

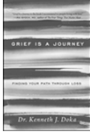
### **Grief Is a Journey Finding Your Path through Loss**

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### **Goals of this Webinar**

- To debunk some of the myths of grief
- To assist individuals grieving a loss by:
  - Validating grief
  - Offering advice for coping with loss
  - Exploring special losses



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### **The Myths of Grief**

- *Grief is a journey through predictable stages*
- *Grief has a timetable*
- *Grief is about detachment*
- *Grief only occurs after a death*
- *Grief ends with closure and detachment*

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### **How to Avoid Grief**

- Avoid any attachments!
- Grief is the price we pay for love



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### **What is Grief?**

- A reaction to loss
  - Each reaction is individual, impacted in part by:
    - Relationship
    - Circumstances of death and life
    - Support (both internal and external)
    - Health
    - Culture and spirituality

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### **Grief**

- Affects us in many ways
  - Physically
  - Emotionally
  - Intellectually
  - Behaviorally
  - Even spiritually



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### **Styles of Grief**

- Grieving styles help find a path through grief
  - Instrumental vs. intuitive
  - Styles on a continuum
- Coping with grief and grieving styles as a family
  - Complementary or symmetrical?
  - Isolating or interacting?
  - Conflicting or respectful?

How we grieve is not a measure of love

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### **Grief as a Roller Coaster**

- Dual Process Model
- Ups and downs, good days and bad days
- Some predictable, some not
- Not universal stages but personal pathways (including resilience)

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### **Resilience as a Pattern**

- "Am I doing too well?"
- Some people have a comparatively limited reaction to loss, due to:
  - Fewer losses or other stress
  - Death was not sudden
  - Intrinsic spirituality
  - Good psychological health
- Patterns of resilience can teach us something

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### Resilient Grievors

- Had an optimistic mindset
- Responded to challenges
- Held the belief that, even in the worst situations, they could learn and grow
- Focused on positive memories

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### Grief

- No timetable to grief
- Over time, the pain lessens
- We return to similar, sometimes better, levels of functioning
- Yet bond always continues

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### Continuing Bonds

- Memories
- Biography
- Legacies
- Extraordinary experiences
- Spiritual connections



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### Continuing Bonds

- The lessening of grief is not the end of memory or attachment
- As the pain ebbs, positive memories become more common
- Surges of grief may still occur

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### When Grief Is Sudden

- A dual challenge
  - The challenge of grief
  - The challenge to our assumptive world, impacting concepts of benevolence, meaning, fairness, identity, and predictability
- Not necessarily easier or harder, just different

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### What Can Help?

- Choices in grief
- Catherine Sanders's "Phases of Grief"
  - Shock
  - Awareness of loss
  - Conservation and withdrawal
  - The turning point
  - Renewal
- Worden's Tasks

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### Accepting Reality



- The role of the funeral and other rituals
- Talking about the loss freely

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### Experiencing Emotions

- No need to bottle feelings
- Understanding ambivalence and finishing business
- Planning for difficult times



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### Adjusting to Life without the Person

- Assessing change
- Coping with loneliness
- Drawing from strengths and avoiding past weaknesses
- Recognizing secondary losses
- Getting support (D, L, R)

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### Continuing the Bond

- Building in moments to remember or reaffirm

**Sanders's Questions**

1. *What do I wish to take from my old life into my new life?*
2. *What do I wish to leave behind?*
3. *What do I need to add?*

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### Reviewing Faith and Meaning

- Challenge to our spirituality and assumptions
- *How does your faith or philosophy speak to you?*
- *What resources does it offer (beliefs, practices, rituals, community)?*

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### Resources for Your Struggle

- Books
- Self-help groups
- Counseling



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### Creating Rituals



- Types of Ritual
  - Continuity
  - Transition
  - Reconciliation
  - Affirmation

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### A Year From Now

- My exercise with my grief group
- My hope



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### Questions?



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### Upcoming Event

- *Photographing Grief*
  - **Date**
    - Wednesday, May 16 from 4:30 – 6:30 pm ET
  - **Location**
    - TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing, 3033 Wilson Blvd., 3rd floor, Arlington, VA
  - **Presenters**
    - *What's Your Grief* co-founders Litsa Williams and Eleanor Haley
  - **Register here**
    - <https://griefphoto.eventbrite.com>

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### Ordering Books

- Order from Amazon
  - <https://www.amazon.com/Grief-Journey-Finding-Your-Through/dp/1476771510>
- Order from Barnes & Noble
  - <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/grief-is-a-journey-dr-kenneth-j-doka/1120912726>

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### CE Info

If you would like to receive CEs for this program, please go to [educate.hospicefoundation.org](http://educate.hospicefoundation.org)

CE Code: GJNY

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