

Mental Health Moment

Presented by the Counseling Department

Grief

This month's edition is about grief and the grief process. All of us will experience grief at some point in time in our lives, and maybe some of us have experienced it most recently with the devastation from the pandemic. While grief and death are unavoidable, we can learn different ways to cope with our intense grief feelings in healthy ways.

First, we have to understand what grief is, and what it isn't, while also learning how this differs from depression and other mental health diagnoses. Grief is defined as "deep sorrow" usually as a reaction to someone's death. We can experience grief from a major breakup in a relationship, divorce, loss of a job, loss of a friendship, moving from your current school or home, and more. Everyone experiences grief in different ways. Therefore, what may cause a grief reaction in you may not affect a friend or classmate the same way. This is why it is so important to know what grief looks like so we can support each other and find help when we need it.


Grief is not necessarily depression, or a mental health crisis, it is not anxiety. However, grief left untreated or repressed can become complicated and one can develop mental health problems that need further intervention.

On the next page, we will have some ideas on how to honor your emotions as you grieve as well as some tips to share with others who are suffering. May you find wellness and health as you move through the grief process safely.

Your counseling team is here to support you with your grief. Contact us via email, appointment request, or a pass from your teacher.

www.heatherleguilloux.ca


Grief & Loss



Quick Facts:

- / grief is a natural response to loss
- / a loss can be anything that has value to a person including people, objects, or events
- / grief is different from clinical depression
- / complicated grief happens if a loss is not processed and feels constant and severe
- / symptoms can include:
 - / shock & disbelief
 - / sadness
 - / physical symptoms
 - / anger
 - / fear
 - / guilt
 - / depression
 - / denial
 - / isolation

Impacts:




/ what can help?

- / support groups
- / grief counselling
- / talking to friends & family
- / religion or spirituality
- / rituals to process grief
- / journaling about the loss

/ grief & loss effects:

all cultures throughout the world



/ references: helpguide.org, addictionhope.com

"The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not 'get over' the loss of a loved one; you will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same nor would you want to."

ELISABETH
KÜBLER-ROSS

funeral.com

"Each person's grief is as unique as their fingerprint. But what everyone has in common is that no matter how they grieve, they share a need for their grief to be witnessed. That doesn't mean needing someone to try to lessen it or reframe it for them. The need is for someone to be fully present to the magnitude of their loss without trying to point out the silver lining."

David Kessler

Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief

Unlocking Us PODCAST WITH BRENÉ BROWN | EPISODE #5

THE 5 STAGES OF GRIEF

AND WHAT THEY REALLY MEAN

1

DENIAL

Denial is a normal reaction to rationalize overwhelming emotions. It is a defense mechanism that buffers the immediate shock of loss.

2

ANGER

As the numbing effects of the denial stage of grief begins to wear off, the pain of loss starts to firmly take hold as we search for blame, feel intense guilt, and lash out.

3

BARGAINING

Bargaining is the "What if..." stage of grief and it serves an important purpose. It provides temporary escape from pain, provides hope, and gives a person time to adjust to the reality of the situation.

4

DEPRESSION

This type of depression is not a sign of mental illness, it is the appropriate response to a great loss. You might experience intense sadness, decreased sleep, reduced appetite, and loss of motivation are common.

5

ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance refers to accepting the reality of a loss and the fact that nothing can change that reality. This does NOT mean that the person is "okay" with the loss.

love lives on.com

GRIEF IS THE LAST
ACT OF LOVE WE HAVE
TO GIVE TO THOSE WE
LOVED. WHERE THERE
IS DEEP GRIEF, THERE
WAS GREAT LOVE.

LIVEPURPOSEFULLYNOW.COM

Staying Healthy

One of the important ways of coping is making sure that you are staying healthy and making smart choices for your body.

Nutrition

Sometimes when you are grieving, you might lose your appetite or forget to eat. You want to make sure that you are eating full, healthy meals throughout the day. Try to eat when others are eating, or set a timer to remind yourself to eat a meal or get a snack.

How has your appetite been?

Exercise

Exercise can be a good coping skill because of the way it impacts your body and brain. You may not feel like being active, but you should take an opportunity to do some sort of physical activity each day. You can take a walk with a family member or play a game outside with a friend or sibling.

Have you been doing any physical activities?

Meditation

Meditation is a way to clear your mind and reduce your level of stress and sadness. This includes taking time to yourself to be in a space of calm and quiet with no distractions. Sometimes listening to music can help you relax even more. As you go through the grieving process, it will be helpful to find time where you can experience some peace.

Do you make time for peace and calm during the day?

Sleep

Sleep has a very big impact on our health and our feelings. Someone who is grieving can have a hard time falling asleep or staying asleep. It is important to make changes to improve your sleep because you will be better able to cope with feelings if you are well-rested.

How has your sleeping been?

myemotions
© 2019 MyEmotions LLC. All Rights Reserved.
For more resources, visit www.myemotions.com

THAT TIME OF YEAR

An anniversary is a date that comes around every year that reminds you of a specific event. For someone who has experienced loss, the anniversary of a special person's death can be challenging. When that time of year comes around, you might find yourself experiencing difficult emotions such as sadness, anger, or grief. Read below to learn tips on helpful ways of coping.

1. Talk About It

You may feel shutting down and not talking about your feelings with others. Remember that what you're feeling is normal and there are others in your life that might feel the same way. It is helpful to be open with your friend and family members so that they can support you. Just being able to talk about it with someone can help you start to feel better.



2. Do Something Special

Take time out to do something special to honor the person you lost. You can cook their favorite meal, watch a movie that they used to enjoy, plant flowers, or create a memorial for them.

3. Visit Them

If you are able to, ask if you can visit the place where your loved one is buried. While there, you can have a conversation with them as if they were still here. Sometimes, it's helpful to believe that they can hear you. Tell them stories about yourself that they would love to hear.

4. Write a Letter

If you can't visit, then write them a letter. In this letter, you can tell them how much you love and miss them. Update them about your life events and everything that's happened since they've passed away. When you're done writing the letter, you can keep it somewhere special.

5. Do Things That Make You Happy

A helpful way of dealing with feelings of sadness or anger is to do things that make you smile and laugh. Watch your favorite shows, listen to your favorite songs, and put yourself around people that make you feel happy.

Focusing on the fact that this person is gone will only keep you sad and make it more difficult to cope. Instead, try to think of all the happy memories that you had with this person. Look through old photos to help you remember all the fun times that you had.

myemotions
© 2019 MyEmotions LLC. All Rights Reserved.
For more resources, visit www.myemotions.com

Grief, I've learned,
is really just love.
It's all the love you want to give,
but cannot. All that unspent love gathers up
in the corners of your eyes,
the lump in your throat,
and in that hollow part of your chest.
Grief is just love with no place to go

— Jamie Anderson —
TheMindsJournal.Com



GRIEF TIP:

Don't try to hide from your feelings and keep them inside.

It won't work.

Let yourself feel your pain & acknowledge your loss.

This is how we heal.

love lives on.com