

GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT

Fish Bowl Activity

□ *“Grief is a normal reaction to loss. It is a process everyone experiences in one way or another, but it’s a journey no one should go through alone.”*

Introduction – Who Am I?

Ice Breaker Questions

Purpose:

- To remind ourselves who we are
 - Sometimes we forget about the important things that make us happy

Ice Breaker Questions

- Some of the accomplishments I have felt proud about are...

- My happiest memory is...

Ice Breaker Questions

- My favourite song, movie, quote or poem is...

- The greatest inspiration in my life has been...

- Talk about what you are grateful for...

Why Am I Here Today?

“When someone is born, we rejoice.
When someone is married, we celebrate.
But when someone dies, we pretend that
nothing has happened”

~ Margaret Mead

It Can Be So Confusing...

- **Grief** is what you feel inside
- **Mourning** is how you express what you feel
- **Bereavement** is the time you spend living with a loss; it's a period of sadness

Let's Talk About Grief

- “Grief is the normal and natural emotional reaction to loss or change of any kind “

Let's Talk About Grief

- *Grieving is a process and healing happens gradually*
- *Be patient with yourself*
- *Grief never ends but it changes. It's a passage not a place to stay*

Let's Talk About Grief

- *"Grief is like reaching out for someone who has always been there, only to find out when I need them one more time, they are no longer there"*

~ The Grief Recovery Handbook

It's Either This or That

When
someone we
love dies

Other kinds
of loss:

Either way we
feel the same

Other Kinds Of Losses

- Ending of a friendship
- Ending of a romantic relationship
- Moving
 - Changes in where we live or who we live with
 - Changes in the people who support us

Other Kinds Of Losses

- Loss of material possessions that have sentimental value
- Work - when we change or stop jobs
- Retirement
- Financial losses
- Changes in health

It Can Be So Confusing...

- Dying
- Died
- Death
- Passed away
- Went to sleep
- Not suffering anymore

When Someone Dies

- Sudden death
- Having an illness
- Which is worse?
- They're different, you can't compare
- My experiences

Myths & Facts

- Myth: Don't feel sad your loved one is in a better place OR You can do better
- Fact: We should feel sad when something bad happens OR you don't want to do better, you still want who you had

Myths & Facts

- Myth: Replace the loss – we can get a new pet OR you can date again
- Fact: It does not honour that all relationships are unique and irreplaceable

Myths & Facts

- Myth: Time heals all wounds
- Fact: Time is not an action. It can no more fix your heart than it can fix a flat tire. You need to take action

Myths & Facts

- Myth: Grieve alone
- Fact: There is a very important distinction between solitude, which we need, and isolation. Grieving entirely alone can be unhealthy

Myths & Facts

- Myth: Be strong. Putting on a brave front to protect your family and friends
- Fact: Feeling frightened, sad or lonely are normal reactions to loss. Crying is ok. Showing your true feelings can be helpful to yourself and others

Myths & Facts

- Myth: Keep busy. Fill your time so that you don't dwell on the loss
- Fact: Keeping busy doesn't change how you feel, it makes you forget about your feelings

Myths & Facts

- Myth: Your grief should last about a year
- Fact: There is no time frame for grieving. Everyone is unique and handles each experience differently. There is no right or wrong way to grieve

Myths & Facts

- Myth: Moving on with your life means you're forgetting the one you lost
- Fact: Moving on means you've accepted your loved one's death. That is not the same as forgetting. You can create a new life and still keep your loved one's memory a part of you

How Do We Grieve?

- Intellectually – with our minds
- Emotionally – with feelings
- Physically – with our body

Intellectual Responses

- Grief is about a broken heart not a broken brain
- People try to help us feel better by saying things such as “they lived along life” or “they’re not suffering anymore” or “they’re in a better place now”

Emotional Responses

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sadness | <input type="checkbox"/> Hurt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger | <input type="checkbox"/> Empty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relief | <input type="checkbox"/> Lonely |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disbelief | <input type="checkbox"/> Heart sick |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety | <input type="checkbox"/> Scared |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confused | <input type="checkbox"/> Sick |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fear | <input type="checkbox"/> Shocked |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guilt | |

Physical Responses

- Shortness of breath
- Trouble sleeping
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Crying
- Dizziness
- Increased or decrease in appetite
- Tightness in our throat
- Heart beats fast
- Upset stomach

What Else Happens?

- Our feelings can change
- Want to be around people vs being alone
- Want to talk vs being quiet
- Sometimes we use humour to help us feel better
- We may want to join a support group or talk one on one with someone

S.T.E.R.B.S.

- Short Term Energy Relieving Behaviours
 - Things we do to distract us from our feelings
 - Temporarily works but our feelings are the same when we stop
- Examples: Shopping, exercise, eating, sleeping

What You Can Expect

- Grieving takes a lot of energy
- You will grieve for what you have lost already and for what you have lost for the future
- You may be confused about who you are
- Your grief will depend on how you see the loss

What You Can Expect

- You may feel differently than others around you
- You will grieve not only the actual person you lost but also for all the hopes, dreams and unfulfilled expectations you held for and with that person

What You Can Expect

- You may lack self concern
- You may experience grief waves
- You may not be able to stop thinking about the death

What You Can Expect

- The loss may bring about old feelings from the past
- You may act differently after a death
- You may find there are certain dates, events or other reminders that bring up memories

Coping Strategies

- Talk and express how you feel
- Journaling - write a letter to the person
- Be creative – paint, draw, scrapbook, make a memory box
- Remember and reflect – honour your loved one
- Plan ahead for holidays, birthdays, anniversaries

How To Help Someone

- “We are not going to tell you how you feel. You already know. And, we will not tell you, we know how you feel because we don’t. Neither does anyone else. At best, we can remember how we felt when our losses occurred”

~ The Grief Recovery Handbook

How To Help Someone

- Listen
- Be present, give them all your attention
- Don't interrupt them
- Give hugs
- Bring them food or drinks
- Let them cry
- Tell them how you would like to help

How To Help Yourself

- Eat healthy & often
- Laugh
- Spend time with friends
- Have fun – still enjoy your life
- Get support – ask for help
- Don't rush grief – it's a journey
- Rest – get enough sleep
- Exercise
- Spend time with friends

Grief Recovery Statement

“It is normal and natural after a loss to review the relationship and discover that there are things that we wish we had ended – different, better, or more – and to discover things that we wish the other person had said or done – different, better, or more”

But we must let go of those questions and honour what we do know

What We Do Know

- Life – it's what you make of it
- Golf ball analogy
