

Responding Appropriately to Grief and Loss as a Healthcare Professional or Wellness Provider Education Proposal

Healthcare professionals are in a unique and challenging position when it comes to supporting people with life changing and life threatening illness and death. These professionals, caregiving in the front lines, are dealing with difficult and emotional situations everyday, sometimes without the formal training on how to be supportive.

Grief is the internal and natural response to loss that human beings experience, and everyone, either in their personal or professional life, will inevitably be faced with a situation of significant loss and resultant grief. Healthcare professionals are uniquely positioned to be able to offer holistic, compassionate care that is supportive across all domains of loss and grief. Unfortunately, North America is a largely death phobic and grief illiterate culture, making it challenging to know the best way to help. This two day workshop will focus on dispelling popular misconceptions of grief, re-framing the way we think about, experience, and support loss and grief.

Day 1: Lecture

Segment 1: (30 Minutes)

Introduction of Presenter

Review of Learning Objectives

- To be able to define grief and identify a variety of losses a person could experience.
- To examine the misconceptions we have in our society about grief, and to recognize the impact these misconceptions have on the bereaved.
- To learn the 11 tenants of the Companioning Model of grief support, and to practice applying it during the workshop.
- To demonstrate basic counselling and supportive skills in a small group setting.
- To appraise and support your role as a Health care professional in providing grief sensitive care, and become aware of community resources.

Segment 2: (45 minutes)

- Introduction of Participants - Why Are You Here?

Break: (20 minutes)

Segment 3: (60 minutes)

- The Importance of Semantics - Defining Grief, Mourning and Bereavement
- Broader Framework for Grief and Loss - Losses Experienced Throughout The Lifespan and in Health Care Settings
 - Exploring Practice Settings in health care/wellness and the intersection with Grief
 - Trajectory of disease - Loss Throughout Healthcare – pediatrics, adults, mental health, workers compensation board, acute care, long term care etc.
- The Ripple Effect of Grief/Loss - It's Not Just The Loss Of...
- An Introduction to the Helping Role
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Segment 4: (60 minutes)

- Past and Current Trends - Explore Death and Grief Culture Historically, as well as Current Trends
- Understanding the Misconceptions of Grief
- Introduction to the Companionship Model - Companionship versus Treating: Grief is Not an Illness

Lunch break: (60 minutes)

Segment 5: (90 Minutes)

Domains and Manifestations of Grief

- Physical
 - Body and physical response to grief, loss, trauma
- Mental
 - Mental and cognitive manifestations of grief
- Emotional

- Emotional manifestations of grief, loss, trauma, including shock, numbness and denial
- Social
 - Social manifestations in social circles, support networks and families
- Spiritual
 - Discussion of concepts of “liminal space,” “world view,” “dark night of the soul,” and “divine spark”

Break: (20 minutes)

Segment 6: (60 minutes)

Discuss The 6 Needs of Mourning and Other Models of Reconciliation and Integration of Grief

Sement 7: (30 minutes) Case Study

Day 2: Lecture and Dyad or Triad Work

Segment 8: (45 minutes)

Review from Day 1 including a video (Nancy Berns, Beyond Closure and Megan Devine)

Segment 9: (60 minutes)

Practical Ways of Supporting Grief

- Explain The 11 Tenets of Companioning The Bereaved
- Counselling Skills - Lecture, Combining The 11 Tenets into Your Role

Segment 10: (60-120 minutes)

- Counselling Skills Breakout: Dyad or triad to practice basic counselling skills and the 11 Tenets of Companioning The Bereaved

Lunch: (60 minutes)

Segment 11: (45 minutes)

Community Supports in Edmonton and Canada for grief, loss, culturally sensitive care and ethics.

Break: (20 minutes)

Segment 12: (90 minutes)

Self Care - Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others

- The Emotional Labour of Caregiving
- Moral Distress and Ethical Dilemmas
- Grief Experienced as a Healthcare professional
 - Individual and then group work

Segment 13: (30 minutes)

- Question and Answer