UNC-CH School of Social Work
Clinical Lecture Series
presents

The Journey of Grief:
For the Clinician and Client
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Intention of Lecture
► Aim: Help prepare participants to work more effectively with grieving clients through exploring participants' own losses and perspectives on life, death, and grief.
► Methods: Offering participants additional knowledge and engaging participants in a variety of experiential exercises related to grief and mourning.

Check-In
► Name and/or relationship to you
► Something that has been helpful for you in your grief

Grief and Mourning: Defined
Grief — The thoughts and feelings on the inside after someone dies
Mourning — The outward expression of those thoughts and feelings
“We all grieve when someone dies, but if we are to heal, we must also mourn.” ~ Alan D. Wolfelt

Grief and Mourning: Impacts
Both impact our entire experience
► physically
► cognitively
► emotionally
► behaviorally
► religiously / spiritually

Grief and Mourning: Experience
Our experience
► is never completed but is instead managed
► is a process of remembering and maintaining a relationship with the deceased
► is an individualistic process
Grief and Mourning: Process

► “Moving forward with our life knowing our loved one is no longer here.”
► There are basic needs or aspects of grief and mourning that we need to “yield” to or “experience fully” if we are to heal.

~ Alan D. Wolfelt

Self-Care

Early, often, throughout:
► Eating
► Sleeping
► Exercise / Movement
► Support (internal and external)

Acknowledging the Reality of the Death

Experience: Shock, denial, fear, relief
Interventions: Story telling
Concerns: Unhealthy coping mechanisms
Needs: Normalization, safety, planning

Experiencing the Pain of Loss

Experience: Feelings, realizations, questions
Interventions: Healthy and safe environment
Concerns: Avoidance
Needs: Trust, space, support

Remembering the Person Who Died and the Relationship Realistically

Experience: Ambivalence, confusion, connection
Interventions: Remembering
Concerns: Cultural complications
Needs: Permission, honesty, rituals
Searching for Meaning
Experience: Self inquiry
Interventions: Education and exploration
Concerns: Not maintaining a healthy relationship with the deceased
Needs: Understanding, acceptance, meaning

Developing a New Identity and Re-investing in the Future
Experience: Adjustment, awareness, resistance
Interventions: Facilitation, goal setting, problem solving
Concerns: Frustration, fear of future losses, unhealthy positive aspects
Needs: Courage, self-care, ongoing support

Process of Grief and Mourning: Review
- Never completed; managed
- Need for process to be gradual
- Importance of engagement in process
- Variety of modalities for healing
- Awareness of cultural complications
- Process often “messy” and not linear

Adapted from Alan D. Wolfelt, Unicorn Bereavement Center, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross
Wanting Memories
Kaeli Reichel

Check-In
► Were there any parts of the song that were meaningful to you or that related to your experience of grief and mourning?

Grief and Mourning Work
► for ourselves and with others

Grief and Mourning: History
► Why do you grieve and mourn the way you do?
► What was modeled to you growing up?
► What cultural messages have you received about grief and mourning?
► What is similar now to how you grew up grieving and what is different?
► Are there any aspects of your grief and mourning (processes) that are not healthy?

Personal Relationship to Death
► Books
► Beliefs
► Practices

Five Remembrances
► I am of the nature to grow old. There is no way to escape growing old.
► I am of the nature to have ill health. There is no way to escape ill health.
► I am of the nature to die. There is no way to escape death.
► All that is dear to me and everyone I love are of the nature to change. There is no way to escape being separated from them.
► My actions are my only true belongings. I cannot escape the consequences of my actions. My actions are the ground on which I stand.

~ Buddha
Life Review

Stephen Levine suggests reflecting on
► gratitude
► forgiveness

I'm Ready

Tracy Chapman

Check-In

► Was there anything resonating for you related to the song?
► Are there practices that invite you to reflect on your beliefs and thoughts about your own death?

Blessings for Those Who Remain

Leader: In the rising of the sun and its going down,
People: We remember them.
Leader: In the blowing of the wind and the chill of winter,
People: We remember them.
Leader: In the opening buds and rebirth of spring,
People: We remember them.
Leader: In the blueness of the sky and the warmth of summer,
People: We remember them.
Leader: In the rustling of the leaves and the beauty of autumn,
People: We remember them.
Leader: In the beginning of the year and when it ends,
People: We remember them.

Blessings for Those Who Remain continued...

Leader: When we are weary and in need of strength,
People: We remember them.
Leader: When we are lost and sick of heart,
People: We remember them.
Leader: When we have joys we yearn to share,
People: We remember them.
Unison: So long as we live, they too shall live,
for they are a part of us, as we remember them.

“The Gates of Repentance”
Jewish High Holy Day Prayer Book

References

Unicorn Bereavement Center: Duke Home Care and Hospice. 1001 Corporate Drive, Hillsborough, NC 27278 (919) 644.6869 http://dhch.duhs.duke.edu/modules/dhccbereave/index.php?id=1

Additional resources on death, dying, and bereavement:
Ken Doka, Robert Neimeyer, Therese Rando, William Worden

Thanks to Willow Graphics for the logo and grief wheel graphics