



# **UNDERSTANDING GRIEF: EDUCATION FOR CAREGIVERS**

**Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors**

# OBJECTIVES

- Defining emotional reactions
- Model of grief
- The four tasks of grief
- How we experience grief
- Responding to someone who is grieving
- How to help
- Care Givers

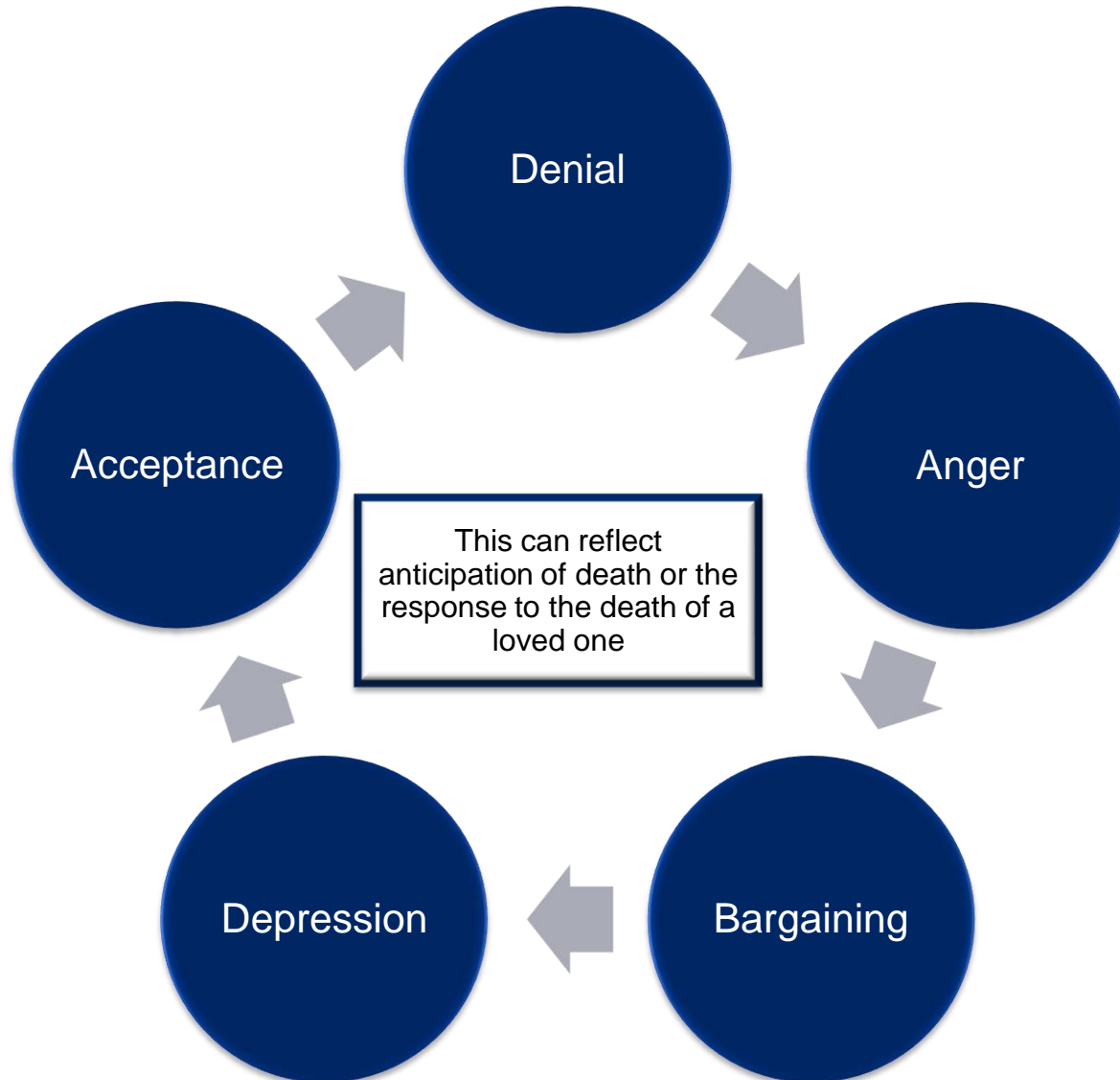


# EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

- Any event that has the potential for overwhelming a person's normal coping ability
- Remember, the emotional significance of any incident is unique for each individual
- A negative stress response to a loss is a normal reaction to an abnormal situation
- Grief is the reaction people have to any loss in their lives



# KUBLER-ROSS MODEL OF GRIEF



# UNDERSTANDING GRIEF

## Four Tasks of Grief

1. Accept the reality of the death
2. Experience the pain of grief
3. Adjust to the environment in which the deceased is missing
4. Form a new identity and reinvest energy without forgetting the past



# HOW WE EXPERIENCE GRIEF

## Physical:

- Pain, Breathing, Dizziness, Sleep

## Emotional:

- Shock, Crying, Anger, Fear, Envy

## Psychological:

- Guilt, Bargaining, Memory

## Social:

- Loneliness, Isolation, Relationships

## Spiritual

- Loss of Faith, Questioning, New Faith



# HOW WE EXPERIENCE GRIEF

## Physical

- Pain
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## Emotional

- Shock
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## Psychological

- Guilt
- Bargaining
- Memory

## Social

- Isolation
- Relationships

## Spiritual

- Loss of Faith
- Questioning
- New Faith



# REALIZE

- Trauma can shatter the way one looks at the world
- Life has just changed forever
- There may be a need to retake control of one's life
- Everyone experiences grief in their own way
- Be respectful of the family's religious beliefs and customs
- Withhold judgment or expectations
- Bereavement is very individualized





# WHAT TO SAY

- “I’m very sorry.”
- “You have our support. Call on us.”
- “This is a great loss to the organization/nation.”
- “\_\_\_\_\_ will be greatly missed.”
- Offer choices and listen to requests.

**“Remember”**

Honor the dead by focusing on the life and the service

**DIGNITY FIRST, COMPASSION ALWAYS**



# KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Know your own limits
- Know when to seek help
- Be a good listener
- Know that it is okay to be quiet
- Be respectful



# WHEN TO SEEK HELP

- When the family member has needs that go beyond your expertise
- If they become emotionally distraught and cannot be consoled
- If the stress negatively starts to affect the household
- If there is a threat of suicide



# SIGNS OF STRESS

## Signs include:

- Sadness
- Headaches and/or stomach aches
- Sleeping difficulties
- More easily upset
- Tearful and/or get angry more
- Often catches colds
- Feel you cannot cope anymore
- Cannot concentrate
- Eat, smoke, and/or drink more than usual

**Signs of stress differ depending on the person**



# SELF-CARE

- Seek additional support from the Chaplain, MFLC or other resources
- Eat a well balanced diet
- Get enough sleep and rest
- Exercise



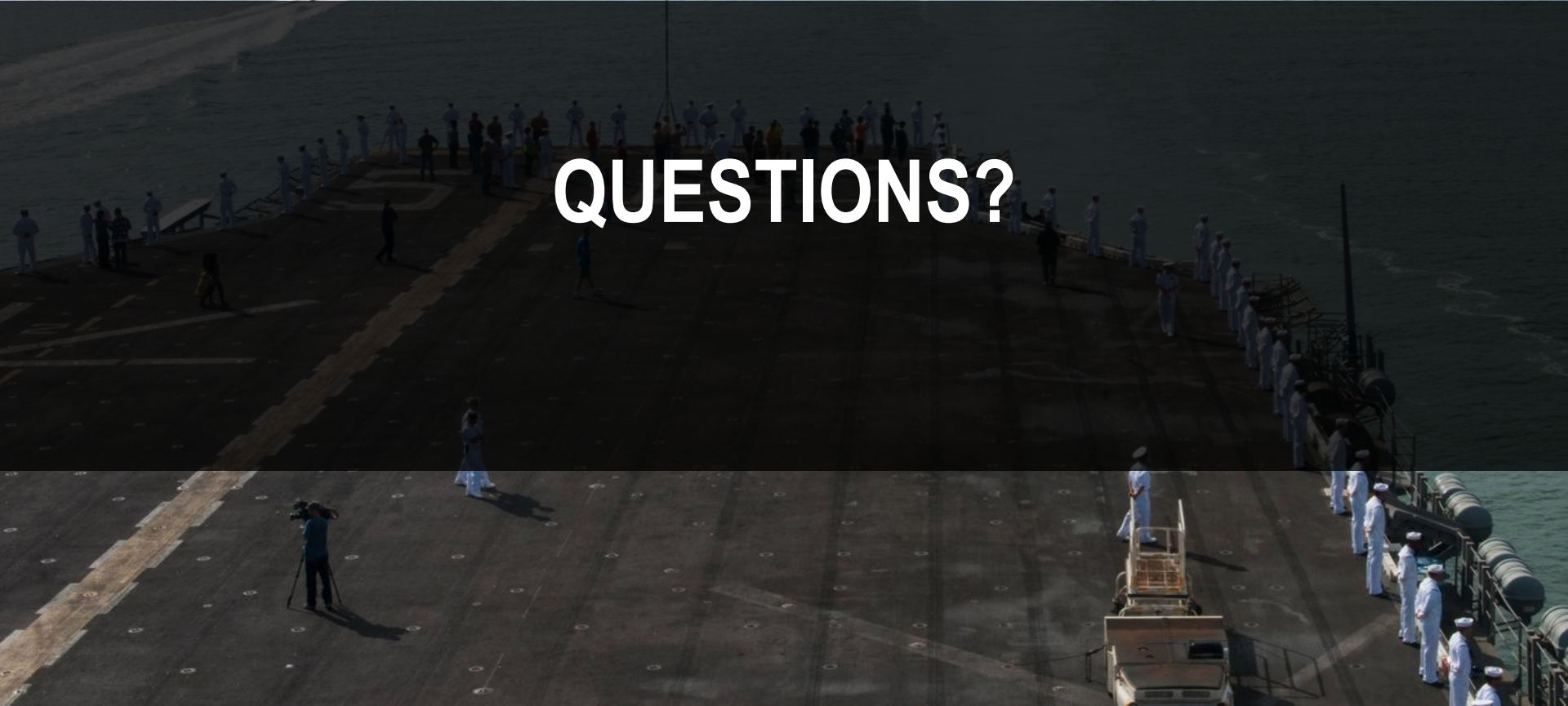
# SUMMARY

- Grief is the reaction people have to any loss in their lives
- Grief is experienced physically, emotionally, socially, psychologically and spiritually
- When talking with others, use age appropriate language and be sensitive to where they are developmentally
- Learn to recognize the signs of stress
- Practice self-care





**QUESTIONS?**



# RESOURCES

- Military Community Services
- Chaplain and Local Clergy
- Military OneSource (800) 342-9647
- TRICARE [www.Tricare.mil](http://www.Tricare.mil)
- Behavioral Health Services







**THANK YOU**