

Notes

Chapter 1

1. The sample was limited in several ways. Most participants were UK citizens, whose experiences of grief and ways of interpreting and expressing those experiences are likely to reflect a certain cultural context. Many of them were made aware of the study by the charity Cruse Bereavement Care. So, forms of grief that might lead one to seek such support are likely to be overrepresented. Ninety-one percent of respondents self-identified as female, and the most frequently reported bereavement was the loss of a partner. The study was undertaken between 2020 and 2021, during a time when social restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic may have led to some respondents having atypical grief experiences.

2. For a different use of the term “mourning,” see Rosenfeld (2020), who takes mourning to be a form of emotional experience that follows the experience of grief. Another use is adopted by Bowlby (1980/1998, 18), who identifies mourning with what I call “grief” or “grieving” while reserving the term “grieving” for moments of conscious distress. What I call “mourning,” he calls “mourning customs.”

3. However, other uses of the term “grief” pick up on quite different phenomena. For example, remarks such as “he gave me real grief for doing that” and “you wouldn’t believe the grief I went through to get here” do not relate to the kinds of experiences I am concerned with.

4. I also limit my consideration of “grief” to *human* experiences of loss. I do not deny that there are ways in which some nonhuman animals might also be said to grieve (for a detailed discussion of grief in nonhuman animals, see King 2013). However, I emphasize aspects of grief that are most likely specific to the human case, given that they depend on our social nature and temporally extended life structure.

5. An earlier model, proposed by Bowlby (1980/1998, 85), identifies four stages: (1) numbness, punctuated by anger or distress; (2) yearning and searching; (3) despair and disorganization; and (4) reorganization. Like Kübler-Ross and Kessler, he does

not think of these stages as a strict sequence and acknowledges that people “oscillate” back and forth between them.

6. Hence, excluded from such an analysis are moods that endure without changing much over time, along with enduring emotional attitudes such as love and hate. What I have elsewhere called “existential feelings” (consisting of a changeable sense of reality and of belonging to the world) are *presupposed* by the relevant dynamic but can also be altered by it (Ratcliffe 2008, 2015). I will return to this point in chapter 8.

7. For instance, Deonna and Teroni (2012, 4–5) begin their introductory text on emotions by offering examples such as “Ben is afraid of this lion,” “Arthur hopes that the weather will hold up,” “Ben regrets not having gone to the party,” “Rosetta is embarrassed by her behavior,” and “Jane is sad because England lost to Germany.”

8. It is important not to overgeneralize here. The loss of interpersonal regulators is not exclusive to bereavement. For instance, it can also occur with the breakdown of a relationship or when one has moved to a new place. Furthermore, not all experiences of grief concern those upon whom we depend significantly for self-regulation.

Chapter 2

1. A concern raised by Goldie (2000, 4) is similar in spirit. He observes how, in seeking to account for the intentionality of emotion, philosophers fail to accommodate feeling. Yet it is clear that feelings are essential to emotion. So, they are “added on” as an afterthought. But this then fails to account for how feeling is *integrated* into emotion.

2. Many contributors to the literature on grief and bereavement either explicitly state or assume that grief is a process. For example, Colin Murray Parkes, whose work has been highly influential, maintains that grief is not a “set of symptoms” but a “succession of clinical pictures which blend into and replace one another,” together comprising a “distinct psychological process” (Parkes 1998, 7).

3. Types of emotions can be distinguished from one another by their formal objects. For instance, while the formal object of grief is loss, the formal object of fear is threat. For further discussion of emotions and their formal objects, see, for example, de Sousa (1987, chap. 5) and Teroni (2007).

4. See also Helm (2001) for discussion of holism. Others similarly endorse the view that emotional values are holistic. For instance, Solomon (1976/1993) suggests that emotions involve not simply evaluative judgments but systems of judgments. de Sousa (2002) likewise endorses what he calls “axiological holism.”

5. The dynamic quality of emotions is also emphasized by Solomon. An emotion, he says, is not simply a judgment or system of judgments; it is a “purposive attempt to structure our world” (1976/1993, xviii). Later, he writes that emotions are

“engagements with the world,” which are not evaluative presentations of concrete objects but ways of being “entangled” in the world (Solomon 2004a). See also Slaby and Wüschner (2014) for an emphasis on emotions as extended engagements with our surroundings.

6. I use the term “object” here to mean the “concrete object of an emotional experience,” what the emotion is directed at. The term thus encompasses entities, events, and situations—past, present, and anticipated.

7. Solomon (1976/1993) also considers the relevant aspect of experience. However, he does not draw a clear distinction between the evaluation of something, the background to that evaluation, and the way in which the two interact, sometimes referring to all of them as “emotions” and as “judgments” or “systems of judgments.”

8. We can relate this to a distinction drawn by Gordon between “factive” and “epistemic” emotions (Gordon 1987, 26). The former arise when one knows p to be the case (as with joy and guilt), while the latter arise when one does not yet know whether p is the case (as with hope and fear). Phenomenologically speaking, the distinction between epistemic and factive emotions is not clear-cut. Emotional responses to events that have occurred implicate other possible events in all sorts of ways, and emotional anticipation of something often involves a change in one’s relationship with an actual situation.

9. In a complementary way, Valentine (2008, 93) observes that “our sense of self is dependent on our relationships with others, so that when a loved one dies, a sense of who we are as a person is under threat.” See also Cholbi (2019) for the view that grief both affects and reveals something about one’s practical identity. Varga and Gallagher (2020) also relate grief to practical identity, in considering a form of grief that involves concern over how our own deaths will affect those with whom our practical identities are entwined.

10. For current purposes, I use the terms “significance” and “mattering” interchangeably.

11. Price (2010, 31) comes close to acknowledging this, in suggesting that “habits” and “emotions” have yet to catch up with a current situation. However, if habits involve activities that we engage in against the backdrop of a pregiven experiential world, then grief impacts upon something more fundamental than habit. And, if habit is integral to the constitution of an experiential world, then it encompasses more than Price indicates.

12. The difference between propositional acceptance of something and its integration into one’s life is also discussed by Furtak (2018, 78–79), who refers to the “cognitive inadequacy of unemotional reason” and how grief can involve accepting something intellectually without being “fully aware of what it means.”

13. Attig (2011, 33) states that a *grieving* process is not itself an emotion and should be distinguished from emotional experiences of grief that “come over us.” However,

I reject this terminological choice. Better, I suggest, to construe the emotion of grief as temporally extended and as involving a blend of activity and passivity. This is compatible with acknowledging that there are also shorter-term emotional experiences that stand out as conspicuous and distressing aspects of it.

14. This is not to endorse the more specific view that a grief process ordinarily requires “grief work,” which involves explicitly confronting and effortfully, reflectively working through what has happened. See Stroebe and Schut (1999) for a critique of the grief work hypothesis and an alternative conception of how grief facilitates acknowledgment and adjustment.

15. Goldie (2012, 62) adds that grief is also “experienced as a process.” Consistent with this, C. S. Lewis (1961/1966, p. 50) writes, “I thought I could describe a *state*, make a map of sorrow. Sorrow, however, turns out to be not a state but a process.”

16. The point applies equally to the beginnings of many grief experiences. We often know that someone we love is dying and may also witness a decline in their health and abilities. The sense of actual and anticipated loss that this involves is sometimes referred to as “anticipatory grief” or “anticipatory mourning” (see, e.g., Sweeting and Gilhooly 1990; Doka 2002).

17. In thinking through the issue of how grief involves narrative disruption rather than a cohesive narrative shape, I am grateful to Luke Brunning for helpful correspondence and an insightful critique of Goldie’s narrative approach (Brunning unpublished).

18. For instance, Higgins (2013, 172) observes that “those who grieve make use of stories, which seem to assist the efforts to reorganize their lives.” Gilbert (2002, 223) likewise remarks, “The need to create stories to make order of disorder and find meaning in the meaningless is particularly relevant to the study of grief.”

19. We grieve for those we love. So, a further question to explore is whether the same points apply equally to the duration of love. It is arguable that they do not, at least not in all instances. If that is right, then the asymmetry is a potentially interesting one. I am thinking more specifically of romantic love here. Stories of people falling out of love swiftly and announcing all of a sudden that “I don’t love you anymore” are not uncommon. In addition, it is arguable that one can start to fall in love, only for the process to stop after a fairly short time. A narrative along these lines is easy to construct. For example, an interpersonal process might begin during the first few dates but end abruptly as one party picks his nose and belches loudly while professing a fondness for serial killers.

20. According to Michael Cholbi (2019), another factor that shapes the course of grief is the pursuit of self-knowledge, conceived of as knowledge of the values that constitute one’s practical identity. However, practical identity is something that can change significantly during the course of profound grief. So, what is most important—gaining

knowledge of a past identity, a current identity, what is common to the two, or what has changed? Alternatively, perhaps what matters most is not knowledge of one's own identity but insight into the *nature* of practical identity, including its fragility and the importance of interpersonal relations. Whichever the case, the nature of this "knowledge" requires clarification. For instance, does it consist, for the most part, of explicit, articulable propositions? Alternatively, is it largely prereflective and inarticulate, manifested in changed attitudes toward other people and life in general? Setting aside the specifics, I am doubtful that an emphasis on self-knowledge adds much to our understanding of grief's trajectory. Reconciling an experiential world or "practical identity" with the reality of the death already *requires* a process of the kind described here. What Attig (2011) calls "relearning the world" is unavoidable, at least if a loss is ultimately to be integrated into one's life. Self-knowledge of whatever kind can contribute to this process, as can much else. But any further opportunities that may arise for gaining self-knowledge are incidental. Nevertheless, as I will suggest in chapter 9, experiences of grief can indeed be sources of insight, even involving a *sense* or *feeling* of revelation, of glimpsing something that is more usually hidden.

Chapter 3

1. Several other philosophers have developed largely complementary positions (e.g., Stocker and Hegeman 1996; Goldie 2002; Döring 2007; Slaby 2008; Helm 2009a; Colombetti 2014; Deonna and Teroni 2015; Furtak 2018).
2. Deonna and Teroni (2015) appeal to "action-readiness" in order to account for the role of feeling. They suggest that different types of emotions involve different evaluative attitudes, each consisting in a distinctive set of diffuse, bodily dispositions. As these dispositions are phenomenologically accessible to some degree, evaluative attitudes are inseparable from what could just as well be termed *bodily feelings*. See also Frijda (2007/2013) for an emphasis on action-readiness.
3. Scarantino (2010) therefore objects to what he calls the "elastic strategy": we stretch "judgment" as much as we have to, so that it fits around emotion. When stretched that far, it also encompasses the "feelings" that others contrast with "judgments."
4. See, for instance, Deonna (2006), Döring (2007), and Tappolet (2016) for attempts to construe emotion in perceptual terms.
5. Slaby and Wüschner (2014, 212–213) similarly seek to capture insights common to both feeling and judgment theories. Emotions, they suggest, are "acted-out engagements with the world," rather than mere *reactions* to situations. To register something emotionally is to be drawn into a situation, and it is through these emotional "engagements" that we experience value. Emotions are not isolated judgments or synchronic, discrete feelings but "temporally extended episodes involving a person's entire comportment in and toward the world."

6. See also Furtak (2018, chap. 4) for discussion of grief and “sinking in.”
7. Slaby (2017) also suggests that affective experience can point beyond what is experienced at a particular time.
8. For further discussion of felt anticipation and degrees of determinacy, see Ratcliffe (2017, chap. 4).
9. Elsewhere, I have developed a different conception of affective depth, one that applies not to emotional episodes and processes but to what I call “existential feelings” (Ratcliffe 2015, chap. 5).
10. Pugmire (2005, 50) also identifies another type of case, where an emotion is experienced as irrevocably inadequate to its object, as in some religious experiences. In the case of grief, there may not be a sense of *irrevocable* inadequacy. Even so, one’s initial emotional response, in pointing toward what is to come, can incorporate a sense of its own failure to accommodate the gravity of what has happened.
11. Some types of emotion are always deep (or, at least, ordinarily deep), as with grief, while some token emotions are deeper than others belonging to the same type, as with the difference between being angry at someone who pushes clumsily past you on the street and being angry with someone who has just run over your dog for fun.
12. Prinz (2004) also suggests that an emotion can “represent” something without embodying the full content of what it represents, although our approaches differ in other respects.
13. Fuchs (2018) emphasizes the role of temporal desynchronization in such experiences.
14. The sense of having lost a part of oneself or undergone an amputation may be most frequent or most pronounced among bereaved parents. As Klass (1999, 29) writes, “When a child dies, the parent experiences an irreparable loss, because the child is an extension of the parent’s self.” A tendency to experience and think of one’s child as an extension of oneself can be understood, at least partly, in terms of how an experiential world or life structure is organized. To a large extent, the parent’s values and projects are directed toward furthering the life of the child: my possibilities are oriented toward the sustenance and development of your possibilities, which I take to extend into the future beyond my own.
15. For detailed discussion of the image/schema distinction, in Merleau-Ponty and elsewhere, see Gallagher (2005).
16. See <https://www.alexawright.com/after-image> (accessed 5 October 2021).
17. This is consistent with the finding that tactual stimulation of another body part often generates sensations in the phantom. Rapid onset of phantoms indicates that this process does not, or at least need not, involve neuroanatomical changes.

Rather, patterns of synaptic activity that were previously eclipsed by input from the missing limb become more salient; they are “unmasked” by its loss (Ramachandran and Hirstein 1998, 1614). However, Ramachandran and Hirstein concede that this explanation is only partial and cannot accommodate every aspect of phantom limb experiences. For instance, it does not account for experiences of voluntary and involuntary movement. For discussion of phantom limbs and cortical remapping, see also Ramachandran and Rogers-Ramachandran (2000).

18. For different approaches to we-intentionality, see, for example, Krueger (2013), Schmid (2014), and Pacherie (2014).

19. The profound effect that interpersonal loss can have on one’s world is consistent with a wider emphasis in the phenomenological tradition on how the world of everyday experience depends on intersubjectivity or intercorporeality. However, it is important to distinguish ways in which particular individuals can shape world experience from the roles played by other people in general or by a generic other. For a helpful recent discussion of intercorporeality in Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, see Moran (2017).

20. Valentine (2008, 126) thus remarks on how narratives of grief point to the conclusion that “self-identity, personhood and agency” are “relational and intersubjective,” in ways that conflict with predominant emphases in certain cultures on “separateness, independence and control.”

21. Køster (2021b) offers an interesting phenomenological account of “feelings of emptiness” in grief, which complements this analysis. He suggests that the sense of self comes to depend on “intercorporeal integration with intimate others” and is therefore experienced as bereft of something in the event of their loss (Køster 2021b, 133).

22. In contrast, Moller (2007) argues for the view that even a long-term partner can, at some level of description, be functionally replaced and that resilience in the face of loss is sometimes to be understood in this way. I will discuss this position further in chapter 6.

23. Radden (forthcoming) argues that, although the pain of grief differs significantly from paradigmatic experiences of localized pain resulting from clearly defined bodily injury, it is much closer to certain experiences of chronic pain.

24. It has been suggested that the prevalence of phantom pain is historically variably, due in part to culturally changing interpretations of phantom limbs by the medical profession and, consequently, by patients as well. It seems that, as pleasant phantoms have become rarer, painful phantoms have increased in frequency (Crawford 2014).

25. See Wilkinson (2000) for a more specific comparison between grief and a burn. See also Solomon (2021) for a discussion of grief as injury.

26. A potentially interesting difference between the pain of grief and the experience of bodily injury is that people tend to be unambiguously motivated to avoid the latter. As Cholbi (2017b) observes, grief's pain is not merely tolerated; we are even "drawn to it." This, he suggests, is due to our recognition that grief, although painful, can yield valuable self-knowledge. However, we could instead maintain that it is not the painful experience of loss that is valued positively, but the person who died and the relationship with that person. Hence, there need be no more conflict here than in any other scenario where (a) we are pained by p but evaluate q positively, and (b) contemplation of q involves contemplation of p and vice versa. Furthermore, it is not clear why we need to appeal to the pursuit of self-knowledge in order to explain why those who grieve are sometimes *drawn toward* what is painful. The need to engage in a process of comprehension and adjustment already suffices to account for this, the alternative being retention of an impossible world. In contrast to Cholbi, Atkins (2021) suggests that grief's "sweet sorrow" is a form of self-pity, which involves redirecting concern away from the deceased and toward oneself, thereby finding temporary relief from the task of confronting loss. The term "sweet sorrow" originates in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, where Juliet says to Romeo the words "parting is such sweet sorrow." Here, the sorrow is "sweet," partly due to the prospect of being reunited the following day. It also makes salient to Juliet the love she feels for Romeo. The latter applies equally to the case of grief. In chapter 6, I will discuss how grief often involves revising and sustaining, rather than abandoning, a relationship with the deceased. There is thus a positive aspect to engaging with the painfulness of loss: it contributes to sustaining a relationship that involves continuing love. This is entirely different from self-pity. I have no doubt that some of those who grieve indulge in self-pity as a way of finding relief from the pain of loss, and that some seek self-knowledge in ways that are painful. However, neither self-pity nor self-knowledge are required in order to account for our being drawn toward something painful. The combination of continuing to value a relationship, needing to comprehend and adjust to loss, and striving to sustain some form of relationship suffices for that. Furthermore, none of this gives us reason to think of the *painfulness of loss itself* as anything other than unequivocally, deeply unpleasant.

Chapter 4

1. See also Merleau-Ponty (1945/2012, 372) for the claim that emotions are "variations of being in the world" that are inseparable from their bodily expressions.
2. I am not sure which of Husserl's writings Merleau-Ponty is referring to here. However, the theme in question is most fully developed in Husserl's *Passive Synthesis Lectures* (Husserl 2001) and in *Experience and Judgment* (Husserl 1948/1973). Merleau-Ponty may have seen the latter.
3. For a more detailed discussion of this theme in Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, see Ratcliffe (2015, 2017).

4. In other writings, I refer to changes in the overall form of experience as “existential feelings,” which I take to consist in a felt sense of the *kinds* of possibilities that are available to ourselves and others (Ratcliffe 2008, 2015). One question that arises is how episodic emotions might bring about changes in existential feeling. How could experiences with circumscribed contents lead to all-enveloping changes in the structure of experience? What I have described here is one way in which that happens. Numerous localized phenomenological disruptions add up to a change in the overall form of experience, its style of temporal unfolding. Nothing seems homely or certain anymore; the world as a whole no longer offers certain kinds of possibilities.

5. Elsewhere, I have suggested that this overarching “style” of prereflective anticipation is one of the things that Wittgenstein is concerned with in the notes posthumously published as *On Certainty* (Wittgenstein 1969; Ratcliffe 2017, chap. 6).

6. Ami Harbin (2016, 2) refers to such experiences as “disorientations.” These, she writes, are “temporally extended, major life experiences that make it difficult for individuals to know how to go on. They often involve feeling deeply out of place, unfamiliar, or not at home.”

7. See also Ingerslev (2018) for a discussion of how grief can involve a loss of experienced meaning, including linguistic meaning, and how this relates to the loss of a life structure that was shared with the deceased.

8. For instance, Kirmayer (2007) suggests that traumatized refugees are faced with something structurally similar, when negotiating a gulf between “disparate worlds” and attempting to convey it to others.

9. See Ratcliffe (2021) for further discussion of Merleau-Ponty on linguistic experience and possibility. See also Kee (2020) for an account of the horizontal structure of linguistic experience. Kee suggests that the experience of spoken words is comparable to that of using a tool: “As a first approximation, the horizons of an object, tool, or (as I shall argue) a word are the networks of typical habitual associations that inform our perception of and interaction with that object, tool, or word and prefigure further continuations of experience with it” (906).

10. For an account of how Merleau-Ponty interprets and draws upon Saussure, see Andén (2018). For a wider-ranging discussion of Merleau-Ponty on language, see Edie (1976).

11. There is more to be said about what, exactly, these possibilities attach to and how they should be integrated into a broader account of linguistic meaning. They do not depend on some quality of perceived speech, given that they also feature in our experiences of written texts. Hearing and reading a word are analogous to encountering the same entity via sight and touch. As Edie (1976, 88) observes, drawing on passages from *Phenomenology of Perception*, “words carry, beneath their conceptual meanings and forms, an ‘immanent’ ‘existential meaning,’ a ‘value of

use,' an 'affective value,' which is not merely *rendered* by them but which *'inhabits* them.'" This is what I have suggested we should think of in terms of a horizontal structure integral to experiences of written and spoken words. There is a great deal more to be said regarding the *kinds* of possibilities involved in our experiences of written and spoken language (what they are possibilities *of*) and how these possibilities relate to, influence, and are influenced by our wider experiences of the world.

12. The term "maximum grip" is often employed to refer to Merleau-Ponty's conception of how we prereflectively position ourselves to achieve an optimal vantage point for perceiving something (Dreyfus 2002; Merleau-Ponty 1945/2012, part II, chap. 3). We could similarly speak of "linguistic maximum grip," a dynamic, progressive way of orienting ourselves toward another person's words, such that we are better placed to resolve a holistic, idiosyncratic system of possibilities.

13. In light of these considerations, we might reflect on the use of explicitly *poetic* language in grief. Neimeyer (1999, 81) offers the following remarks: "Literal language fails to capture the nuances of feeling and meaning that constitute our unique sense of loss. Poetic self-expression presses back the boundaries of public speech, articulating symbolically what cannot be stated plainly." Relating language to the horizontal structure of experience and its disruption serves to illuminate at least some of the forms this "pressing back" can take.

14. Colombetti (2009, 17) similarly suggests that the expression of emotional feelings, including their verbal expression, sometimes lends precision to them. Naming emotions, for instance, "squeezes complex feelings into something compact." This can be thought of in terms of the linguistic completion of emotion, rather than the expression of a preformed experience. One way in which language can add determinacy to an experience is by resolving its content—what an emotional feeling is about. In addition, it can contribute to the sense of which *kind* of emotion one is experiencing. See also Ratcliffe (2017) for the view that language contributes to emotional experience in these ways.

15. More recently, Noë (2012, 27–28) has endorsed a similar view, according to which thought can be a "kind of extended perception," involving a grasp of what one would have to do in order to access the relevant entity. He adds that, although this does not apply universally, "all thought is directed to its object thanks to the thinker's skillful access to the object."

16. See also Brinkmann (2020, 30–31) for the view that human grief is distinctive in virtue of how we relate to time.

17. Fuchs (2018, 50) also discusses a form of temporal desynchronization that originates, not in loss of life structure, but in a conflict between the "ongoing reality of everyday life" and the "persisting presence of the loved one."

18. Ronald de Sousa (1987, chap. 7) has suggested that emotions solve the "Frame Problem," construed as the problem of securing relevance so that our thoughts have

the right material to work with. If that is so, then solving the problem is an ongoing task. Even everyday situations involve subtle perturbations of the significant world within which we think and act. It is never wholly determinate, even during times of relative stability.

19. Burley (2015, 156) thus suggests that we should be wary of the “tendency to take a phenomenon that goes very deep in our lives and to discuss it in ways that turn it into a logical conundrum.”

20. See also Markovic (2021) for a discussion of involuntary transformative experience. Markovic rightly suggests that the emphasis, in the case of grief and other involuntary transformative experiences, should be placed on the transformation process itself, rather than the contrast between pre- and post-transformation states of affairs.

21. Harbin (2016) offers a complementary critique of certain ethical approaches for failing to address how ethical life is to proceed in the context of what she calls “disorientation.”

Chapter 5

1. Brinkmann (2020, chap. 3) suggests that certain phenomenological approaches to grief (including mine) are too pragmatic in emphasis and neglect the ways in which grief involves the personal and the particular. Here and in the remaining chapters, I dispense with such concerns by addressing the specifically *interpersonal* aspects of grief and how they relate to practical disruptions. See Ratcliffe (2015, 2017) for wider-ranging discussion of the phenomenological centrality of interpersonal experience and relatedness. See also Ratcliffe (2020a) for a consideration of the interpersonal phenomenology of grief.

2. Sabucedo, Evans, and Hayes (2020) provide a detailed and wide-ranging overview of research on the relationships between bereavement hallucinations and culture.

3. See Kamp et al. (2020) for a survey of literature on perceptual and perception-like experiences of the deceased, which considers different methodological and disciplinary perspectives.

4. For instance, Daggett (2005) focuses on experiences of communication rather than mere presence, where communication can include perception-like experiences but is also wider-ranging.

5. This distinction is also applicable to other phenomena labeled as “hallucination.” For instance, it is arguable that auditory verbal hallucinations, in psychiatric contexts and more widely, fall into two broad categories: those involving certain auditory qualities and those involving a less determinate sense of receiving a communication from elsewhere (Ratcliffe 2017).

6. There is a further distinction between experiencing a *personal* style and experiencing a more general style that is indicative of an *animate* being. Although this

distinction is not drawn clearly by Merleau-Ponty, I suggest that the difference is attributable to a certain way of being *affected* that is typical of the interpersonal.

7. There are also complementary themes in the writings of Levinas. See Brinkmann (2020, 71), whose discussion of grief draws on Levinas in order to emphasize the importance of acknowledging the “*otherness of the other*.”

8. I have referred both to experiencing *possibilities* and to being *affected*. As discussed in chapter 3, I take the two to be inextricable; it is through the feeling body that we experience various kinds of possibilities, including relational possibilities involving other people. The emotional qualities of an interpersonal experience thus reflect the kinds of possibilities that are most salient (Ratcliffe 2015, 2017). During patterned interactions between people, feelings and associated possibilities unfold in structured ways. Adopting a complementary approach, Køster (2021a) draws on work by Fuchs (e.g., 2017, 2018) to suggest that our sense of the presence of a particular person involves a distinctive bodily “resonance” to that person’s “style,” a felt sense of the person. While Køster emphasizes complex multisensory experiences, I propose that such experiences can also arise without sensory experiences of the person in one or more externally directed sensory modalities. There remains a distinctive *way of being affected*, even though many of the possibilities associated with real-time interaction, such as possibilities for affecting that person, may be lacking.

9. This view of how our possibilities depend on those of others complements the position set out by Beauvoir (1947/2018), according to which human freedom is to be conceived of in terms of a future that remains indeterminate in significant ways, where this indeterminacy is only sustainable if one recognizes and is committed to the freedom of others upon whom it depends.

10. This sense of connection can also be fragile, incomplete, and—at times—unsustainable. It is consistent with intermittent or constant feelings of loss and absence (a point that applies equally to episodic experiences of presence and to less pronounced, longer-term experiences of being affected). Hence, what I have identified here remains compatible with the final sentence of Sartre’s memorial essay: “There is nothing to be concluded from this except that this long friendship, neither done nor undone, obliterated when it was about to be reborn, or broken, remains inside me, an ever-open wound” (1998, 624).

11. An experience of this nature may well be what is referred to here: “I have felt his presence intensely on a few occasions at night in our room. I can feel a physical sensation in my body that is unexplainable” (#17).

12. In a commentary on Lewis’s text, Rowan Williams offers the following insightful remark: “The implication is also that God *cannot but* continuously shatter your images of him. And given what has been said about how it is only the living being that overturns our projections, that maintains the tang of otherness, it is the shifting, painfully expanding character of our thought about God that best shows what

it means to call him ‘living.’ If our experience is littered with broken images of God—and deep pain and grief will certainly do this—then we are left either with no believable God at all or with a God whose otherness becomes daily more resistant and powerful; and alive” (Lewis 2015, 86–87).

13. It could well be that various other phenomena commonly labeled as “hallucinations” do not conform to orthodox definitions either. For instance, a hallucination of a drinking glass might be construed as a sensory experience that is similar or identical in content to that of perceiving a drinking glass. However, what may be lacking from such an experience is a sense of the associated possibilities—of touching it, picking it up, drinking from it. Without that, there is a diminished sense of presence. Alternatively, a hallucination might involve experiencing the kinds of possibilities associated with being in the presence of a drinking glass but without the associated sensory contents. It is arguable that experiences of both types occur, that they are different in kind, and that they are both categorized together as “hallucinations” due to lack of phenomenological sensitivity (Ratcliffe 2017).

14. For instance, see Ratcliffe (2017, chap. 4) for a discussion of certain “hallucinations” that arise in psychiatric contexts and involve a distinctively personal sense of threat.

15. See also Barthes (1980/2000) for discussion of how a photograph can capture a person in a way that does not depend on an accurate likeness.

Chapter 6

1. Consistent with this, Steffen and Coyle (2011, 595) observe that there is sometimes a “simultaneous sense of intensely felt loss alongside the perceived continuation of a living relationship.”

2. Dubose (1997, 373) also applies Merleau-Ponty’s discussion of reversibility to the phenomenology of grief: “The chiasmic structure of self and other is drowned in the reversibility of *dis*-appearance. In numbness and shock, one’s lived body has died *with* the lost loved one. A *reversibility occurs between the dis-appearance of the other and the dis-appearance of myself.*”

3. See Ruin (2018) for an approach that explores how shared, cultural experience is structured in ways that involve our “being with” the dead as well as the living.

4. For further discussion of this issue, see also Boelen et al. (2006).

5. Root and Exline (2014) observe that empirical studies report conflicting findings and conclude that more work is needed in order to identify what the important dimensions of variation actually are.

6. For example, bereavement by suicide is often associated with feelings of guilt, rejection, anger, shame, and confusion (Young et al. 2012). These are likely to interfere

with the development of bonds and also to influence the emotional qualities of bonds. For instance, it has been suggested the circumstances of the death can impede one's attempts to make sense of loss, in ways that are inseparable from how one relates to the deceased (Neimeyer, Baldwin, and Gillies 2006).

7. According to McCracken (2005, 145), the significance of biographical events remains open while someone is still alive, as that person retains the ability to act in ways that alter it. But, once the person has died, we can, as part of a grief process, look upon their life as a whole and assign a stable, enduring significance to events. I have argued that remembering the dead can also involve something importantly different: continuing to be affected by them, finding new forms of significance in the person's biography, and remaining open to new possibilities.

8. Elsewhere, however, I have offered a detailed critique of the view that belief-desire psychology is central to interpersonal understanding (Ratcliffe 2007).

9. One might object that Freud is in fact referring to "mourning" rather than "grief." However, this is an artifact of the English translation. The original German term, "Trauer," does not respect that distinction.

10. Price (2010, 30) uses different terms to make a similar point, suggesting that grief incorporates two distinct kinds of sadness: an initial "anguish" and an enduring "desolation."

11. Attig (2000) also emphasizes how continuing to love a person who has died requires coming to accept one's separation from them.

12. See Bonanno (2009) for discussion of the relevant findings. I will return to the notion of "resilience" in chapter 8.

13. Preston-Roedder and Preston-Roedder (2018) are also critical of Moller for assuming an overly narrow conception of what it is for someone to be of importance in one's life.

14. Cholbi does not regard grief itself as exclusively past-directed. Instead, he conceives of it as "the unfolding of an engagement with a relationship that has been lost or transformed" (Cholbi 2017a, 270). Nevertheless, the *object* of grief remains something that *has* happened—the loss of certain aspects of a relationship. Cholbi thus takes the rationality of grief to be "backward-looking," in a manner comparable to that of other emotions such as joy.

15. Most of the study participants who described grief over childlessness were members of the support network Gateway Women (<https://gateway-women.com>; last accessed 6 September 2021). The network founder, Jody Day, has also written a detailed account of her own grief over childlessness (Day 2016).

16. Mehmel (2021) also observes that grief is not simply a reflection of the extent to which one's life structure depended on a particular person, as it involves losing

possibilities that are integral to one's sense of self and orientation toward the future. Such a loss does not require prior establishment of shared practices involving the deceased.

17. Jody Day (2016, 220) writes, "The shift in identity from being a woman who hopes, one day, to become a mother to one who knows, without question, that it's never going to happen is so huge that it throws *everything* into question."

18. For further discussion of non-bereavement losses, see the essays collected in Harris (2020).

19. This emphasis on actualizing one another's possibilities, in ways that are inextricable, complements an account of interpersonal love that Sara Heinämaa (2020) pieces together from some of Husserl's writings. According to Heinämaa's interpretation of Husserl, love relates to the dynamic, temporal structure of human subjectivity. Loving someone is not a matter of caring for a "stable," "fixed" thing. Rather, it involves "a connection between unique ways of becoming" (Heinämaa 2020, 432).

20. As de Sousa (1987, 123) observes, "There are as many formal objects as there are different emotion types." For discussion of emotions and their formal objects, see also Teroni (2007).

Chapter 7

1. Thompson (1994) points out that these different conceptions of emotion regulation are not always made explicit or distinguished from one another.

2. See also Mikulincer, Shaver, and Pereg (2003); Shaver and Mikulincer (2014); and Varga and Krueger (2013) for statements of the view that early attachment serves as a model for conceptualizing interpersonally distributed regulation processes that continue into adulthood.

3. Slaby (2014) suggests that social interaction sometimes facilitates *types* of emotional experience that would otherwise be inaccessible to a person.

4. Mikulincer, Shaver, and Pereg (2003, 82–83) relate this seeking of support from others to the theme of attachment. They suggest that, when we lack the resources for coping with certain situations and associated emotions, the ability to draw on external regulators is contingent on our "attachment history."

5. In developing their account of emotional scaffolding, Colombetti and Krueger (2015) draw on a broader account of the nature and role of scaffolding proposed by Sterelny (2010).

6. Nadeau (1998) provides a detailed account of "family grief," which considers how families operate as units that make sense of events together, how grief is shaped and regulated by family dynamics, and how relationships and patterns of interactions within families are altered by the deaths of family members.

7. See, for example, Dunahoo et al. (1998) for discussion of gender differences in coping styles, and Mesquita, De Leersnyder, and Albert (2014) for cultural differences.

8. Delegation, although not explicitly recognized as such, is arguably ubiquitous in infancy. As Reeck, Ames, and Ochsner (2016, 48) put it, where one party is lacking in regulatory capacities, “a social regulator can use their executive capacity to implement regulatory strategies on behalf of the target.” Thompson (2014, 174) observes that, even in adulthood, our emotions continue to be “managed by others.”

9. Bowlby (1980/1998, 232) recognizes that bereavement can involve this distinctive challenge: “Not infrequently after a person has been bereaved the situation with which he has to deal is unique, for the death entails the loss of the very person in whom he has been accustomed to confide. Thus, not only is the death itself an appalling blow but the very person towards whom it is natural to turn in calamity is no longer there. For that reason, if his mourning is to follow a favourable course, it becomes essential that the bereaved be able to turn for comfort elsewhere.”

10. One way of conceiving of continuing bonds and their regulatory roles is to further extend attachment theory, so as to include relations with the dead, along with their wider social and cultural contexts (Klass 2006, 854).

11. Higgins (2020, 12) discusses how aesthetic practices can play a similar role to narratives, helping people make sense of “incoherent feelings,” reconnect with the social world, and sustain bonds with the deceased.

12. In considering the view that grief can involve two people sharing a token emotion, Krueger discusses an oft-quoted passage from Scheler (1954, 12–13), which describes two parents standing beside the body of their dead child and *feeling the same sorrow*. Krueger notes that Scheler’s description is “synchronic” and thus incomplete. In emphasizing the dynamic, changing structure of grief and how it involves mutual regulation, we can further see why the example is lacking. While it is true that people can be said to share grief in various ways, this is not principally a matter of what is experienced at any particular moment. Shared grief involves a temporally extended, heterogeneous process; it is not something that can be captured by a single snapshot.

13. Even if we reject the possibility of a token emotional experience shared by two or more subjects, it could still be maintained that a person’s experience of grief is partly *constituted* by its interpersonal and social scaffolding. Brinkmann (2020, 128) thus suggests that grief is not an internal psychological process but a form of *extended emotion*. In other words, the ingredients of grief include certain features of the environment that the grieving person interacts with in a structured, sustained manner. Grief, Brinkmann writes, is “an *extended* psychological process that involves objects and persons in our environment as constituent parts of the emotion.” Rather than risk getting caught up in lengthy debates about whether certain forms of scaffolding are partly *constitutive* of grief or just *causally* related to it, I will remain metaphysically neutral here. The point we need to acknowledge is that many of the

regulatory processes acting upon grief are interpersonal and social in nature, rather than exclusively intrapersonal. What is less clear is whether and how grief itself should be distinguished from everything that shapes its course over time, including processes that are themselves interpersonally and socially distributed.

14. For example, see Scrutton (2018) for a discussion of how rituals can foster shared grief.

15. More recently, Davies (2015) has provided a detailed and wide-ranging study of the cultural settings in which bereavement is experienced, focusing on contemporary Britain.

16. All numbered quotations were obtained via the grief survey, other responses via the pandemic-experience survey. I conducted the latter in collaboration with researchers at the Universities of Okinawa, Bristol, and Birmingham. Anyone over eighteen years of age with relevant life experience was invited to participate. Respondents were instructed to provide free-text answers to a series of questions about various aspects of their experience, with no word limits. Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Okinawa. See Carel, Ratcliffe, and Froese (2020) for an introduction to the survey and an account of its rationale. See Froese et al. (2021) for the subsequent data report and access to the full corpus of testimonies.

Chapter 8

1. See Worden (1996) and Dyregov (2008) for wider-ranging discussions of grief in children.

2. See Sweeting and Gilhooly (1990) for a historical review and critical discussion of work on “anticipatory grief.” In an interesting extension of the concept, Varga and Gallagher (2020) address what they call anticipatory-vicarious grief, where one feels a sense of loss over how one’s own impending death will affect others.

3. Another issue to consider (raised briefly in section 4.4) is whether certain kinds of nonhuman animals experience grief and, if so, whether my account also applies to animal grief. Brinkmann (2020, 2) is doubtful that nonhuman animals can experience grief in anything like the ways we do. As they live in the present, while human grief reflects a temporally extended life structure, it is “only on the surface that other species appear to feel grief.” I think he is right to maintain that nonhuman animals cannot experience a disturbance of world, at least not in the elaborate and temporally extended way that humans can. However, this does not preclude simpler forms of habitual dependence on conspecifics or members of other species. Neither does it rule out forms of animal grief that approximate, to some degree, the *personal* aspect of loss. This, I have suggested, is dissociable to some extent from how one’s world is disrupted. Given this, it could be that some nonhuman animals form attachments that involve being affected by the distinctive *style* of another organism. So,

although I limit the scope of my discussion in this book to the full range of human grief experiences, I also acknowledge that the existence and nature of animal grief remains an open issue. King (2013) provides numerous interesting examples and anecdotes that are suggestive of grief in various animal species. However, her admission that humans “grapple” with grief in ways that are “fundamentally different” from other animals leaves open the option of a narrower conception of grief that applies only to the former (King 2013, 147). A further problem with King’s discussion is the risk of circularity in maintaining that an animal is capable of love if it is capable of grief and that various behaviors are attributable to grief insofar as they originate in love.

4. However, the proposed diagnostic criteria for pathological grief in the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* do include the “bereavement reaction” being “out of proportion to or inconsistent with cultural, religious, or age-appropriate norms” (American Psychiatric Association 2013, 790).

5. For instance, see Ratcliffe (2015, chap. 10) for a discussion of various different criteria that could be employed in order to distinguish pathological depression from healthy forms of experience.

6. Thus, my position is equally compatible with the view that differences between forms of grief ought to be acknowledged without “pathologizing” any of them (Brinkmann 2018).

7. See also Lamb, Pies, and Zisook (2010), who propose eliminating the bereavement exclusion clause but also extending *DSM-IV*’s two-week duration requirement for major depression. For a good retrospective account of the debate, which seeks to represent the diverse viewpoints involved, see Zachar, First, and Kendler (2017).

8. Loss versus retention of self-esteem is also the principal difference emphasized by Freud (1917/2005).

9. In order of appearance, they are “likely to,” “tend to,” “may be,” “generally,” “generally,” “common,” “typically,” and “generally.”

10. Such differences are also emphasized by Lamb, Pies, and Zisook (2010, 23).

11. Of course, depression experiences can share other symptoms as well, such as lethargy and bodily discomfort. However, for current purposes, a more selective emphasis on isolation, stasis, and loss of possibility suffices.

12. This corresponds to what Lear (2006) calls “radical hope.” See Ratcliffe (2015, chap. 4) for a discussion of radical hope in grief and its absence in depression.

13. These testimonies were obtained via a survey conducted as part of the 2009–2012 project “Emotional Experience in Depression: A Philosophical Study,” funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council and the German Research Foundation (DFG). For details of the survey, see Ratcliffe (2015, chap. 1).

14. Loss of access to types of possibilities in depression can take various different forms. One might be unable to experience or contemplate possibilities of a given type in any circumstances (where the type of possibility in question varies in specificity). Alternatively, the inability could be context-sensitive; what seems utterly inaccessible in certain situations continues to be experienced in others. Self-reports can also be challenging to interpret. For instance, someone might remain able to offer very general expressions of hope, seemingly indicating an intact ability to contemplate certain types of possibilities, but be unable to formulate hopes with more specific contents that relate to a life structure, thus suggesting otherwise (Owen et al. 2015; Ratcliffe 2015, 2020b).

15. These testimonies were obtained via a qualitative survey of depression experiences. See note 13 for details.

16. Nussbaum (2001, 82–83) remarks insightfully that “the pathological mourner continues to put the dead person at the very center of her own structure of goals and expectations, and this paralyzes life.”

17. See also Horowitz et al. (2003) for a list of proposed diagnostic criteria for complicated grief.

18. The *ICD-11* description of Prolonged Grief Disorder can be found here: <https://icd.who.int/browse11/l-m/en#/http://id.who.int/icd/entity/1183832314> (last accessed 18 October 2021). For an earlier characterization of “prolonged grief disorder” and a proposal for its inclusion in *DSM-5* and *ICD-11*, see Prigerson et al. (2009).

19. See Prigerson et al. (2021) for an account of the events and activities leading up to the approval of Prolonged Grief Disorder as a new diagnosis for inclusion in *DSM-5-TR*, along with a wider-ranging historical review of changing conceptions of pathological grief.

20. Complementing this, Zisook and Shear (2009) note that typical grief involves a process of transition from one form of experience to another, which they refer to as a movement from “acute” to “integrated” or “abiding” grief.

21. In addition, Neimeyer (e.g., 2005) emphasizes how finding meaning in loss depends on narrative construction. However, it is important not to overstate the role of narrative. Reorientation in grief involves changes in habitual expectations and patterns of significance that are integral to world experience. This need not involve explicit, sense-making narratives.

22. Consistent with this, Boelen, van den Hout, and van den Bout (2006, 115) refer to a form of “anxious avoidance” in complicated grief, which involves maintaining a “strong connection to the deceased” in a way that avoids “confrontation with the reality of the loss.”

23. See Ratcliffe, Ruddell, and Smith (2014) for an account of how loss of trust is central to traumatic experience.

24. However, “difficulty trusting other individuals since the death” does appear among the earlier *DSM-5* criteria for Persistent Complex Bereavement Disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, 790).

25. This is consistent with the identification of “yearning/longing” and “preoccupation” as separate criteria in *DSM-5-TR* (Boelen et al., 2020).

26. This is not to suggest that interpersonal relations always make a positive contribution to the course of grief. Certain *kinds* of relationships, with both the living and the dead, can contribute to dysregulation and lack of dynamism. Parkes (2006) provides a detailed discussion of how people’s ways of experiencing grief relate to their prior *attachment styles*, emphasizing how different *ways* of relating to others shape our responses to bereavement. The circumstances of the death can also play an important role. For instance, bereavement by suicide is associated with higher reported rates of pathological grief, as well as depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (Young et al. 2012). With an emphasis on how interpersonal processes shape grief, it is clear why this might be the case. For instance, the bereavement may erode one’s trust and confidence, in ways that are then exacerbated by responses on the part of others that involve discomfort or stigma. How one makes sense of the loss and relates to the person who has died are also likely to be affected in ways that influence the course of grief (Neimeyer, Baldwin, and Gillies 2006). Due to the particular difficulties associated with bereavement by suicide, it has been suggested that the grief experienced by survivors may be “qualitatively” different from grief in other circumstances (Young et al. 2012).

27. Eisenbruch (1984, 299) notes how refugees’ experiences of loss can similarly take these contrasting forms: “some refugees cling fixedly to the culture of the society they have left behind, idealizing the values of the lost culture. Others, in contrast, idealize the host society and hasten to discard the values of their past.” Again, this illustrates how “pathological” loss, involving a lack of integration between past and present, can involve experiences of quite different kinds.

28. See also Doka (2002) for various different perspectives on disenfranchised grief.

29. Rinofner-Kreidl (2016) further suggests that even typical or healthy forms of grief involve degrees and kinds of disenfranchisement.

30. The network founder, Jody Day, has provided a detailed discussion of disenfranchisement among those who grieve over involuntary childlessness (Day 2016).

31. Bonanno’s position therefore contrasts markedly with that of Bowlby (1980/1998, 8), who remarks on a widespread failure to acknowledge just how “distressing and disabling” the experience of loss is and for how long. According to Bonanno, such views originate in a sampling bias; clinicians and therapists are more likely to encounter people who are experiencing severe forms of grief.

32. A more specific and plausible target of criticism is the view that explicit “grief work” is generally required in order to adjust to significant bereavements (Bonanno 2009, chap. 2).

33. Bonanno (2009, 75) acknowledges that factors such as level of education, financial situation, and other causes of stress are all important. However, he also suggests that genetic differences may have a role to play.

Chapter 9

1. See Ratcliffe (2015, chap. 1) for further discussion of Husserl’s conception of the phenomenological reduction.

2. One way of putting this would be to say that both grief and phenomenological enquiry involve engaging with what Karl Jaspers (1969) calls “limit situations.” See George (2017) for a discussion of grief as a limit situation, which focuses more specifically on memory in grief.

3. Heidegger, in his 1929–1930 lecture course, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, draws a complementary distinction between genuine philosophizing and practices of exchanging propositions that remain embedded in conventional language: “A dialogue that is a philosophizing is rarely or never at all attained among those who busy themselves with philosophy, yet do not philosophize. So long as this elementary readiness for the intrinsic perilousness of philosophy is lacking, a confrontation that is a philosophizing will never occur, no matter how many articles are launched against one another in journals” (Heidegger 1995, 20). However, I would not want to endorse a simple opposition between authentic and institutionalized modes of philosophical inquiry. Philosophical thought has many different roles to play and spans many different techniques. What I am concerned with here is one conception of one kind of philosophy.

4. Similar remarks can be found in *The Prose of the World* and some of the essays collected in *Sense and Non-Sense*.

5. Carel (2016) proposes that experiences of illness can play a comparable role.

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By: Matthew Ratcliffe

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