

Classroom Activities for a Course on Death, Dying, and Bereavement

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Death affects everyone. Yet, it is often very difficult for people to openly discuss their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about death. This chapter provides activities designed to promote active student engagement in the exploration and discussion of death. This is accomplished in two ways. First, a novel classroom activity is introduced. This activity increases students' knowledge about organ and tissue donation while encouraging students to explore and share their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward organ and tissue donation. Second, an annotated bibliography provides a summary of published resources that contain a variety of teaching activities. The references provided in the annotated bibliography were selected based on the likelihood that the activities would increase students' self-awareness and promote classroom discussions. The activities described in both sections of this chapter capture the attention and interest of students, encourage them to become active participants in the exploration and discussion of death, and educate them about death, dying, and bereavement.

Exploring Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Organ and Tissue Donation: A Classroom Activity

More than 100,000 people are on the national organ transplant waiting list. Due to the shortage of suitable organs, approximately 19 people die each day waiting for an organ. This shortage is mainly the result of a lack of organ donors (Corr, Nabe, & Corr, 2009; www.anatomicalgiftact.org; www.organdonor.gov).

Under the stipulations of the Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act (2006), adults, emancipated minors, and minors authorized under state law to apply for a driver's license may make an anatomical donation for the purposes of transplantation, education, or research that will commence at the time of their death (www.anatomicalgiftact.org). If emancipated minors, young adults of driving age, and adults of sound mind are able to make their wishes of

organ donation known, then why is it that more than 100 people on the waiting list die each week?

Research suggests that the majority of Americans has a positive attitude toward organ and tissue donation (Feeley & Servoss, 2005). Although there is generally a positive attitude toward organ and tissue donation, there is a reluctance to discuss organ and tissue donation with family members and to register as a donor (e.g., Cosse & Weisenberger, 2000; Feeley & Servoss, 2005). Surveying 502 university students, Feeley and Servoss (2005) found that the majority of students expressed positive attitudes toward organ donation. However, only 11% were registered donors.

These findings suggest that a course on death, dying, and bereavement should encourage students to reflect on their attitudes toward organ and tissue donation (OTD). The following teaching activity consists of a series of exercises designed to (1) encourage students to explore their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward OTD, (2) increase student knowledge about OTD, (3) encourage open discussions, and (4) encourage students to share their views about OTD with their classmates and family members. The teaching activity begins with a reflection assignment to encourage students to explore their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward OTD. A questionnaire assesses student knowledge about OTD and provides a means by which the instructor can provide accurate information and encourage classroom discussion. The teaching activity ends with a reflection assignment to encourage students to examine their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward OTD after being presented with accurate information about OTD and being exposed to others' views.

Reflection Exercise I

This written reflection exercise encourages each student to think about organ donation. Hopefully, by reflecting on their thoughts, students will be more likely to engage in class discussion. Instructors should ask students to reflect upon their thoughts,

feelings and attitudes toward organ donation with the following directions:

Please spend the next ten minutes writing about your thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward organ and tissue donation. What life experiences (e.g., knowing someone who has received a transplant) and/or factors have influenced your thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward organ and tissue donation? If someone were to ask you how you feel about organ donation, how would you respond?

Questionnaire

After students complete the written assignment, instructors should ask students to complete the questionnaire (see Appendix A; http://psychology.missouri.edu/sites/psychology.missouri.edu/files/Bauer_DeathDyingBereavement_Appendices.pdf). The questionnaire tests students' knowledge about OTD and solicits information for class discussion. In Section A, students indicate whether they have heard a particular statement before, and then decide whether the statement is true or false. The statements are common myths about organ and tissue donation. In Section B, students complete a series of fill-in-the-blank sentences about OTD. In Section C, students indicate whether they support OTD, have had a personal experience with OTD, are registered donors, and have discussed their wishes with their family members.

Accurate Information

After the students have completed the written exercise and the questionnaire, instructors should provide general information about organ donation. Accurate responses to the first six questions on the questionnaire, accurate statistical information (as of January 2011), and general information about organ and tissue donation can be found in Appendix B (http://psychology.missouri.edu/sites/psychology.missouri.edu/files/Bauer_DeathDyingBereavement_Appendices.pdf). Additionally, it is recommended that instructors familiarize themselves with the most up-to-date information on organ and tissue donation.¹

It is recommended that instructors lead a class discussion to encourage active student participation in learning about OTD. This can be accomplished by discussing each of the first six items on the questionnaire. For each item, the instructor should record the students' responses (i.e., true, false, not sure) and the number of students who have heard the statement previously. Before proceeding to the next statement, instructors should dispel misconceptions. After all six statements are presented and addressed; the instructor should mention the proportion of

students who reported hearing the myths. Next, instructors should gather students' responses to questions 7 through 10, listen to the students' answers, and then divulge the correct answers (see Appendix B). It is important for instructors to highlight the importance of distinguishing between accurate and inaccurate information about OTD.

Classroom Discussion

While classroom discussions often lead to active student participation, it is important to note that classroom discussions on organ and tissue donation can be very uncomfortable for some students and can lead to intense emotions. Therefore, instructors should provide students with the number to the counseling center. Instructors should appreciate that some students may feel very uncomfortable talking about their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward OTD. Therefore, instructors should not force students to engage in the conversation. Rather, instructors should ask for volunteers to share thoughts, feelings, and attitudes about organ donation. Before beginning the classroom discussion, instructors should emphasize that in the United States individuals have the right to choose whether or not they would like to be organ donors. While the majority of the students are likely to express positive attitudes toward organ donation, some will express negative attitudes. Therefore, it is extremely important that instructors emphasize the importance of respecting each others' thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and encourage an engaging conversation where all viewpoints are welcomed.

Instructors can begin the conversation by taking a poll of students' responses to questions 11 through 14 on the questionnaire. Next, instructors can ask students to raise their hands if they (1) support organ donation and tissue donation, (2) partially support organ donation, (3) do not support organ and tissue donation, or (4) are undecided as to whether or not they support organ and tissue donation. Instructors should encourage a class discussion on the perceptions of organ donation. To start the conversation, instructors may want to ask questions such as: Why might some people choose to donate and others decide not to donate? To maintain the conversation, instructors could also ask volunteers to share their thoughts from the written exercise. As it is likely that the majority of the students will report supporting OTD, it is important to provide the students with reasons why some individuals may oppose OTD.²

Next, instructors can ask students to raise their hands if students know someone personally who is (1) waiting for an organ donation, (2) has received an organ donation, or (3) has donated an organ. Many

websites contain personal stories about donor families, patients waiting for transplants, and transplant recipients.³ Instructors may initiate a classroom discussion by sharing these stories. Or, instructors may initiate a classroom conversation by asking students if anyone would like to share his or her own experiences with OTD. Instructors may also want to ask the volunteers to share how this experience has influenced their thoughts, feelings, and attitude toward organ donation. Through discussing their experiences, the volunteers may help their classmates become aware of some of the thoughts and feelings evoked when deciding whether or not to donate organs and while waiting for a transplant.

Instructors can also take a poll regarding whether students (1) are registered organ donors, (2) are not currently registered, but intend to register, (3) choose not to be a registered donor, or (4) are undecided. The instructor can then ask students to share their reasons for registering or choosing not to register. Instructors may also want to ask those who intend to register why they have not yet done so.

It is extremely important for the students to understand the importance of discussing their wishes with their family members. Instructors can lead a discussion about students' decisions regarding informing their families and romantic partners about their wishes. Instructors may want to ask those who have talked to their family members about OTD to share their stories about the conversation (e.g., how did they begin the conversation, what was the outcome).

After concluding the discussion, instructors should distribute the handout (see Appendix C; http://psychology.missouri.edu/sites/psychology.missouri.edu/files/Bauer_DeathDyingBereavement_Appendices.pdf) which provides general information about organ donation, a list of additional resources, and information about making one's wishes known.

Reflection Exercise II

This written reflection exercise encourages each student to reflect upon what they have learned and their opinions toward organ donation. Instructors could use the following directions:

Please spend the next five to ten minutes responding to the following questions. What have you learned about organ donation? How has the class discussion influenced your thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about organ donation? Do you still have questions about organ donation? If you do, what are they? If someone were to ask you how you feel about organ donation, how would you respond? If you were to talk to your

family about organ donation, what would you discuss?

Conclusion

Instructors may choose to end this teaching activity after students complete the written assignment, or they may ask students to share their reflections. Although this teaching activity focused on encouraging students to explore and share their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward organ donation, there are a variety of activities (e.g., panel discussions, debates, role-playing exercises, site visits) covering many topics that should be utilized in a course on death, dying, and bereavement. The annotated bibliography below provides a summary of published resources that contain activities designed to facilitate student learning and enhance student engagement. The annotated bibliography is divided into 3 main sections. Resources in the first section provide a variety of activities that can be used in the classroom. References provided in the second section provide detailed information about a specific type of activity (e.g., small group discussions, journal assignments, service learning projects, site visits). Resources in the third section focus on activities for specific topics (i.e., death perspectives, grief, the stage theory of dying).

Annotated Bibliography

General Activities

Corr (1978) outlines 13 major topics to explore in an introductory death and dying course. For each topic, he provides background information and possible classroom activities that not only increase students' knowledge but also enable them to confront their own feelings and attitudes. He recommends various activities (e.g., role playing, oral and written responses to discussion questions, journaling, guest speakers, films, books, case studies) to actively engage students in the exploration and discussion of death and dying.

- Corr, C. A. (1978). A model syllabus for death and dying courses. *Death Education, 1*, 433 – 457. doi: 10.1080/07481187808252916

DeSpelder and Strickland's (2005) workbook accompanies the DeSpelder and Strickland (2004) text. In the first section of the workbook, the authors encourage students to examine their attitudes toward death by completing a death questionnaire and composing a deathology (i.e., an essay in which an individual describes their experiences with and reactions to death and losses and then reflects on how these experiences have shaped their attitudes and beliefs toward death). The greater part of the workbook contains study material for each textbook

chapter. The authors present chapter summaries, important terms, practice questions, additional readings, an annotated list of organizations and internet resources, and additional written exercises. These exercises enable students to further explore the course material. Example activities include: examining how death is depicted in cartoons, television, and music; reflecting upon death customs in different cultures; creating an imaginary hospice; and writing an ethical will. These activities enable students to further explore what they learn in class and provide a means through which students can gain insight into their own thoughts and feelings about death.

- DeSpelder, L. A., & Strickland, A. L. (2005). *A journey through the last dance: Activities and resources*. Boston, MA: McGraw - Hill.

DeSpelder and Strickland's (2009) instructor's manual includes an overview of the chapter contents, a list of objectives, a list of key terms/concepts, assessment questions, teaching activities, and an annotated list of audiovisual resources for each chapter of their textbook. Teaching exercises include topics for classroom discussions, role-playing exercises, interview assignments, potential field trip sites, debate topics, specific written assignments (e.g., journal, research), and suggestions for guest speakers. Because of the variety of activities provided in the manual and the number of engaging class discussions my class has experienced using some of these activities, I have found that this to be an extremely helpful resource. I believe that it is one of the most useful resources available for both new and experienced death education instructors.

- DeSpelder, L. A., & Strickland, A. L. (2009). *Online Instructor's Manual*. Boston, MA: McGraw - Hill.

Harvey and Hoffman (2002) share how Harvey engages his students in a large lecture course on loss and trauma. In addition to lecturing, he incorporates approximately 20 videos or video clips, engages students in discussing the videos, and invites 7 – 10 guest speakers. The authors provide background information about 3 of the videos. Students take 2 multiple choice exams, write a book review, and journal about a loss event. Evaluations from 1,295 students indicate that even in a large lecture setting the course and assignments not only increased their interest and knowledge in the topic, but also increased their knowledge about the diversity of loss, compassion for others' losses, and their ability to express their own losses.

- Harvey, J. H., & Hofmann, W. J. (2002). Teaching about loss: A special opportunity for psychology. *Teaching of Psychology*, 29, 319 – 320.

Knott, Ribar, Duson, and King (1989) describe icebreakers, classroom activities, role playing scenarios, and affective experience exercises (to aid in exploring, identifying, and discussing feelings) that can be utilized in a death and dying course. For each activity, the authors provide information regarding preparation, goals, time allotment, the procedure, and guidelines for discussion. The activities are appropriate for use in middle schools, high schools, higher education, and for professional education. Educators can use the icebreakers to introduce a group of people or a topic. For example, to introduce reincarnation, the authors provide a set of instructions and then ask participants to complete the following: "I'm coming back as ..." (p. 3). They also provide detailed instructions on activities that have participants calculate their longevity, contemplate the consequences of their death, become more aware of the finiteness of life, and discuss decisions faced by terminally ill persons. The authors also include sixteen role-playing scenarios (e.g., infant death, suicide).

- Knott, J. E., Ribar, M. C., Duson, B. M., & King, M. R. (1989). *Thanatopic: Activities for confronting death*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Mills, Reisler, Robinson, and Vermilye (1976) present age-appropriate learning activities for 4 age groups (i.e., 5-6, 7-9, 10-12, 13-18) in their comprehensive text. Educators can adapt many of these activities for older (including college-age) or younger individuals. For each exercise, the authors identify a learning opportunity, state an objective, describe an activity, and provide notes to the instructor. The authors gear the majority of the learning activities (54 out of 65) toward the 13-18 year old age group. The learning activities focus on a variety of topics including: difficulties in saying goodbye, feelings of empathy, death classifications, values that may influence life and death decisions, assassination, dying for a cause, cryogenics, and life insurance. This text provides excellent ideas that an instructor could easily adapt or further develop to meet his or her class objectives. Although the majority of the activities are appropriate for college-age students, instructors could use some of these activities to illustrate to college students the types of activities that would be appropriate for children of various ages.

- Mills, G. C., Reisler, R. Jr., Robinson, A. E., & Vermilye, G. (1976). *Discussing death: A guide to death education*. Homewood, IL: ETC Publications.

Thomas's (1984) edited volume contains a variety of resources for educators working with young children and young adults, including 6 articles focusing on instructional methods, a section on personal narratives (e.g., loss of a classroom pet [Butler]; loss of a student [Lubetsky & Lubetsky]), a list of fictional and non-fictional books, and an annotated list of organizations. Yarber presents 5 issues that a teacher should contemplate prior to teaching a death class and provides lists of possible topics to cover, appropriate guest speakers, and a variety of learning activities (e.g., field trips, role-playing). Dahlgreen and Prager-Decker provide detailed information for teaching elementary school children about death using 5 activities. These activities could be used to educate college students about how to explain death to children. For example, they suggest that teachers bring in both a living and a dead plant to initiate a discussion about differences between living and nonliving things. They also describe how to use children's literature to explain what happens when someone dies and to describe the feelings that someone may experience. Overall, the book contains valuable articles for someone teaching a death education course (especially a course directed toward young children or toward future teachers of young children). Unfortunately, some sections of the book are outdated (e.g., the list of books and organizations).

- Thomas, J. L. (Ed.). (1984). *Death and dying in the classroom: Readings for reference*. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press.

Specific Activities

Death visualization. Perlin (1982) provides step-by-step instructions for a 15-20 minute voluntary death visualization exercise that he uses with both college students and hospice workers. Using a combination of relaxation and visualization techniques, the author asks students to imagine experiencing a series of scenarios. The story begins with the students imagining going to a doctor for a routine physical and finding out that they have a lung tumor that needs immediate medical attention. The author then tells students that six months have passed and that there is only a short period of time left to live. The author then informs the students that they have died. After each scenario, students respond to questions. Students form small groups to discuss their visualizations. Perlin states that few individuals report feeling as though they had actually died, and many describe their feelings. Perlin asserts that this

exercise initiates exploration of one's own feelings toward death and dying and may increase empathy toward those who are facing death.

- Perlin, T. M. (1982). Death visualization: A teaching and learning device. *Death Education*, 6, 294 – 298.

Group discussions. In order to expose students to new perspectives and to encourage students to explore their own thoughts and feelings toward death, Thornton (1991) asks students to share their thoughts in small group discussions (6-8 students). Throughout the semester, Thornton assigns 6 discussion topics (i.e., death concepts, children's literature, dying process, euthanasia, grief, suicide). To prepare for the discussions, students read assigned materials (selected to increase interest and knowledge) and respond to questions by writing a reaction paper. In order to increase the likelihood that students actively participate in the discussion groups, the reaction papers are due prior to the discussions. Group facilitators encourage participation from all group members. Students receive points for their reaction papers and for participating in the group discussion. Evaluations across two courses indicated that the majority of students believed that the assignments and discussions increased their knowledge, provided alternative perspectives and opinions, and facilitated the exploration and expression of their own ideas.

- Thornton, G. (1991). Assessment of small group discussions in a death-and-dying course. *Death Studies*, 15, 473 – 480. doi: 10.1080/07481189108252773

Journal assignments. Doll, Kerekoglow, Sarma, and Hare (2008) state that some students may feel extremely uncomfortable if asked to share their death experiences with an entire class. Therefore, the authors assigned journal questions to gauge students' learning and to encourage class participation. Over the course of the semester, students completed two journal assignments. In the first, students recalled either the death or funeral of a loved one. They then planned their own funerals and composed their own obituaries. In the second, students discussed an issue covered in class with three people and wrote their own death fantasy (i.e., a description of how they envision their own death). The majority of students reported the journaling to be a positive learning experience. In addition to positive outcomes, the authors point out that journaling may be extremely painful for some students and that these students may need to be encouraged to seek professional help. The authors provide their journal instructions as well as additional suggestions (e.g., asking for volunteers to read an entry).

- Doll, K., Kerekoglow, S., Sarma, A. R., & Hare, J. (2008). Using students' journals about

death experiences as a pedagogical tool. *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*, 29, 124-138. doi: 10.1080/02701960802223183

Panel discussions. Dodd's (1988) students participated in a small panel discussion on bereavement. In this article, he provides information regarding how he recruits panel members, an overview of the activity, and information about guiding and moderating the panel discussion. The students (both the panelists and the audience members) responded positively to the panel discussion, and audience members became actively engaged in the discussion. Additionally, students reported learning valuable information and interpersonal skills that allows them to feel more comfortable interacting with the bereaved and prepares them to be more emotionally supportive of those who are grieving.

- Dodd, D. K. (1988). Responding to the bereaved: A student panel discussion. *Teaching of Psychology*, 15, 33 – 36. doi: 10.1207/s15328023top1501_7

Service learning projects. In addition to describing a variety of activities, Basu and Heuser (2003) provide detailed information about the preparation (e.g., securing appropriate service learning sites), implementation, and evaluation of a voluntary service learning (SL) project. The authors asked students to keep journals of their experiences, share their experiences with classmates throughout the semester, write an analytical paper, and deliver a 15-minute oral presentation about how their experiences related to the academic material covered during the semester. Students responded positively, indicating that the SL project enhanced their understanding of the course material and of death more generally, offered new perspectives, and created a greater sense of responsibility to the community. The SL site supervisors also provided positive feedback. The authors offer advice to others who wish to incorporate a SL project into their course. Instructors should find the Appendices extremely helpful because they contain an instructional handout for students, an SL contract, journal instructions, and student and agency evaluation forms.

- Basu, S., & Heuser, L. (2003). Using service learning in death education. *Death Studies*, 27, 901 – 927. doi: 10.1080/074811803 90241868

Site visits. Garces-Foley (2008) provides advice on how to increase the likelihood that a site visit (e.g., visiting a funeral home) is successful. She stresses the importance of planning the site visit, preparing students for the experience, and evaluating the site. She provides specific reading assignments and suggestions for cemetery and funeral home visits.

For a funeral home visit, she suggests inquiring about viewing the embalming room and crematorium. She recommends assigning chapters from Gary Laderman's (2003) *Rest in peace: A cultural history of death and the funeral home in twentieth century America* and Stephen Prothero's (2002) *Purified by fire: A history of cremation in America*. She also suggests specific websites for examining additional funeral practice topics and proposes several assignments that enable students to integrate their site experience with the course material (e.g., research paper, surveys, role-playing scenarios). This chapter should be helpful for instructors who are new to planning death education field trips.

- Garces-Foley, K. (2008). Teaching outside the classroom. In C. M. Moreman (Ed.), *Teaching death and dying* (pp. 171 – 185). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Supplemental readings. Carr's (2006) interdisciplinary compilation of readings focuses on 8 main topics which he labels: (1) heavens and hells, (2) resurrection and reincarnation, (3) death and philosophy, (4) being with the dying, (5) suicide, (6) the rights of the dying, (7) near-death experiences, and (8) preparing for death. Due the diversity of the topics, this book complements introductory death education texts and can be used as a supplemental reader in a variety of disciplines (e.g., religion, philosophy, psychology). In addition to providing a variety of readings (i.e., 4-7 readings per topic), Carr provides discussion questions at the end of each reading and presents possible small discussion group exercises and learning activities at the end of each topic. He recommends various films, topics for debate, people to interview, site visits, role-playing scenarios, and topics for further discussion.

- Carr, T. K. (2006). *Introducing death and dying: Readings and exercises*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

Specific Topics

Death perspectives. Fetro, Lyde, and Russell (2001) describe a series of classroom activities that introduces students to five perspectives of death (i.e., ecological, humanistic, religious, reincarnation, life after life), enables students to identify these perspectives in everyday surroundings, and encourages students to reflect upon their own death perspectives. Students define death and answer a series of questions. Music is used to introduce and illustrate the five perspectives. Then, students are divided into 5 groups and asked to draw one of the perspectives and describe it to the class. Students complete a self-assessment measuring the extent to which each of the five perspectives were part of their own death perspective. The instructor collects the

self-assessments and then summarizes the students' responses. This summary enables the instructor to illustrate how people have different death perspectives. Instructors may find the authors' outline of the main points of the perspectives, sample music selections, self-assessment handout, summary chart, and additional assessment techniques helpful for incorporating these activities into their own classrooms.

- Fetro, J.V., Lyde, A. R., & Russell, R. D. (2001). Perspectives on death and dying: Reflections in music and the arts. *American Journal of Health Education, 32*, 371 –373.

Grief. Engel (1980-1981) describes an exercise developed to help people working with the bereaved discover that, while there are some commonalities in the experience of loss, there are also individual differences in the grieving process. Engel provides background information and advice on implementation of this exercise. After viewing the emotional film *What Happened to Pity?*, participants shared their feelings and reactions. Engel provides the dialog that took place, which illustrates that the participants experienced a variety of feelings, including a blend of both common and diverse responses. The dialog also provides a structure that an instructor could use in the classroom. Although Engel geared the workshop toward those individuals who work with the bereaved (e.g., physicians, social workers, clergy), this group exercise, in conjunction with a class lecture, would enable students to gain both intellectual and emotional knowledge about the uniqueness of grief.

- Engel, G. L. (1980-1981). A group dynamic approach to teaching and learning about grief. *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying, 11*, 45 – 59. doi: 10.2190/72P1-90GQ-Y2MC-NJB3

Gould's (1994) goal of providing his students with a theoretical understanding of grief begins by having students examine their own personal losses. Students write about a personal grief experience that they are willing to share with a small group (i.e., 3 – 4) of classmates. Each student shares his or her experience in a small discussion group. As each person tells his or her story, one member compiles a list of the feelings and behaviors mentioned. Each group discusses similarities and differences among the stories. Then, each group crafts a visual display of their conclusions and shares it with the class. The discussion focuses on similarities and differences among the projects, in terms of research and theories. Gould reports that his students' visual grief models are insightful, and he shares four of the visual models created by his students (e.g., boat, roller coaster), to illustrate that there are many different forms of grieving.

- Gould, J. B. (1994). "A picture is worth a thousand words": A strategy for grief education. *Death Studies, 18*, 65 – 74. doi: 10.1080/07481189408252643

Kubler-Ross' (1970) stage theory of dying.

Goodale (1981) describes a classroom activity that facilitates student exploration into the feelings and reactions that a dying individual may experience. Students were assigned numbers and were informed that someone (based on their assigned number) would die by the conclusion of the class period. The author then asked students to share their reactions and feelings. Upon completion of the activity, students discussed their comments in conjunction with Elizabeth Kubler-Ross' (1970) stage theory of dying. Goodale provides suggestions to increase class discussion and to debrief students upon the completion of the classroom exercise. Comments made in his own classes demonstrate that this activity complements typical lecture material (e.g., Kubler-Ross' stage theory) on dying.

- Goodale, R. A. (1981). The stages of death and dying. In L. T. Benjamin & K. D. Lowman (Eds.), *Activities Handbook for the Teaching of Psychology: Volume 1* (pp. 135 – 137). Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association.

Conclusion

This chapter described a variety of teaching activities designed to capture student interest, encourage active participation, and educate students about death, dying, and bereavement. These activities facilitate student learning while enabling students to explore their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes. Additionally, many of these activities (e.g., panel discussions, guest speakers, role playing, class discussions, films, interviews) encourage students to not only reflect upon their own thoughts but to also entertain and contemplate others' views. As a result, these activities help students appreciate the many factors that can influence an individual's thoughts, feelings, and attitudes toward aspects of death, dying, and bereavement. It is my sincere hope that the aforementioned activities and discussion topics facilitate student learning and enhance student engagement in your classroom.

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Footnotes

¹The United States Government Information on Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation website (www.organdonor.gov) is an excellent resource. It contains statistical information, information about what can be donated, who can donate, religious views, transplantation basics, risk factors, as well as additional materials and resources. The United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) website (www.unos.org) is also an excellent resource containing information such as the history of organ transplants, statistical data, organ allocation, and patient information. The Gift of a Lifetime website (www.organtransplants.org) contains similar information (statistics, myths, religious views) as well as photo-documentaries and classroom activities for educators. Instructors may also want to read the Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act (2006; www.anatomicalgiftact.org).

²Surveying 502 undergraduates, Feeley and Servoss (2005) found that 14% percent of their participants, who were not registered donors, expressed a general negative attitude toward organ donations (e.g., “I just don’t want to donate”; p. 241). Others provided more specific reasons for opposing consenting to organ donation: 4% cited philosophical/religious reasons (e.g., “organs are meant for me”; “body wholeness”; p. 241), 2% reported emotional reasons (e.g., “don’t want to be cut open”, “scared”; p. 241), 1% articulated myths, and 1% indicated family objections to organ donation. Other researchers have found similar results indicating that those who do not support OTD provide fear of premature death, fear of bodily mutilation, anxiety, and religion as reasons for their opposition (e.g., Minniefield, Yang, & Muti, 2001; Morgan & Miller, 2002).

³The Gift of a Lifetime web site (www.organtransplants.org) and the Donate Life America web site (<http://www.shareyourlife.org/StoriesOfHope/>) provide photo-documentaries of donor families, patients waiting for transplants, and transplant recipients. Instructors and students can view pictures and hear stories from real people.