The best way to help children face significant changes or losses is to let them know what is happening as soon as the loss, separation, or change seems definite. When parents try to delay telling the news, they often underestimate how sensitive children are to parental preoccupation and tension. Telling a child about an impending loss not only prevents the distress and anxiety that may build as the child increasingly wonders what is wrong but also allows the child to begin to prepare for what lies ahead rather than being caught off guard.


The attachment literature on disorganized-unresolved attachment classification in relation to loss, or “unresolved loss,” is informative in identifying CB expressions that are indicative of failure to integrate the death of a loved one. In this article, an important linkage is identified between a prominent indicator of unresolved loss that involves a lapse in the monitoring of reasoning implying disbelief that the person is dead and the clinical writings of J. Bowlby (1980) and V. D. Volkan (1981) on maladaptive variants of CB expression.