

Befriending Death

Sarum Centre for Contemporary Spirituality

Led and facilitated by James Woodward

November 16, 2016

Sarum College

10am – 4.30pm

www.sarum.ac.uk

Timetable

10 am to 11am **First Session** Saying the Un-sayable – starting with us !

11 to 11.30am Coffee (Served in the Refectory)

1130 to 1245pm **Second Session** Listening to the voices of those who are embracing death

1245 to 145 Lunch

145 to 315 **Third Session** Befriending Death- Pastoral Presence

315 to 345 Tea

345 to 4.30 **Fourth Session** Moving outwards – where do we go from here? Concluding Reflections

Aims of the day

1. To listen to each other and reflect upon our experience of loss, change and death in self and others.
2. To consider what wisdom might enable us to develop and deepen our Pastoral work and spiritual accompaniment.
3. To use both learning and experience in our life and work

Dr James Woodward is an Anglican priest, a theological educator and writer. He was appointed last year as Principal of Sarum College after 30 years of ministry in a variety of contexts. He still finds inspiration and challenge from a year spent as a nursing auxiliary at St Christopher's Hospice in London between university and theological college in the early 1980s. One consistent theme remains with him – ***why do Christians find it so hard to consider mortality?***

Life and Death

The aim of this short exercise is to explore what we feel makes for life in our faith

Take a piece of paper and divided into two columns. Head one side **events that bring me to life** - and the other - **events that deaden me**.

Read the passage below

Before the world was made we were chosen to live in God's presence by praising, reverencing and serving him in and through his creation. As worn, because God alone is our security, refuge and strength. We can be so detached from every created thing only if we have a stronger attachment; therefore our one dominating desire and fundamental choice must be to live in love with his presence.

Everything on the face of the earth exists to help us to do this. We must appreciate and make use of everything that helps, and rid us of anything that is destructive to our living in love in his presence.

Therefore, we must be so poised that we do not cling to any created thing as though it were our ultimate good, but remain open to the possibility that the love may demand us poverty rather than riches, sickness rather than health, dishonour rather than honour, a short life rather than a long one.

Gerard W Hughes **Cry of Wonder** Bloomsbury 2014 page 277

Does this give you any indication of the events or experiences that are destructive or creative of life in you?

Session One:

Saying the Unsayable: Starting With Ourselves

1. Overview

Ignatius and the inner and outer journey

Putting death into context - The lifespan

The tasks of growing older

Beginning to reflect on our experience

2. The Parable of the Good Sower

We are all capable of being all the different kinds of seed (good, distracted, rejecting) at different times in our lives or in different situations...

1) the capacity to die - the seed; the secret of all aliveness is the habitual laying down of life. Paschal mystery of life through dying is part of all our lives in small ways (little everyday deaths) and large ways....

'in response to an unfolding of the paschal mystery which has invited them to let go of something dear, face inner demons, work through traumas and engage with the work of personal growth'.

2) the capacity to receive - the soil; not easy to be helped; we can feel that asking for help diminishes us, but in fact it enlarges us - 'it makes us more accessible to others, forges connection and creates compassion.'

3. *Life and Death are intertwined?*

developed a culture where to express vulnerability and the need for help is seen as something impressive, something courageous and deeply Christian.'

significant that at the heart of our worship, there is that which invites us to kneel and stretch out empty hands to receive - and then take in, digest and make part of ourselves - that total gift of Christ.

4. *Remembering*

- 00s growing, moving, no voice
- 10s escaping/beginnings of choice/ independence
- 20s exploring and home building
- 30s daring/pushing boundaries

5. *Remembering and anticipating*

- 40s losing/enduring
- 50s achieving/going it alone
- 60s letting go/reorienting
- 70s ?? creativity/synthesis/entering 4th age

6. Peter van Breemen: 5 tasks as we grow older

Practice silence/seek source of our being

Stop being busy/listen quietly to those close to us

Rid ourselves of unholy or even holy compulsions

Inner journey – involving acceptance, forgiveness, preparation for death

Letting important memories surface

7. The spirit of these tasks

Gratitude

Simplicity (*Laudato Si*; Annie Dillard)

Fruitfulness (the image of the vine)

Wisdom, trust, openness, humour

The great gift that frail & vulnerable people bring to the community (Jean Vanier)

Finding God in all things (de Mello)

8. Life and Death

Take a piece of paper and divided into two columns. Head one side events that bring me to life - and the other - events that deaden me.

Session 2

Listening to the voices of those who are embracing death

1. Overview

What is the culture within which we live and die?

Consumerism – materialism – medical-ism?

How do we learn to face our limitations, the shadows in our loving and in the end our mortality?

Listening to a wider range of voices?

2. *Dignitas Clinic Zurich* – a personal view.

3. *Dignitas Questions*

- ❖ the poverty within which our story of living and dying is narrated.
- ❖ more time to explore the deeper cultural, philosophical and theological shape of death in 21st-century Britain.
- ❖ the nurture of a good death then this was not possible with the blunt and reductionist narratives of medicine and the law.
- ❖ the tension between disposition towards liberality and progressiveness and belief that the desire to control death fails to offer an opportunity for growth, transformation and a deeper sense of the texture and mystery of life.

4. *Christopher Hitchens Mortality*

5. *Listening to Hitchens*

- A right way to die?
- Fighting – freedom – paradox
- We fear death because it hurts !
- The horror of suffering

- Dealing with paradox, contradiction, ambiguity

6. Tom Lubbock

7. The unpredictables of death

- "the human practice of dying"
- Good news /bad news : who and what can we trust?
- What are the languages of death ?
- Sometimes silence works best ?
- Enlarged by the courage deeply embedded in life !

8. Philip Gould

9. The politics of death?

- We are born out of a struggle and fight to the end
- death need not only be negative or painful, it can be life affirming and revolutionary.
- You have to use this recurrence to find your real purpose in life.'
- How to move into a richer, fuller and spiritual connectedness.
- Is any preparation for death possible or desirable ?

Break into groups of 3 to 5

Reflect on your own experience and bring to the group some thoughts or questions that challenge you to be faithful and creative befrienders of death

10. Questions?

How and whether we really can ever own and live our death?

What of our theology of death and resurrection?

What is the origin of death?

Session Three

Befriending Death: Pastoral Presence – Reminders and Pointers

1. Assumptions:

- ❖ There are no experts
- ❖ Not all experience is good experience
- ❖ Listening is hard spiritual work
- ❖ We all make mistakes
- ❖ We are supported by our faith and tradition
- ❖ There is always something more to discover and learn

2. Facing Loss Change & Death

- ❖ The unknown to be feared ?
- ❖ Caring and life go on in the process
- ❖ How honest can we be and how do we tell the truth?
- ❖ People have enormous inner resources that help them deal with their destiny
- ❖ Our culture fears death

3. Dying to live?

- Are we death denying and death fearing?
- Have we embraced our own dying?
- Death is not significant – dying is!
- To live is to die?
- Our life and its struggles are charged with meaning

4. A Spirituality of

- Imagination
- Humanity
- Compassion

5. Imagination

And he went back to meet the fox.

‘Goodbye,’ he said.

‘Goodbye,’ said the fox.’ And now here is my secret, a very simple secret. It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.’

Antoine de Saint- Exupery, *The Little Prince*.

6. The art of Seeing

I wanted to put this picture before your eyes, and your acceptance of this picture consists in your being inclined to regard a given case differently: that is, to compare it with this series of pictures. I have changed your way of seeing

Ludwig Wittgenstein

7. The Tyranny of Certainty

- ▶ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose (Isaiah 35:1)
- ▶ Stay in the wilderness
- ▶ Facing our pain
- ▶ Embracing profound ambiguities and uncertainties

8. Humanity

It is not the genius that we shall need, not the cynic, nor the adroit technician, but honest, straightforward men (Bonhoeffer).

Virtues for pastors?

Truthfulness; Trustworthiness; Insight; Respect;

Vulnerability; Compassion and Enthusiasm

9.The basis of engagement?

- ▶ The pastor represents the community of faith
- ▶ The pastor expresses divine love and mercy
- ▶ The pastor expresses human solidarity

10.The tasks of Grieving

- ❖ To accept reality
- ❖ To feel and express the pain
- ❖ To come to terms with the an altered life
- ❖ To be able to reinvest our emotional and spiritual energy
- ❖ To learn to live, grow, change, move on and die

11.Dead End : Shrinking your grief

12.Reorientation : growing your world

13.Resources from the tradition:

- ❖ Our pattern of living and dying given meaning by Christ (Romans 6:3-5)
- ❖ A crucified God
- ❖ Reflecting the meaning and power of Faith
- ❖ What do we see in the cross?
- ❖ Seeing the reality of death in and around us
- ❖ Our Easter faith and sharing the Easter Gospel

14.Celebrates our humanity

- Courage
- Patience
- Resilience
- Endurance
- Perspective
- Humour
- Openness to others and God

■

15. A Theology that is:

- ❖ Contextual and situationally related
- ❖ Truthful about reality
- ❖ Interrogatory
- ❖ Celebrates Humanity

16. Compassion

‘This is a melting heart, and a troubled heart, and a wounded heart, and a contrite heart; and by the powerful work of thy piercing spirit such a heart I have’

John Donne

It is the source of all lasting joy. And it is the foundation of a good heart.....through kindness, through affection, through honesty.....This is not a matter of complicated theorising. It is a matter of common sense.

The Dalai Lama

17. Imagination

And he went back to meet the fox.

‘Goodbye,’ he said.

‘Goodbye,’ said the fox.’ And now here is my secret, a very simple secret. It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.’

Antoine de Saint- Exupery, *The Little Prince*.

18. Listening

“The answer, it seems, is the judicious use of painkillers and love ... [and] the key to it all is in listening to what the dying have to say.”

Cicely Saunders

19. What can we control?

What happens to us in life is seldom within our control, however the attitude we have towards what happens to us is entirely within our control **Bettlehem The Informed Heart**

Group Work

***Think about a situation where you have either
needed or asked for help***

***Locate the positive or negative aspects of this
experience***

Aubade Philip Larkin

I work all day, and get half-drunk at night.
Waking at four to soundless dark, I stare.
In time the curtain-edges will grow light.
Till then I see what's really always there:
Unresting death, a whole day nearer now,
Making all thought impossible but how
And where and when I shall myself die.
Arid interrogation: yet the dread
Of dying, and being dead,
Flashes afresh to hold and horrify.

The mind blanks at the glare. Not in remorse
—The good not done, the love not given, time
Torn off unused—nor wretchedly because
An only life can take so long to climb
Clear of its wrong beginnings, and may never;
But at the total emptiness for ever,
The sure extinction that we travel to
And shall be lost in always. Not to be here,
Not to be anywhere,
And soon; nothing more terrible, nothing more true.

This is a special way of being afraid
No trick dispels. Religion used to try,
That vast moth-eaten musical brocade
Created to pretend we never die,
And specious stuff that says *No rational being
Can fear a thing it will not feel*, not seeing
That this is what we fear—no sight, no sound,
No touch or taste or smell, nothing to think with,
Nothing to love or link with,
The anaesthetic from which none come round.

And so it stays just on the edge of vision,
A small unfocused blur, a standing chill
That slows each impulse down to indecision.
Most things may never happen: this one will,
And realisation of it rages out
In furnace-fear when we are caught without
People or drink. Courage is no good:
It means not scaring others. Being brave
Lets no one off the grave.
Death is no different whined at than withstood.

Slowly light strengthens, and the room takes shape.
It stands plain as a wardrobe, what we know,
Have always known, know that we can't escape,
Yet can't accept. One side will have to go.
Meanwhile telephones crouch, getting ready to ring
In locked-up offices, and all the uncaring
Intricate rented world begins to rouse.
The sky is white as clay, with no sun.
Work has to be done.
Postmen like doctors go from house to house.

Philip Larkin, "Aubade" from *Collected Poems* Faber 2001

Resources for reflecting upon loss, change, human vulnerability, death and dying.

Issues of suffering and faith

- Carson, D A (1991) *How Long O Lord? Reflections on Suffering and Evil* (Revell)
- Cassidy, S (1988) *Sharing the Darkness: The Spirituality of Caring* (DLT)
- Cassidy, S (1991) *Good Friday People* (DLT)
- Goldingay, J (Ed.) (1990) *Signs, Wonders and Healing* (When Christians disagree series) (IVP)
- Grayshon, J. (1996) *The Treasures of Darkness* (Hodder & Stoughton Religious)
- Grayshon, J. (2002) *A Pathway through Pain* (Monarch Books)
- Hauerwas, S. (1990) *Naming the silences: God, medicine and the problem of suffering* (Eerdmans)
- Kushner, H (2002) *When bad things happen to good people*(Pan Books)
- Lewis, CS *The Problem of Pain*
- Lucas, E (Ed.) (1997) *Christian Healing: What can we Believe?* (SPCK)
- MacNutt, F. (1997) *Healing* (Ave Maria Press) McGrath, A (2000) *Why Does God allow suffering?*
- Moltmann, J (2001)*The Crucified God* (SCM)
- Mursell, G *Out of the deep: Prayer as Protest*
- Pearson, M (2004) *Christian Healing* (Charisma House)
- Spufford, F. (2012) *Unapologetic: Why despite everything Christianity can still make surprising emotional sense* (Harper One)
- Swinton, J (2007) *Raging with compassion: pastoral responses to the problem of evil* (Eerdmans)
- Wright, N 'The Theology and Methodology of 'Signs and Wonders'
in Smail, T; Walker, A and Wright, N (1995) *Charismatic Renewal: the Search for a Theology* (SPCK)

Depression and mental health

- Ashton, M (1984) *A Mind at Ease* (Overcomer Publications)
- Barker, M (2000) *Psychology, Religion & Mental Health* (Rutherford House) Carson, M (2008) *The Pastoral Care of People with Mental Health Problems* (SPCK)
- Carter, Land Minerth, F (1995) *The Freedom from Depression Workbook* (Thomas Nelson)
- Chave-Jones, M (1981) *Coping with Depression* (Lion)
- Cleese, J and Skinner, R *Families & how to survive them* (1983) and *"Life & how to survive it* (1993) (Methuen)
- Collins, G (1993) *The Biblical basis of Christian counselling for people helpers*, NavPress,
- Collins, S *Dealing with Depression* (Christian Focus Publications 2012)
- Daily Telegraph: Archbishop of Canterbury's daughter *My battle with Depression*
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10013906/Archbishop-of-Canterburys-daughter-My-battle-with-depression.html>
- Davies, G (1988) *Stress* (Kingsway)
- Davies, G (2005) *Genius, Grief and Grace* (Christian Focus Publications) DePaulo, J and Horvitz, L (2002) *Understanding Depression* (BCA/John Wiley & Sons) Depression Alliance Website <http://www.depressionalliance.org/> Dominian, J (1976) *Depression* (Fontana Collins)
- Elliot, E (1982) *No Graven Image* (Good News Publishing)
- Foskett, John (1984) *Meaning in madness: the pastor and the mentally ill*
- Foyle, M (2009) *Honourably Wounded: Stress among Christian workers*, (Monarch Books)
- Hughes, S (1982) *Seven Steps to Overcoming Depression* (Marshall Morgan and Scott) Chapter 7
- Jamison, K R (1996) *An Unquiet Mind: A Memoir of Moods and Madness* (Picador) Lloyd-
- Jones, M (1965) *Spiritual Depression* (Zondervan Pickering & Inglis)
- Lyall, D (2001) *Integrity of pastoral care* (SPCK)

- Lockley, J (2002) *A practical workshop for the depressed Christian*, (Authentic Media)
- McGrath, (1992) J and A *The dilemma of self-esteem - the cross & Christian confidence*, (Crossway Books)
- McKenzie, K (2006) *Understanding Depression* (BMA Family Doctor Publications)
- Milligan, S., Clare, A. W (1994) *Depression and how to survive it* (Arrow)
- Packer, J (2005) *Knowing God* (Hodder and Stoughton) (Chapter 22)
- Patel, V (2003) *Where there is no Psychiatrist* (Gaskell)
- Pitt, B (1993) *Down with Gloom* (Gaskell)
- Procter, A. and E. (2012) *Encountering Depression* (SPCK)
- Royal College of Psychiatrists Website on Depression <http://www.repsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfofora/1/problems/depression/depression.aspx>
- Rose, S (2004) *Emotional Healing* (Grove Renewal 16)
- Rowe, D. *Depression -the way out of your prison* (1996: Routledge)
- Sanford, J (1982) *Ministry Burnout* (Arthur James)
- Skygger, Rand Cleese, J (1993) *Families and How to Survive Them* (Vermillion/Ebury/Random House)
- Spufford, F. (2012) *Unapologetic: Why, despite everything, Christianity can still make surprising emotional sense* (Faber and Faber)
- Swinton, j. (2001) *Spirituality and mental health care: rediscovering a forgotten dimension* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers)
- Swinton J. (2007) *Raging with Compassion: Pastoral Responses to the Problem of Evil* (Eerdmans)
- Tournier, P (1980) *The Person Reborn* (Harper Collins) (Chapter 8)
- White, J (1982) *The Masks of Melancholy* (IVP)
- White, J (1991) *Changing on the Inside* (Eagle)
- Wilkinson, G (2006) *Understanding Stress* (BMA)

Williams, Richards & Whitton (2002) *I'm not supposed to feel like this*. (Hodder & Stoughton).

Winter, R (2001) *The Roots of Sorrow* (Resource Publications)

Winter, R (2005) *Perfecting Ourselves to Death* (IVP)

Wolpert, L. (2001) *Malignant sadness: the anatomy of depression* (Faber and Faber)

Zundel, V. (2008) *Crying for the Light - Bible readings and reflections for living with depression*. Bible Reading Fellowship.

Death, Dying and Grief

Ainsworth-Smith, I. and Speck, P. *Letting Go: Caring for the Dying and Bereaved*, London, SPCK, 1999

Anderson, R *Theology, Death & Dying*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1986

Atkinson, D, 'Life, Health & Death. in the *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology*, Leicester: IVP, 1995:87-92

Autton, N *The Pastoral Care of the Dying*, London: SPCK, 1969

Billings, A *Dying and Grieving: A Guide to Pastoral Ministry*, London: SPCK, 2002

Bridger, F *23 days: A Story of Love, Death and God*, London: DLT, 2004

Cassidy, S *The Longest journey*

'God be at my End -On Dying Well ' *Chrism: St Raphael quarterly magazine* Vol. 34:3 Autumn 9

Common Worship: Pastoral Services, London: Church House Publishing, 2001

Dickenson, D. Johnson, M. & Katz, J. S. (Eds.) *Death, Dying & Bereavement* (2nd Edn.) London: Sage/Open University, 2006

Elliot, E *Facing the Death of a Loved One*, Westchester, Illinois: Good News Publishers, 1973

Goodliff, P. *Care in a Confused Climate*. (London: DLT, 1998, Ch 1 (for extended background reading: Ch 3)

Grigor, J *Loss: An Invitation to Grow*, Arthur James, 1986

- Hallock, D *Six Months to Live*, Robertsbridge: Plough Publishing, 2001
- Hick, J *Death & Eternal Life*
- Howell, D *Understanding the Grief journey*, Cambridge: Grove Pastoral 56, 1993
- Howell, D *The Pain of Parting: Understanding the Grief journey*, Cambridge: Grove Pastoral 56, 1993
- Hughes, J P *The Pastor's Notebook*, Eastbourne: Kingsway, 2003
- Jupp, P, Rogers, T, Henshall, M, (1997) *Interpreting Death: Christian Theology and Pastoral Practice* (Geoffrey Chapman)
- Kirkpatrick, Bill *Going Forth: A Practical and Spiritual Approach to Dying and Death*. Kubler-
- Ross, E (1977) *On Death and Dying* (Simon & Schuster)
- Lewis, CS *A Grief Observed*, London: Faber & Faber, 1961
- Lloyd, T *Dying and Death Step by Step: A Funerals Flowchart*, Grove Worship 160, Cambridge: Grove Books, 2010
- Martinez, P & Hull, A *Tracing the Rainbow: Working Through Loss and Bereavement*, Authentic Lifestyle, 2003
- McCarthy, B, *Assisted Suicide: Drawing a Line in the Sand*, Grove Ethics 155, Cambridge: Grove Books, 2009
- McCoughry, R & Morris, W *Making a World of Difference: Christian Reflections on Disability*, London: SPCK, 2002
- Mitton, M & Parker, R *Requiem Healing or its 2002 revision -Healing Death's Wounds*
- Mitton, M. & Parker, R. *Healing Death's Wounds*, (a re-working of Requiem Healing, London: DLT, 1991) Bath: Arcadia, 2002 (Especially Chapters 8 to 11)
- Murray Parkes, C 'Grief: Lessons from the Past, Visions for the Future'
Bereavement Care
Summer 2002 Volume 21 Number 2 (MF)
- Murray Parkes, C *Bereavement: Studies of Grief in Adult Life*, London: Penguin, 1972 Ch 10 (The classic text on bereavement republished 1998)
- Nouwen, H *Our Greatest Gift: A Meditation on Dying & Caring*
- Owen, D *Living Through Bereavement: With the Help of Christian Thought & Prayer*, London: SPCK, 2008
- Parkes, C M *Bereavement: Studies of Grief in Adult Life*. London: Penguin, 1972 Ch 10

- Parsons, M *Suicide and the Church: A Pastoral Theology*, Grove Pastoral 123, Cambridge: Grove Books, 2010
- Raphael, B. *The Anatomy of Bereavement*. London: Hutchinson, 1984 Ch 9
- Saunders, C. *Beyond All Pain: A Companion for the Suffering and Bereaved*, London: SPCK, 1983
- Simpson, R., *Before we say Goodbye: Preparing for a Good Death*, London: HarperCollins, 2001
- Stanworth, R., *Recognizing Spiritual needs in People who are Dying*, Oxford: OUP, 2004 (St Christopher's Hospice, comprehensive; Esp. Part 4)
- Stroebe, M, Stroebe, W, & Hansson, R (Eds.) *Handbook of Bereavement: Theory, Research and Intervention*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993
- Thorp, H *Establishing a Bereavement Ministry Team*, Grove Pastoral 113, Cambridge: Grove Books, 2008
- Tomblin, H & English, P *Supporting Young People Through Parental Break-up* Grove Youth 21, Cambridge: Grove Books, 2010
- Waiter, A *Funerals and how to improve them*
- Watson, D *Fear No Evil: A Personal Struggle with Cancer*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1984
- Whitaker, A *All in the End is Harvest*, London: DLT & CRUSE, 1984
- Woodward, J *Befriending Death* SPCK 1997
- Worden, J. W. *Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy*. London: Tavistock, 1983 Ch 3
- Wright, NT *For All the Saints?* London: SPCK, 2003
- Wyatt, J *Matters of Life & Death: Human Dilemmas in the Light of the Christian Faith*, Nottingham: IVP, 2009
- Wynne Jones, P *Children, Death and Bereavement*, London: Scripture Union, 1985

Web Resources

- ❖ For raising death awareness see:

<http://www.qeep.com/blog/top-7-websites-raising-death-awareness/>

<http://www.dyingmatters.org/>

- ❖ For some information about the development of death cafes see:

<http://deathcafe.com/>

- ❖ a starting point to begin to think about loss and grief see:

<http://thelossfoundation.org/>

- ❖ Have a look at the developments in palliative care –

<http://www.ncpc.org.uk/>

- ❖ On the influential work of Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

<http://www.ekrfoundation.org/five-stages-of-grief/>

- ❖ On the pioneering work of St Christopher's Hospice and Dame Cicely Saunders

<http://www.stchristophers.org.uk/>

If you come across other resources that you have found to be helpful please contact us so that we can share good practice.

Mid-Term Break by Seamus Heaney

I sat all morning in the college sick bay
Counting bells knelling classes to a close.
At two o'clock our neighbours drove me home.

In the porch I met my father crying—
He had always taken funerals in his stride—
And Big Jim Evans saying it was a hard blow.

The baby cooed and laughed and rocked the pram
When I came in, and I was embarrassed
By old men standing up to shake my hand

And tell me they were 'sorry for my trouble'.
Whispers informed strangers I was the eldest,
Away at school, as my mother held my hand

In hers and coughed out angry tearless sighs.
At ten o'clock the ambulance arrived
With the corpse, stanced and bandaged by the nurses.

Next morning I went up into the room. Snowdrops
And candles soothed the bedside; I saw him
For the first time in six weeks. Paler now,

Wearing a poppy bruise on his left temple,
He lay in the four-foot box as in his cot.
No gaudy scars, the bumper knocked him clear.

A four-foot box, a foot for every year. (*Opened Ground: Selected poems 1966-1996.*)