



# MOURNING THE DREAMS

How Parents Create Meaning  
from Miscarriage, Stillbirth  
& Early Infant Death

CLAUDIA MALACRIDA







**CLAUDIA MALACRIDA** lives with her husband, daughter and dog in Calgary, Alberta. She completed her MA in Sociology at The University of Calgary working with Dr. Arthur Frank. Presently, Claudia is doing doctoral work at the University of Alberta. Her current research concerns the dilemmas of care for mothers whose children are diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder.

*Mourning The Dreams* is a compassionate and compelling account of the difficulties parents encounter when they lose an infant to pregnancy complications, prematurity, stillbirth or complications within the first month of life. The book explores the particular difficulties bereaved parents encounter in recovering from the loss of a child through perinatal death. Parents not only grieve their child and its unrealized potential, but they often find their personal experiences are at odds with prevailing ideas and assumptions about the nature of their loss and how they should react to it. They are placed in the position of having to justify their lived feelings in the face of denial and silence from friends, family,

their religious communities, their workplaces, the medical community, and even within their spousal relationships. Sometimes bereaved parents themselves fail to see their feelings of grief as legitimate or normal.

*Mourning the Dreams* also describes the courage and creativity of parents who, despite nonlegitimizing social forces, claim their losses as real and salvage meaning from their children's incomplete lives. An accessible and moving study, *Mourning the Dreams* is a book that will be helpful to bereaved parents and to those who care for and about them: family members, friends, grief counselors, obstetrical nurses, and physicians.

*Claudia Malacrida uses her own experiences of perinatal loss to enter the stories of other parents. She invites parents to speak, and she is able to hear what clinicians and authors often miss: parents' pain of loss, their encounters with denials of the importance of these losses (too often by those closest to them), and their more than occasional triumphs as they find ways to value their children's brief lives and to remain parents to all their children. This book offers parents the shared affirmation of their stories, and it offers those who care for these parents a chance to hear grief as it is expressed among parents themselves.*

**Arthur W. Frank**, author of *At the will of the body: Reflections on illness* and *The wounded storyteller: Body, illness, and ethics*.

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