

***New resource for 800,000 people widowed yearly
gives guidance on “Gaining Traction” after major loss***

Los Gatos, CA -- **According to the US Census Bureau, 800,000 people lose their wives, husbands, or partners every year — 700,000 of them women.** For the 13.6 million widows currently living in the US, spousal loss is the number one stressor they face daily, resulting in a serious illness for 60% of them within 12 months of their loss. And at a time when they can most use emotional help and practical assistance, most widows lose 75% of their support base as former networks of friends and relatives disintegrate or falter under the pressure of grief and changed patterns of relationship.

“Thanks to the hospice movement, there are more and more first-year group resources professionally facilitated in metropolitan areas – but that isn’t often the case for smaller communities,” says Vicki Panagotacos, Ph.D., FT, author of the new book **GAINING TRACTION: Starting Over After the Death of Your Life Partner**. “Getting through that first year is tough, but what most widows and widowers don’t understand is that it’s really the second year when loss ‘comes home to roost.’ We are seeing groups of widows getting together to exchange advice on starting over, but most do not have access to trained practitioners who can coach the skills of recovery and resilience that are so critical at this stage.”

GAINING TRACTION offers the benefits of Panagotacos' years of experience in facilitating hospice grief support groups, private counseling, and teaching the skills and tools for rebuilding life after loss. **Unlike many other resources in the field, this book focuses on getting started on a new life**, providing practical techniques to undo the self-limiting beliefs, anxieties, and apprehension that can lead to emotional paralysis and a limited lifestyle. The reader is guided through a process of defining what they want — and don’t want — to include in their future. This is difficult for some to conceive; for others it is simply hard to admit.

“Perhaps the biggest challenge widows face is not settling for the circumstances they are handed by a major loss,” observes Panagotacos. “Everyone deserves to grieve at their own speed and in their own way, but eventually they have to decide whether they are going to allow their grief to define the rest of their lives or open and move forward step by step.”

Dr. Panagotacos makes additional resources available online at her blog talkinggrief.com and the website bestgriefbooks.com.

GAINING TRACTION: Starting Over After the Death of Your Life Partner by Vicki Panagotacos, Ph.D., FT, paperback, 170 pages, ISBN: 978-0991580507. Available from Amazon.com and Ingram Book Distribution.