

Navigating Loss and Grief

Berkshire Youth Worker SUMMIT
Bousquet Mountain

October 16, 2024

Keynote Speaker:

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WELCOME !!

Being Compassionate looks like:

“I may not always understand the depth of your grief, but I do understand what it feels like to be very sad about a loss. I am so sorry for your loss.”-Dr. Jean Clarke-Mitchell



GROUNDING

Instructions: **ACTIVITY**

1. Get comfortable, feel relaxed and supported.

2. Begin to Focus on your breath:

- a. Take slow, deep breaths.
- b. Notice the rise and fall of your chest or abdomen.
- c. Slowly exhale.

3. Engage your senses:

- a. **Sight:** Look around the room and identify three colors you see.
- b. **Hearing:** Listen to three sounds in the environment.
- c. **Touch:** Notice the feel of your clothes, the warmth of your skin.
- d. **Smell:** Identify any scents in the air.
- e. **Taste:** Think of a favorite food or drink. Imagine its taste and smell.

3. Grounding statement: Repeat this statement to yourself:

"I am safe and present in this moment."



"I am safe and present in this moment."

What is Loss and Grief?

Grief is a powerful emotion that is in response to a loss, a universal experience that comes in many forms. It affects us both physically and emotionally.



What is Loss?

Loss is a general term that includes a wide range of experiences. Loss can be a significant life event that can lead to a range of emotional responses including sadness, grief, anger, guilt, fear, and confusion.



TYPES OF LOSSES WE SUFFER

1. Death and Bereavement:

- **Loss of a loved one:** Family member, friend, or pet.
- **Loss of a relationship:** Romantic relationship, a friendship, or a family connection.
- **How did the death occur?:**
 - a. Natural causes
 - b. Accident
 - c. Completed suicide
 - d. Murdered



OTHER LOSSES

Health and Well-being:

- **Loss of health:** This can include chronic illnesses, disabilities, or the loss of a body part.
- **Loss of independence:** This can occur due to age, illness, or other circumstances.
- **Loss of youth:** As we age, we may grieve the loss of our younger selves and the possibilities that once
- **Loss of a sense of self:** Due to trauma, illness, a death.

Life Changes:

- **Loss of a job:** This can lead to financial hardship, a loss of identity, and social isolation.
- **Loss of a home:** This can be due to relocation, foreclosure, or other circumstances.
- **Loss of a dream or goal:** This can be particularly painful when we feel we have lost something we have worked hard for.
- **Loss of hope or faith:** This can occur during difficult times when it feels like there is no light at the end of the tunnel.

GRIEF



Types of Grief:

1. Anticipatory grief -

When grief starts to develop before the actual loss of what is important to you.

2. Disenfranchised grief - When loss is: Devalued, Stigmatized, Cannot be openly mourned

3. Complicated grief - When the pain of experiencing a loss does not fade with time.

Data on Loss and grief

1. **Childhood Grief Statistics state that 1.5 million children live in a single-parent home because of the loss of one parent.**
2. **Nearly 2 million children under 18 have lost both parents.**
3. **U.S.: Approximately 6 million children will experience the death of a parent, sibling, or close friend by age 18.**

According to an article from Psychiatric Times:

1. **40% of grieverers meet the criteria for major depression one month after their loss**
2. **24% still meet the criteria after two months.**

The way grief in children is processed can be positively or negatively affected by others around them.

Bereavement during childhood can also cause issues such as bedwetting, digestive problems and trouble sleeping.

Story of Valerie

A professional experience with one youth:

The Impact of Loss and Grief on You

- **Vicarious trauma**
- **Burn out**
- **Physical Manifestations**
- **Emotional Manifestations**
- **Compassion fatigue**
- **Secondary loss**
- **Lack of self-awareness**



Coping with Loss and Grief

Self-Care Strategies for Youth Workers

- **Normalize self-care:** Does not mean selfish it is necessary and effective support of yourselves and young people.
- **Practical self-care techniques:** Manage stress and increase sense of well-being
 - **Mindfulness and meditation**
 - **Physical activity**
 - **Healthy eating**
 - **Adequate sleep**
 - **Building a strong support system**
 - **Seeking professional help when needed**

SEEING SUPPORT

Grief is unique to each person! Build your support from that perspective.

Seeking support from:

- Partners
- Family
- Friends
- Colleagues
- Supervisors
- Mental health professionals.
- Group work
- Your communities



Building Resilience

Strategies for building resilience:

Help youth workers navigate challenging situations.

- Developing a growth mindset
- Practicing gratitude
- Finding meaning in the work
- Building a strong sense of purpose
- Practice Me-care
- Find Joy where possible



In closing

- **Action!** Youth Workers, take the time to:
 - Prioritize self-care
 - Seek support without fear
 - Create a culture of well-being within their organizations.
- **My message?:** There is resilience in both young people and youth workers through the power of connection and support.



Thank
you!



Thank You!

"Only the development of compassion and the understanding for others can bring us the tranquility and happiness we all seek."

- Dalai Lama.

