

Introduction to the Study

Project Title - Death Proximity: Grief and Emotional Wellness Stories in Black Communities

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Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research study is to examine the impact of a death of a family member on loved ones who remain behind. Specifically, it investigates contemporary discussions and challenges related to death, grief, and bereavement as well as attitudes toward death from the perspectives of Black people in the United States.

Study Population and Procedures: I am conducting interviews with two groups or segments of people. The first group consists of people who have experienced the death of a close family member, (specifically, a parent, spouse, sibling, child, or other relative). The age range of interviewees is from 20 to 65. In my recruiting, I am controlling for fairly equal numbers concerning the age ranges of interviewees, with about 10 interviews from each ten-year age range for a total of approximately 40 interviews from this group. The second group consists of people in death-related work professions such as hospice workers, end-of-life caregivers, funeral home workers, grief counselors, clergy, and death advocates who can be of any racial, ethnic, age, gender, etc. group due to the larger number of non-Blacks in these professions. I plan to have a total of approximately 20 interviews from this group. Interviews will be conducted in a format agreed upon with participants, and the duration is the amount of time it takes participants to answer my interview questions, which will be from 30 minutes to 2 hours depending upon the information they desire to provide for each question.

Potential Risks and Benefits: Some participants may experience mild emotional discomfort when discussing their grief experiences. However, many individuals may find emotional relief and healing through the process of sharing their stories.

Data Confidentiality and Storage: Currently, we do not intend to share the data from this project, however, if we choose to do so in the future, the data will be shared in a de-identified manner. No identifying information, including participant names or the names of individuals mentioned during interviews, will be shared. Data will be stored using university-approved cloud storage with security measures such as up-to-date antivirus software and remote data deletion capability. A Pitt-owned laptop, recording device, and notebook will be securely stored in the investigator's personal workspace when not in use. Should I decide to share data in the future, I will contact the Office of Sponsored Programs at the University of Pittsburgh before sharing de-identified research data/materials to inquire about an agreement needing to be executed.

Compensation: People being interviewed can receive a \$20 gift card.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or decide to withdraw at any time, there will be no consequences; simply say that you desire to end the interview. If you withdraw, any information collected up to that point will be destroyed upon request.

Contact Information: This study is being conducted by Dr. Robin Brooks, who can be reached at rob88@pitt.edu or (619) 354-5785 if you have any questions. You may also contact the Human Subjects Protection Advocate at the University of Pittsburgh Human Research Protection Office (1-866-212-2668) to discuss any concerns.

Would you like to participate?