

## An Editorial Comment: A Question to Clinical Social Workers About 9/11

I had a conversation with a social worker from Oklahoma City between 1996 and before September 11, 2001. We discussed the April 19, 1995, truck bomb that exploded at the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people, injuring more than 700 people, and causing structural damage to 25 buildings. The focus of our discussion was on the impact of the news media. A hypothesis was developed: the constant barrage of media interviews inhibit an individual's ability to recover from the trauma. The media (mostly news reporters) will not allow the subject to rest.

With both my parents dead, I don't have reporters coming to me on a weekly basis asking me how I feel about it. I have been able to go on with my life. Oklahoma and Twin Towers victims are not permitted to grieve in peace. It gets worse for the Twin Tower victims. One can purchase commemorative plates, rings, and statues symbolizing the remembrance of the tragedy. One can purchase jewelry made from the wreckage. If the victims get a piece of the proceeds from the commercialization, are they emotionally helped or hurt?

Victims of such major traumatic events are afforded *no* respite. Their lives seem to require them to constantly reflect on the tragedy. They are *not afforded* an opportunity to "let go."

I watched both my parents die of cancer. It was a terrible experience, but I have recovered. Occasionally, I think of my parents and feel sad, but I am able to move on. I can do this in peace. I wonder how I could continue my life, if someone was

constantly reminding me (and I don't need reminding) that my parents are dead? "Well, your parents are now dead, how do you feel about that, Steve?" I don't think that I could cope with the constant barrage of questions and commercialization of my experience.

I am interested in sharing your vision with subscribers of *The Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics*. If you are interested in sharing your opinion, complete my 4-item questionnaire which can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LJWJROD>

Thanks!

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Editor