Understanding Grief

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Who is CareFirst?

Hospice

Palliative Care

Grief Services

The Clinic at CareFirst
Grief is the physical, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual response to actual or threatened loss of a person, thing or place to which we are emotionally attached.

“We grieve because we are biologically willed to attach.”
(John Bowlby, Father of Attachment Theory)
Our Approach to Grief

- Grief is a normal and natural response to loss
- Grief is not a problem to be solved, but a process to be experienced
  - There is no time table for grief
- Everyone grieves in their own individual way

What Does Grief Mean?
Types of Grief

- Normal
- Anticipatory
- Complicated
- Cumulative
- Disenfranchised
- Chronic
- Delayed
How Does Grief Manifest?

Physical
Emotional
Mental/Cognitive
Behavioral
Social
Spiritual
Most Common Grief Responses

- Memory Loss
- Confusion
- Appetite Loss
- Sleep Disturbances
- Social Withdrawal
- Tightness in Chest
- Anxiety
- Preoccupied
- Anger
- Lack of Energy
- Lack of Emotional Control
The foundation of grief research was done by Kubler-Ross and is known as the 5 stages of Grief...

- Denial/Shock
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Grieving
- Acceptance
More Recent Models of Grief

The Grief Spiral (Circle)
John Bowlby

Model: The Circle of Grief

Four Tasks of Grief and Mourning
William Worden

• Task I: To Accept the Reality of the Loss
• Task II: To Process the Pain of Grief
• Task III: To Adjust to a World Without the Deceased
• Task IV: To Find an Enduring Connection With the Deceased in the Midst of Embarking on a New Life
Complicated Grief occurs when there are multiple factors influencing one's ability to grieve appropriately.

- Grief can be considered “complicated” if the death was:
  - Sudden, unexpected, or traumatic
  - Resulting from an overly lengthy and/or illness
  - Death that the mourner perceives as preventable

- And/or if the mourner:
  - Is extremely angry or ambivalent about the death
  - Is experiencing other concurrent crises or stressors
  - Has preexisting mental health issues
  - Perceives a lack of social support
  - Experiences Disenfranchised Grief
Disenfranchised Grief often occurs when a grieving person’s loss can’t be openly acknowledged or is one that society does not accept as a real.

- There is a loss, but the person feels “no right” to grieve
- The loss and/or grieving process is minimized
- There is a need for the grief experienced to be recognized and validated
What is the difference between grief and depression?
### Grief vs. Depression

#### Grief
- Sadness
- Crying
- Anger
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Denial
- Numbness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Relief
- Yearning
- Rumination over the Loss
- Sleep disturbance

#### Depression
- Thoughts of suicide
- Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness.
- Slow speech and body movements
- Inability to function at work, home, and/or school.
- Disruption in sleep
- Loss of appetite (extreme)
- Lack of interest (extreme)
- Lack of motivation
- Inability to find pleasure in activities
Symptoms related to grief typically:

- Decrease in intensity over the days and weeks following
- Often comes in “waves” and tend to be directly associated with thoughts or reminders of the loved one
- Positive emotions and humor are present at times
- Self-Esteem is generally preserved
- Thoughts of death are focused on the deceased and may present as wanting to “join them”
Styles of Grieving

While everyone grieves in their own way, there are two main “styles” of grieving:

Formulated from research by Terry Martin and Kenneth Doka; some of their results are published as part of their book, "Men Don't Cry, Women Do: Transcending Gender Stereotypes of Grief."

Intuitive Griever

Instrumental Griever

From: http://www.squidoo.com/grief-loss-bereavement#module10213343
Practical Coping Skills

• Self-Care
• Plan ahead for “triggers”
• Give yourself space to identify emotions
• Express feelings in creative or tangible way
• Do something in memory or in honor of those who have died
• Utilize resources such as books, websites, support groups, individual counseling to help express emotions and process through experiences
• Seek support from friends, family, and other social networks
• Mindfulness/Meditation
• Breathing techniques
• Physical exercise
Remember!

- Eat well
- Get plenty of rest
- Cry
- Talk
- Allow yourself to experience the many feelings that you may have such as anger, sadness, or guilt
- Remember that grief takes time and these are unprecedented circumstances. Be easy on yourself.
Helpful Resources

Websites

www.whatsyourgrief.com

www.dougy.org
Wrap Up

Don’t forget:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PNXDMHR

*Reach out to your local Mental Health agency or access your EAP services for individual support

Questions?