

Tincture of Time: Living through grief to hope

Judy Schreiber-Mosher

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The author, Judy Schreiber-Mosher, is the widow of the well-known father of the Soteria-movement, American psychiatrist Loren Mosher. Judy asked me to write some valedictory comments for her book. In general for a cover blurb you can quickly scan through the text (even if your first language is German as in my case). This was impossible, I got caught by the manuscript and read it from the first until the last sentence – the first English book I ever read cover to cover.

‘Judy, this is a death sentence.’ With these words Loren informs his wife about the diagnosis of liver cancer received the year before he dies. It was on July 10, 2004 in Berlin, when he left our world.

Knowing his diagnosis, Judy, an occupational therapist and later social worker and psychotherapist, began keeping a journal, after completing two writing courses on *Writing the Personal Memory* and *Writing the Memoir*. After the

inescapable death of her spouse she participated in both a psychotherapy and a bereavement group to explore the emotional unknown and overcome the deep grief following the loss of 'the love of her life.'

The result of these efforts is her book, which obviously helped her to survive Loren's death. She refused suppressing her grief with psychiatric drugs; not surprising given the critical view on toxic psychiatric drugs which was so important for Loren's Soteria approach. Focussing on special topics in 14 chapters, she reports and reflects in a direct way the deepest personal challenges she and Loren faced; from the first diagnosis of cancer until the end and the subsequent three years: becoming the secretary of his death, supervising his ashes, going to a bereavement group, missing her love's touches and sleeping alone, confronting his clothes, accepting his not-acceptable death, meeting a man and thinking about sexual contacts again, etc.

But the book is much more than a simple report of coping with personal problems. Unadorned, with cool humour and linguistic ease the author articulates the unspeakable: hopes, thoughts and fears in the face of the fatal illness of her beloved husband – blending passion and sadness with magical moments in the joined life.

The book encourages me to look into the eye of what will happen with deadly certainty sooner or – hopefully – later to me or to my beloved. How would or could I act, facing the rest of my life suddenly without my beloved wife? Or how would or could she go on to live without me? But, thanks to *Tincture of Time*, it will be easier to have words for the aftermath and for communicating about it, and, although inconceivable, to know love is transcendent and there is a life worth living for those who are left behind. Thanks to Judy for her courage in being so open-hearted with her personal thoughts and feelings. Along with the

Soteria approach, the book is a second cornerstone to keep the memory of her husband alive.

Find more information on www.soteriapress.com

Peter Lehmann