

# **You can give bereavement care**

## **Module 6**

# Learning objectives

- Describe loss, grief, mourning, bereavement
- Explore theories of loss
- Outline the 9 cell tool
- Describe cultural practices around death
- Discuss bereavement care

# Definitions

- Bereavement is the loss of something of value
- Grief is a person's reaction to the loss
- Mourning is the behavior and actions of someone who is bereaved

# Bereavement / loss

- person
  - death of parent, grandparent, sibling, partner, child
  - death of close friend
  - loss/breakup of relationship
  - loss of friendship
  - serious illness in self or other
- possession
  - loss of role or financial security
  - change in physical appearance

# Grief

- person's reaction to the loss
  - describes a range of emotions and reactions
- different types
  - normal grief
  - anticipatory grief
    - happen before the loss occurs
  - complicated grief
  - chronic grief

# Group work

- Mary is a 32 year old woman with three children aged between five and 15. She has a younger unmarried sister with whom she is particularly close to. She has been diagnosed with brain tumour a few weeks ago. There are no options for curative treatment. She has been discharged from hospital.

# Grief

- Group work

- to explore reactions to loss in patients, families and health workers
- each group should think about one character from the scenario, imagining and discussing how they might feel. (10 minutes)

- Group 1 is Mary

- Group 2 is her sister

- Group 3 is her home care nurse or volunteer.

# Grief reactions

- Case scenario
- Queen Victoria

*"How I, who leant on him for all and everything—without whom I did nothing, moved not a finger, arranged not a print or photograph, didn't put on a gown or bonnet if he didn't approve it shall go on, to live, to move, to help myself in difficult moments?"*





# Grief reactions

- shock or disbelief
- anguish and severe distress
- anger
- searching for the lost one
- depression, fatigue, loss of
- interest in life
- acceptance and planning for the future

# Theories of grief

- Stages
  - *Elizabeth Kubler-Ross*
- Four tasks of grieving
  - *William Worden*
- Dual process model
  - *Stroebe and Schut*
- Rebuilding life and search for meaning
  - *Robert Neimeyer*

# Theories of grief

- **Stages**

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance
- *Developed as stages of death and dying and not bereavement, not used as a framework for bereavement support*

# Theories of grief

## ■ Tasks

- Accept the reality of the loss
- Work through the pain
- Adjust to the new environment
- Emotionally relocate the deceased person and move on

■ *Tasks and their completion not as flexible as the next 2 theories and less used now*

# Theories of grief

## ■ Dual process

- at times, individuals may be more focused on coping with the loss itself, whereas at other times be more focused on adapting to an altered productive life
- grieving may differ from one individual to another, from one moment to another, and from one culture to another

## ■ *Very adaptable and widely used theory*



# Theories of grief

## ■ Meaning reconstruction

- loss in the context of our life stories; re-writing the book or the story of your life
- process of healing grief through the telling and re-telling of our life stories
- seeking new meanings to re-affirm and re-build our life in a world without our loved one
- *‘Who are we now in the light of this loss’*
- <http://livinglifedyingdeath.com/healing-grief/>

## ■ *Increasing interest as framework for narrative grief work*

# Mourning

- Mourning is the behavior and actions of someone who is bereaved
  - outward expression of grief
  - includes cultural factors and practices
  - includes behaviors and rituals

# Mourning

## ■ Behaviors

- crying
- praying
- sleep disturbances
- appetite disturbances
- social withdrawal
- dreams of the deceased
- absent-minded behavior
- memorializing or sharing memories

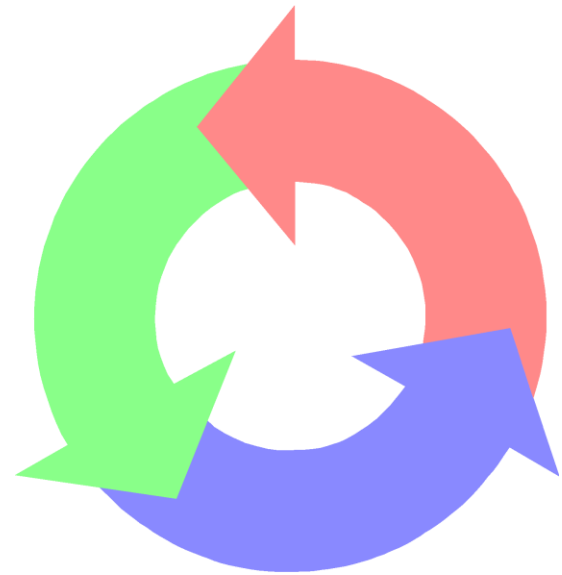


# Mourning

- What are the customs, beliefs and practices around death in your culture?
- Which of these are helpful?
- Are any unhelpful and why?
- How could a palliative care team give bereavement support in this setting?

# Grief assessment

- Begins at time of admission or diagnosis
- Ongoing
  - to recognise normal grief reaction
  - to detect complicated grief



# Bereavement experiences

- Useful framework to explore individual, cultural and societal issues and responses in bereavement

	Cell number	1	2	3
Cell letter		Immediate	After several months	After a couple of years
A	Felt	A1	A2	A3
B	Shown	B1	B2	B3
C	Allowed/ Expected	C1	C2	C3

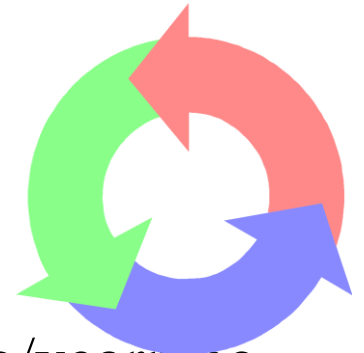
*9 cell tool for bereavement training*

*Jenny Hunt, Zimbabwe*

# Grief assessment

## ■ Normal

- emotional symptoms
  - shock, anger, denial, anxiety, bargaining/yearning, depression, acceptance
- physical Symptoms
  - lack of energy, upset stomach, panic like attacks, tightness in the chest, shortness of breath
- thoughts
  - disbelief, confusion, sense of presence, lack of concentration



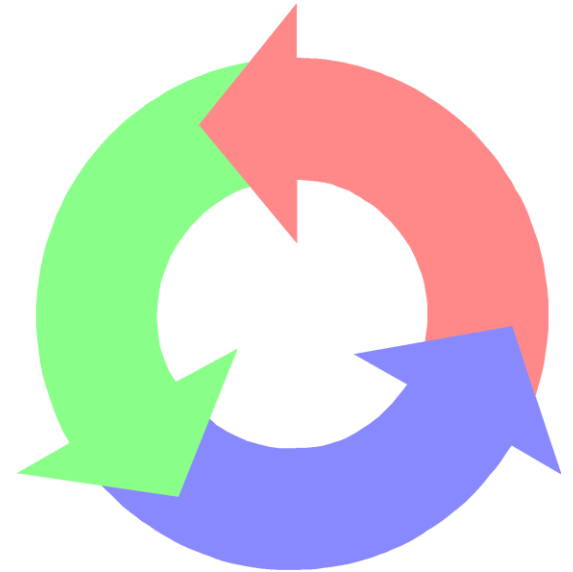
# Grief assessment

- Normal
  - all of these symptoms are normal, although not every person will have every symptom.
  - the bereavement period varies from person to person
    - may be brief, or last many years
    - generally is from months to one year
- Completion
  - healing is when pain is less
  - work of grief never really finishes

# Grief assessment

- What was the relationship
- Nature of the attachment
- Mode of death
- Personality variables
- Social variables

\* Adapted from William Worden. (1982). *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.



# Bereavement support

- How do we support grieving in practice?
  - *<http://www.goodlifedeathgrief.org.uk/>*



# to absent friends ...

[home](#) [about](#) [festival](#) [storytelling](#) [remembrance](#) [get involved](#)

## a people's festival of storytelling and remembrance

**1-7 november 2014**

Because dead ordinary people live on in the memories and stories we share.





# Bereavement support

- Establish a relationship with the bereaved
- Be comfortable with their expression of grief
- Provide presence
- Active listening, touch, reassurance
- Normalise grief reactions
- Companion them in rebuilding their life

# Bereavement support

- You are the best therapeutic tool!!!!
- “Suffering is not a problem that demands a solution; it is not a question that demands an answer; it is a mystery that demands a presence.”

*John Wyatt 1998*

- These resources are developed as part of the THET multi-country project whose goal is to strengthen and integrate palliative care into national health systems through a public health primary care approach
  - Acknowledgement given to Cairdeas International Palliative Care Trust and MPCU for their preparation and adaptation
  - part of the teaching materials for the Palliative Care Toolkit training with modules as per the Training Manual
  - can be used as basic PC presentations when facilitators are encouraged to adapt and make contextual



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