



## Cognitions Associated with Prolonged Grief Disorder

Every year roughly 2.8 million people die in the United States, leaving behind 25 million bereaved loved ones. With over 500,000 lives lost in the United States due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this number will significantly increase this year, disproportionately impacting people of color (Tirupathia et al., 2020). While most bereaved people are able to adapt to the loss, about 10% encounter problems and develop a condition known as prolonged grief disorder (PGD) (Lundorff et al., 2017). The ICD-11 characterizes PGD as persistent symptoms of acute grief that include yearning for or preoccupation with thoughts of the deceased, intense emotional pain and significant impairment in functioning. Prolonged Grief Disorder is now also included in the DSM-5-TR.

Bereavement can present unique challenges for young adults due to the pressures of juggling school, work and family responsibilities. Many bereaved students of color face additional challenges such as limited access to resources including quality and affordable healthcare. Prior research has shown that roughly one-third of college students (average age 18-23) in the United States have lost a loved one in the past year (Balk et al., 2010). In a recent study (Glickman, 2021), we found that 13% of predominantly BIPOC college students met criteria for Prolonged Grief Disorder (PGD).

This presentation will review grief, prolonged grief disorder and the role of typical beliefs in PGD. We will also describe frequency, correlates of PGD and typical beliefs in a diverse sample of bereaved college students. Clinical implications of these findings for working with bereaved clients will be discussed.



*With this workshop, participants will be able to:*

- Understand the difference between prolonged grief disorder (PGD) and regular grief.
- Identify typical cognitions related to PGD and how they manifest in bereaved young adults.
- Assess bereaved clients for cognitions that may indicate prolonged grief and the need for specialized grief treatment.



### Dr. Kim Glickman

Dr. Kim Glickman is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at York College/CUNY where she teaches courses in social work practice and research methods. Her research has focused primarily on bereavement and prolonged grief disorder and psychological distress among urban college students. Dr. Glickman has a private psychotherapy practice in Bronx, NY and has worked for many years in the field of outpatient mental health. Dr. Glickman is an affiliate with the Center for Complicated Grief at Columbia University.



### Dr. Natalia Skritskaya

Dr. Natalia Skritskaya is a researcher at the Center for Complicated Grief, Columbia University and clinical psychologist in private practice. She has a background in cognitive-behavioral therapy for anxiety disorders with an interest in mind-body connection. For the past decade Dr. Skritskaya has been helping clients with prolonged and acute grief and has trained clinicians in evidence-based complicated grief treatment. Her research is focused on assessment and the role of bereavement-related cognitions in prolonged grief.



## Dr. Amy Cuzzola-Kern

Dr. Amy Cuzzola-Kern is pursuing an MSW at the Columbia School of Social Work where she is an intern at the Center for Complicated Grief. She has worked in philanthropy, nonprofit management and politics. Her primary areas of social work practice include nonprofit capacity building, project management and key stakeholder engagement.