Caucasian American Grief Recovery After Spousal Death

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BACKGROUND OF STUDY:

* “Caucasians are more prone to protest or attempt to change a situation, effectively delaying, or even eliminating the need for a loss appraisal” (Bjorck, Cuthbertson, Thurman, et at., 2010, p. 436)

STUDY METHOD:

* Mixed-methodology design
* General demographics, coping strategies, (the Brief COPE) and grief recovery

*Hypothesis:*

* Elderly Caucasian Americans do not immediately cope as effectively after the death of their spouse in comparison to other ethnic groups

*Research Questions*

* Do older Caucasian Americans use Worden’s task-based theory in grief recovery?
* What coping strategies have been effective?
* Do older Caucasian Americans cope less effectively than other ethnic groups in response to spousal death?

*Purpose:*

* To identify type of coping strategy after spousal loss among Caucasian American adults

FINDINGS:

* 33 participants; prominently female; mean age: 68.48 years
* Majority of participants did not use a recovery program
* Used emotional focused coping (e.g.., acceptance)
* Some concerns about safety, loneliness, and money

DISCUSSION:

* Outcomes did not support hypothesis. i.e., There is no statistical difference of coping strategies by ethnicity because p value is higher than .05 (Carver 1997).
* Study limitation: Small sample size

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE:

* Social workers can: create groups, events and provide guidance in bereavement.

CONCLUSION:

* Participants use Worden’s task-based theory
* Loss and grief issues should be included in social work curriculum and then social workers will be ready to provide services related to the issues.
* Suggestions: More research, bigger sample, spousal death within 5 years

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