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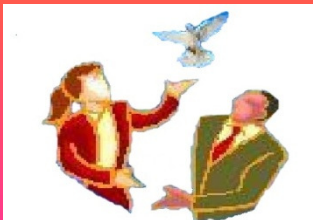
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GRIEF & LOSS

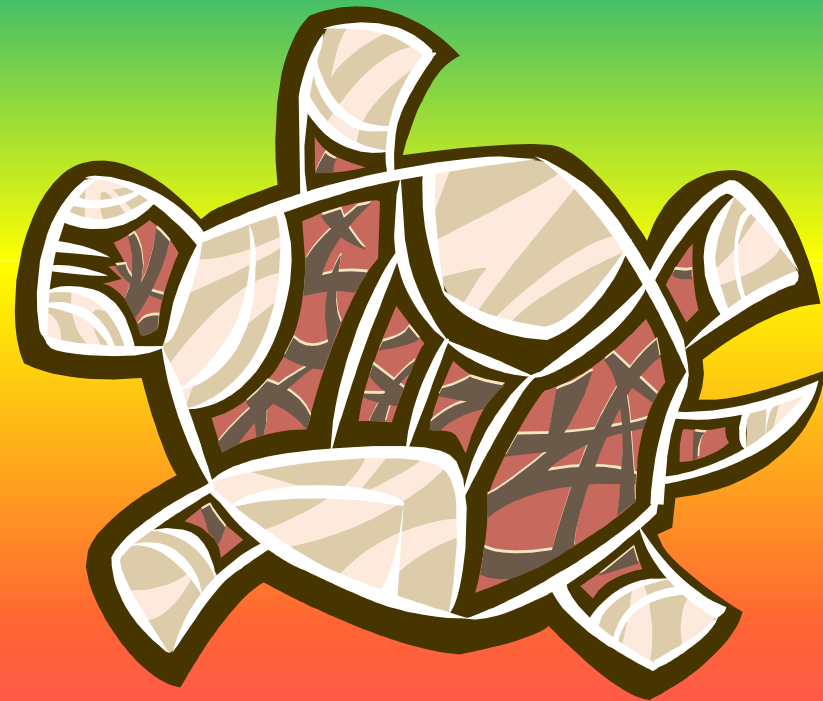


A JOURNEY IN LIFE

Acknowledgements

- We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners of this land

➤ We Thank those who have supplied these premises and equipment



Welcome

- You are valued
- We value confidentiality (what is said in group stays in group)
- We value safety (personal and physical)
- Amenities and exits
- You have the right to pass (and so do I)
- Mobile phones silent please
- Handouts – do you need a pen?



Personal Safety

- The information and ideas reflected in this presentation represent the research of the author, Ron Cruickshank, and those who are quoted. It is recommended that this information be taken in conjunction and collaboration with your medical practitioner and any other members of your personal care team.

Why do we grieve?

- We are, by nature, social creatures
- Change can be difficult
- We develop strong bonds of caring
- Feelings are deeply rooted
- People and pets occupy a special place in our hearts



- Grieving is the process of healing the wound of separation from someone or something we care about.
- We come to accept the loss as part of our lives
- We move on Never quite the same again

- Loss is an integral part of life
- It is life itself rather than something that happens to us as we live
- Can be described as a state of being deprived of or being without something one has previously had (or anticipated having) that is of value to you

- Grief is the pain and suffering experienced after loss
- Mourning is the period of time during which signs of grief are evident
- There is no time frame for grieving or mourning
- Healing takes time.....

Grief & Loss

- Name some situations where grief and loss may occur:

A dream is shattered

Change of address

The death a relative

Retirement

Separation from a friend

Loss of a pet

Change in physical ability

Loss of hope or perceived future

Change in mental ability

Children leaving home

Immigration

Miscarriage or inability to have a child

What is the common factor?

Grief and Loss Situations That May Arise Through Mental Health Issues

- Loss of connection with someone you love
- Loss of health, body image
- Loss of physical ability, mobility
- Loss of independence
- Loss of memory, concentration
- Dreams unfulfilled

Compounded Grief Due To A Number Of Losses

- Social life reduced
- Family don't come to visit
- Few friends come to visit or invite you
- “Casserole Negative”
- Loss of someone or something special on top of your struggles with remaining mentally and emotionally healthy

Disenfranchised Grief (DOKA, 1989)

- Where the relationship is not recognised (same sex, extra marital relationship)
- Where the griever is not recognised (intellectual disability, children)
- Where the loss is not recognised (elective abortion, pets)

Grief Is A Normal Response To Loss

Grief is

- Normal
- Natural
- Emotionally and Physically Painful

And

- Takes time to resolve

Grief will be dependant on a number of factors

- Degree of attachment
- Quality and length of relationship
- Length and nature of illness
- Nature of death or loss

Loss and the Grief it brings

- Affects the whole person
- Changes how we feel physically and emotionally
- Affects our energy level and our activities
- Is experienced by everyone differently

How do we recognise Grief

- Emotions
- Physiological Sensations (Physical sensations)
- Cognitions (Thoughts or thinking)
- Behaviours

4 Phases of Grief

- **NUMBNESS** – Emotions are frozen
- **PINING** – Desire to bring back that which has been lost
- **DEPRESSION** – preoccupation or procrastination with the loss
- **RECOVERY** – development of a new identity

Phases of Grief

- Although there is a recognised grief cycle, no two people take the same path:
 - There is no set order
 - No set style – several feelings may present together
 - No set depth
 - No set duration
 - Stages may be revisited again and again

Expanded Phases

- We may be in a state of shock
- We may express emotion – withdrawing, crying
- We may feel depressed and lonely
- We may experience physical reactions and distress
- We may become panicky
- We may feel a sense of guilt about the loss
- We may be filled with hostility and resentment
- We may be unable to return to usual activities
- We may struggle to readjust to reality
- Gradually hope comes through again
- When grief is related to mental health these items may be experienced again and again

Experiences of Grief

- Disbelief, Shock, Crying/Sobbing, Denial
- Questioning, Idealization, Bargaining,
- Depression, Anxiety/Panic, Resentment
- Guilt, Anger, Relief, Loneliness, Despair
- Helplessness, Frustration, Envy, Hatred
- Limbo, Struggle, Hope, Life worth living

We Need To Make Allowances

We had
some
fantastic
times...

He can
be such
fun

I don't
think
things will
ever be
quite the
same

I miss the
old her so
much...

It's so
hard
alone
....

What Emotions Occur With Loss

- FEAR – anxiety, apprehension, panic, terror
- PERPLEXITY – puzzlement, ambivalence, confusion
- SADNESS – hopelessness, sorrow, despair
- ANGER – resentment, frustration, bitterness, rage
- HURT – fragile, rejected, betrayed, devastated

- INADEQUACY – weakness, overwhelmed, helpless
- GUILT – remorse, responsible, to blame
- LONELINESS – bereft, abandoned, isolated
- AFFECTION – love, release, melancholy
- RELIEF – contented, glad, release

4 Tasks of Grieving

- ACCEPT - the new reality
- EXPERIENCE – the pain
- ADJUST – to the change
- ALLOW – yourself to move on with the loss/death to one side

Why do we grieve differently?

- Experiences through life
- Role of the person/item in our life
- Circumstances in our life
- Current influences – resilience
- Role expectations
- Supports

Some needs of the grieving

- To feel support – care and love of those around us
- To find acceptance – recovery is linked to acceptance of the loss
- To face reality – recognise the change
- Acceptance will not come until reality is faced
- Emotional release – feelings need to be encouraged to be expressed
- Tears.....talking.....
- Spiritual Awareness ...Connection...belief... knowing..

Life Continues....

- Grieving people need
- CARE
- ENCOURAGEMENT
- SUPPORT

How we can help the person in their grieving:

- Listen and support
- Let them tell their story
- Encourage exploration of the loss
- Reassure them they are not going “crazy”

When helping those who grieve:

- Alert them to what triggers their loss and grief, e.g. anniversaries, repeating old cycles...
- Provide information about the grieving process to help them understand their reactions
- Normalize the intensity and pervasiveness of the pain incurred by the loss

When helping those who grieve:

- Allow them to go over the loss in order to begin to understand the loss
- Expand their recognition of the previous losses and the impact on the current loss
- Encourage them to identify and use current support
- Help them recognise progress no matter how small

When helping those who grieve:

- Encourage them to feel safe and comfortable with you
- Accept their experience as unique to them
- Don't judge them or their circumstances
- Normalize their reactions
- Let them tell their story as they need to tell it (even if repetitive)

When helping those who grieve:

- Look at their social resources
- Help them to understand what affect grieving is having on them
- Help the person to understand that things do change and life isn't static
- Help them explore new ways of coping

When helping those who grieve:

Be Aware

Remember that grief is a normal process

Be There

Learn to be with the person, not to solve the problem

Be Sensitive

Allow the pain. Learn to enter in to it, not try to take it away

Be Human

Allow the expression of feelings (guilt, anger, sorrow, depression) without judgement.

**Look with
your heart**

For the need under the emotion and help them recognise this

Be Ready

To hear their story when it is told over and over again

Be Patient

Remember that the process of mourning takes time and is different for each individual

Self Care

- Staying with intense energy can be draining
- Take time for nurturing yourself
- Give yourself some uplifting energy
- Explore your own grief as it arises.
- Give your self the same care as you gave to your loved one.

Who can a grieving person call:

- 1Source Health & Wellbeing 0400 606 321
- Lifeline 13 12 14
- RHH Grief Support 6222 8344
- ARAFMI support line 62 247 247
- Kids Help Line 1800 551 800
- Cancer Council Helpline 13 11 20

Thank You for your valued support of this group.

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