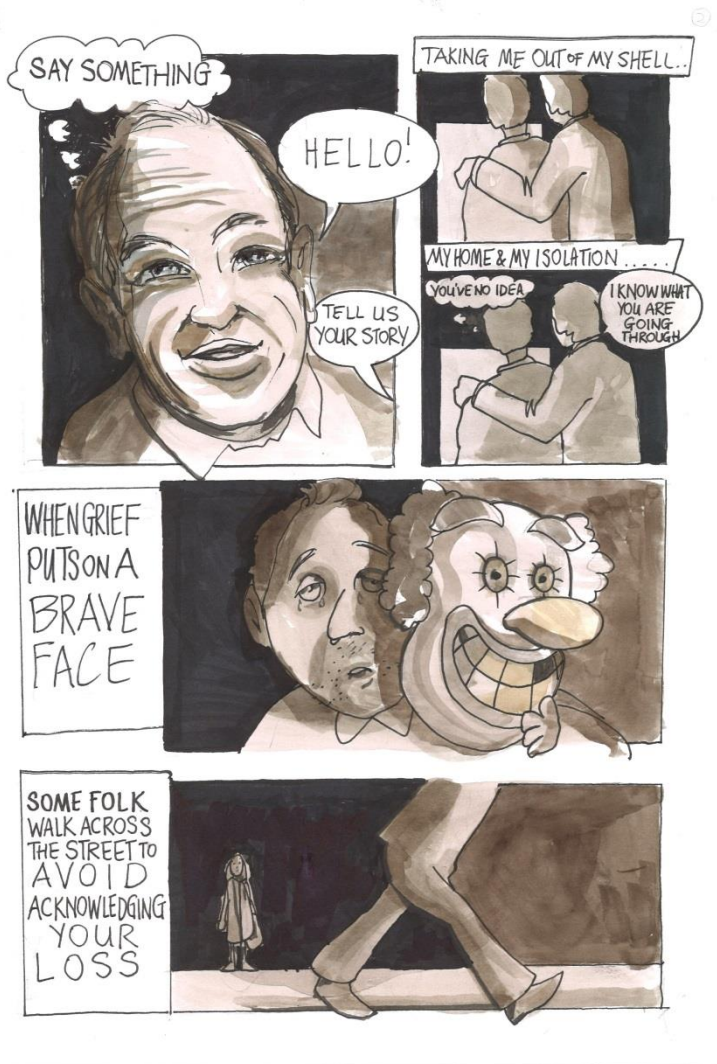
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# Five ways, bereavement and the creative power of art and metaphor

Dr James (Jim ) Turner

# Constructivism

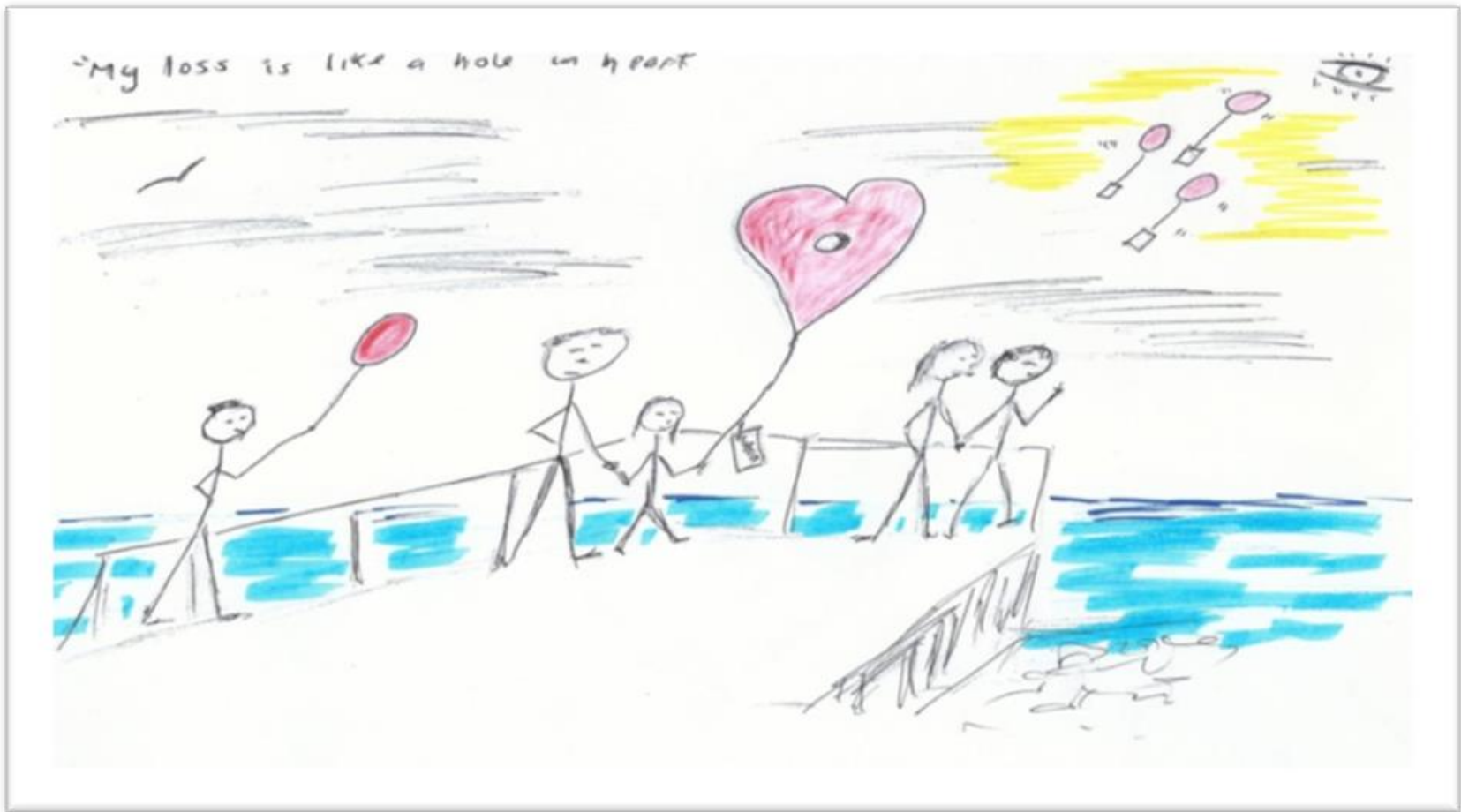


- Bartlett's observations (Good and Brophy 1990) constructivist approach resonates and is based on the principle that human beings are inveterate meaning makers
- We are weavers of narratives that give thematic significance to the salient plot structure of their lives (Neimeyer 1999 and 1998).

# Metaphors and constructivism



- Salka (1997) discusses experience based metaphors as an approach where one *'gathers information from a client's telling of his or her direct experience, a specific, individualised story or analogy often emerges...through the clients identification with this metaphor rapport with his or her unconscious mind is deepened'* (p23).



- Dad she said through her tears *'it's like I have been given a jigsaw but there's a bit missing, as if I have a hole in me that will never heal'*



# So what can you do? Five ways approach



...Connect

...be active

...keep learning

...give to others

...be mindful

# Connect...



Connect with the people around you:

- your family,
- friends,
- colleagues and neighbours.
- Spend time developing these and new relationships.

# Be active...



- Exercise keeps our hearts and bodies healthy. But how?
- We often talk about the mind and body as though they are completely separate – but they aren't. The mind can't function unless your body is working properly – but it also works the other way. The state of your mind affects your body.



# Be active...

- Tulle (2018) has found that of a survey of over 8000 people who engage in #ParkRun they are happier than the general population.
- So – if you feel low or anxious, you may do less and become less active – which can make you feel worse. You can get caught in a harmful cycle
- <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/treatmentswellbeing/physicalactivity.aspx>

# Be active...



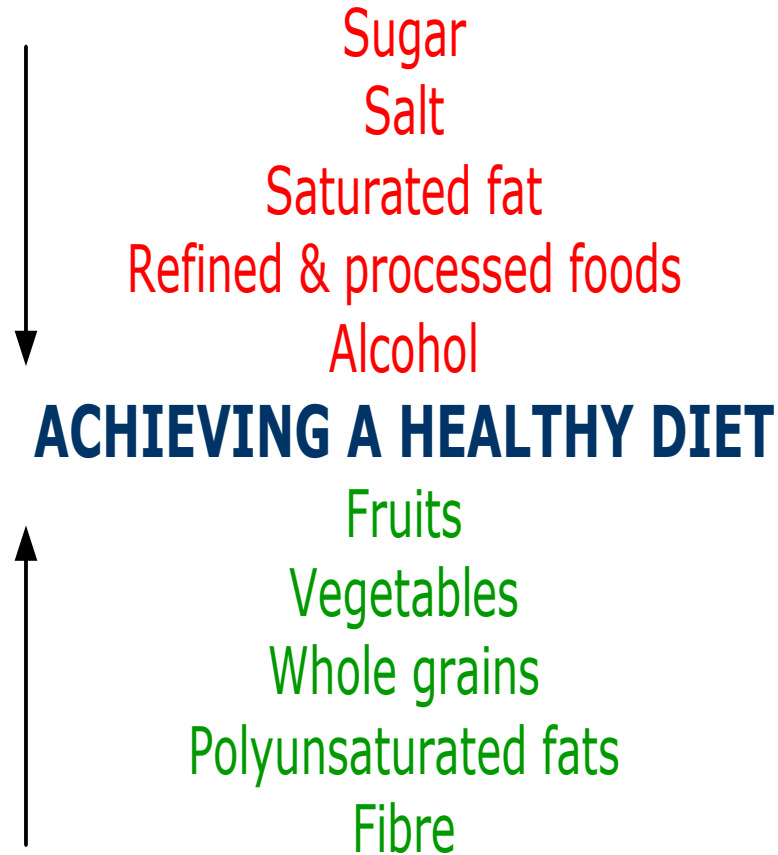
The health benefits are primarily psychosocial; making new friends, maintaining social networks and the stimulus of interacting with people from a variety of backgrounds.

You don't have to go to the gym...

Take a walk, go cycling or play a game of football.

Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life

# Be active...Fuel for the mind *and* body



# Be active...Fuel for the mind *and* body

<b>Omega-3 fatty acids are good:</b>	<b>Omega-6 fatty acids are good:</b>
Essential for mood & proper brain function	Keep blood thin
Control blood cholesterol & fat levels	Prevent fluid retention
Improve immune function & metabolism	Help to lower blood pressure
Reduce inflammation	Make insulin work more effectively
Reduce the stickiness of the blood	Product anti-inflammatory actions



# Be active...Eat yourself HAPPY....

- Lack of Folic Acid can cause depression and extra folic acid can relieve depression (in vegetables)
- Tryptophan has been used as a supplement for treating depression (in protein)
- People with too little selenium in their diet are more likely to be depressed (in Nuts)
- Extra zinc in a diet may help to relieve depression (in wholemeal)
- Omega-3 Fatty Acids (in fish oil)

BAD.....

- Saturated fat must be kept low (dairy and red meat)
- Sugar cravings may occur in people with depression, which can be damaging in the long term (avoid it).

# Keep learning...

- Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence.
- So why not sign up for that cooking course, start learning to play a musical instrument, or figure out how to fix your bike?
- ‘The participatory nature of the arts can develop trust, openness, honesty, cooperativeness, tolerance and respect, which in turn helps to build and nurture social capital within communities’  
(Putnam and Feldstein, 2000)

# Keep Learning...



- Arts interventions might provide positive outcomes in reducing social isolation, building confidence and motivation.  
(Stickley et al 2016)

# What client 'L' had to say...

*'As I progressed through the therapy process I identified some images that described my overcoming of this initial 'swimming through' and these were depicted by Jim and positioned at the 'other end of the vortex'. The image of the fish, for example, came from the idea of a fish that is able to keep on swimming, regardless of difficulties it encounters. The image of an explorer emerged towards the end of the sessions in an answer to a question from Jim as to how I now perceived myself, having gone through the process of therapy; in this case I perceived myself as being ready to venture into the potentially exciting realm of the unknown, complete with a 'toolkit' that I could use in order to examine and help any psychological problems that I found flaring up in myself.*



# Keep learning - Music Therapy

Leading research has shown that music therapy can significantly improve and support the mood, alertness and engagement of people.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuBl3TNrjek>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKDXuCE7LeQ>

# Give to others....

- Even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word.
- Larger acts, such as volunteering at your local community centre, can improve your mental wellbeing and help you build new social networks.

## On Giving: Kahlil Gibran

*You give but little when you give of your possessions.*

*It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.*

*For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard for fear you may need them tomorrow?*

*And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the overprudent dog burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims to the holy city?*

*And what is fear of need but need itself?*

*Is not dread of thirst when your well is full, the thirst that is unquenchable?*

# Be mindful...



- Be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.
- Some people call this awareness "mindfulness".
- It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges

# Some useful References

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# Farewell...

Cheerio....I hope this was helpful and well done on such a magnificent project!

All the best

*Jim*

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 Cruse  
Bereavement  
Care

*Somewhere to turn when someone dies*

**Sheffield  
Hallam  
University**

