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Loss, Grief & Boundary training for HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Presentation to CARE Network, ECHO Series

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Financial Disclosure

I have no relevant financial
relationships with any
commercial interests



Learning Objectives

1

*Nuanced
Understanding of
Losses*

2

Increased
awareness of
the
inextricable
links between
loss, grief,
mourning and
bereavement

3

Recognize
awareness
personal grief
triggers and
introduction
of the
C.A.R.E
model

4

Practice Body Scans
for Differentiation
and Mindfulness for
emotional and
professional health



Bodies die – Memories live

“If you know someone who has lost a child, and you're afraid to mention them because you think you might make them sad by reminding them that they died--you're not reminding them. They didn't forget they died. What you're reminding them of is that you remembered that they lived, and...that is a great gift.”

~ Elizabeth Edwards



Loss | Grief | Mourning

- ❑ **Loss** is the temporary or permanent disappearance of a beloved person, pet, object, physical, emotional, mental or spiritual functioning or routine
- ❑ **Types of losses:**
Material | Relationship | Intrapsychic loss | Role loss | Loss of hope and future | Loss of function
- ❑ **Grief** is a neuro-psych-bio-social-spiritual reactions to Loss
Individually expressed by each person

Anderson and Mitchell (1983)



Loss | Grief | Mourning

- ❑ **Grief** is the whole person response to any kind of significant loss
 - typical and unique to each individual or situation
 - Grief encompasses many feelings and thoughts
 - neuro-psych-bio-social-spiritual reaction - our entire self grieves

- ❑ **Mourning** is the shared expression of a grief experience, including decreased function or role, loss of assumed health, and annihilation of dreams the future
 - Cultural and customary influences on mourning
 - Religious influence on mourning
 - Finding a new equilibrium following any type of loss



Types of Grievors

1

Instrumental
grievors

2

Intuitive
grievors

3

Dissonant or
Disenfranchised
Grievors

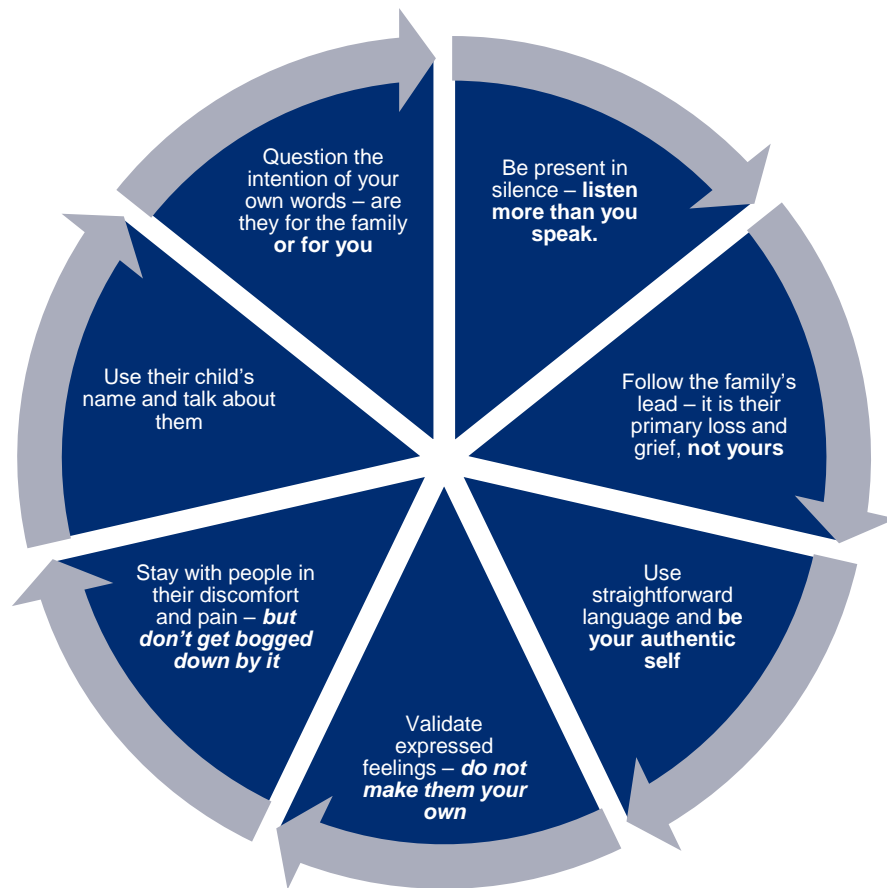
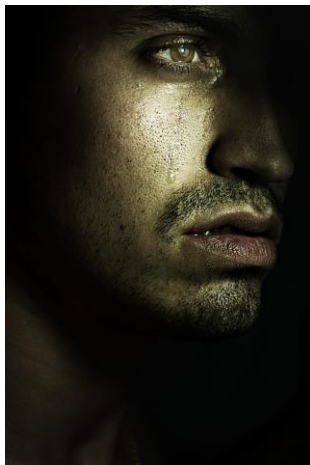


Common Grief Reactions

- Feelings and reactions to grief may include:
 - Sadness, guilt, regrets, relief, worry, anxiety, shock or numbness, and anger
 - Struggling with life (religion, philosophy, etc....)
 - Irritability or withdrawing from others
 - Difficulty sleeping and eating or sleeping and eating more than is typical.
 - Bodily responses such as upset stomach, tight muscles, and headache, etc.
 - Difficulty concentrating, aloofness, denial, aggression
- Cultural demonstrative grief after learning about a death
- *Rule of thumb: Anything in excess – too much/too little is your personal STOP sign*



Working with Bereaved Parents



Ways Healthcare Providers are affected by Death

- ✓ Loss of role and relationship with the patient and family
- ✓ Hyper-identification with pain experienced by the parents –
differentiate: whose loss/pain is it?
- ✓ Loss of assumptions about your physician worldview or professional frame of reference
- ✓ Unresolved previous losses bubble up
- ✓ Facing one's mortality



C.A.R.E model of support

1

Communication

2

Accommodation

3

Recognition

4

Emotional support





Coping and Replenishing

How do you cope and replenish?

A 2011 study with healthcare providers regarding the death of a patient:

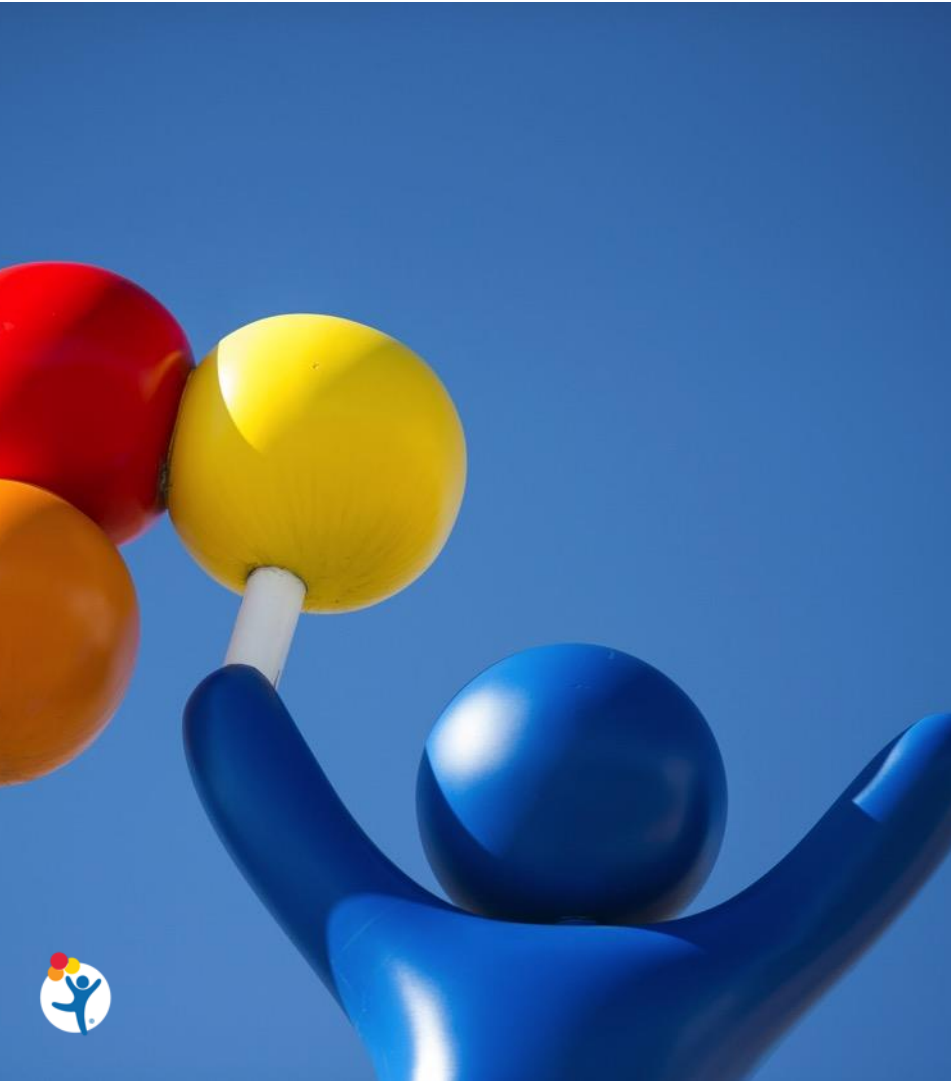
- Talked about the child and their emotions (85%)
- Used positive reframing (80%)
- Self-distraction (57%).
- Seeking religious guidance (55%).
- Self blame (40%)
- Humor (13%)
- Speak with colleagues (70%)and with family and friends (48%).

Plant and Cyr (2011)

Grief Counseling Therapy Techniques & Interventions
(positivepsychology.com)

Replenishing is again as individual as your fingerprint – every one of us does it differently, so find out what works for you





Coping with Loss & Grief

- ❖ You must acknowledge your experienced loss to transform your grief
- ❖ Mindfulness exercise
 - Recognize you are having an emotional experience
 - Allow the emotion to play out
 - Investigate the feeling in your body
 - Nurture and allow self-compassion
 - Spirits grieve too, let your spirit grieve so it can soar again



Connect with others

- ❖ Humans are networkers, we need connectedness
- ❖ Develop a culture of trust
- ❖ Find a trusted coworker to process with
- ❖ Learn ways to share with your personal support system


Reflective Work

Reflect on your personal losses

- ❖ Make a loss chart, reflect on your 'ungrieved' losses
- ❖ Write a page about how your family/culture has "taught you" to deal with loss, grief, and mourning
- ❖ Begin to write your own mourning manifesto
- ❖ SEEK HELP

Everything you learn about your loss and grief work is as individual as your thumb print – it works only for you. Each person must do their own grief work!



A close-up photograph of a pair of hands holding a large, lit candle. The candle is a pale yellow color and has a single flame. The hands are positioned on either side of the candle, with the fingers gently gripping it. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue and white, suggesting a window or a bright, airy space. The overall mood is warm and appreciative.

Thank You for Your Time and Attention