

Speaker Notes

Understanding Grief: Education for Caregivers

Page 1 – Title Slide

None

Page 2 – Objectives

None

Page 3 – Emotional Reactions

- Grief is unique to each individual. Even though public perception may be that the loss should be devastating or perhaps not that significant to the individual, the loss is actually dependent on a number of factors, including the type of loss, the meaning of the loss in the individual's life, and individual circumstances/experiences.
- Grief can be experienced due to (among other things):
 - Death of a loved one
 - Divorce
 - Moving away from family and friends
 - Loss of a pet
 - Diagnosis of a terminal illness

Page 4 – Kubler-Ross Model of Grief

- These are not the only emotions and feelings associated with grief, nor are they stages that occur in order or separately. Often, this is what we feel when we see others experiencing a loss.

Page 5 – Understanding Grief

- When people grieve, they are coming to terms with what has changed in their lives. At the same time, they are beginning to find new ways of going about their lives to cope with the gaps that the death of their loved one has created.

Page 6 – How We Experience Grief

- Physical responses can include:
 - Pain in the neck, head, jaw, back, chest around the heart
 - Pounding or racing heartbeat
 - Muscle stiffness, soreness, weakness
 - Feeling dizzy or fainting
 - Feeling like you are choking or having difficulty breathing
 - Changes in appetite
 - Changes in sleep patterns

Page 7 – How We Experience Grief (Continued)

- There is no one way to respond to grief. "Gut instincts" and your own experiences may inform your grieving process.
- It doesn't have to be a perfect performance. Let yourself off the hook.

Page 8 – Realize

None

Page 9 – What to Say

- Remember the context (grief). Respect the tone set by the family themselves.
- Begin conversations with those emotionally related to the deceased with an acknowledgement of their sacrifice (not just a “statement of facts” or need for information from them).

Page 10 – Keys to Success

None

Page 11 – When to Seek Help

None

Page 12 – Signs of Stress

- These are typical reactions that might be expected. The characteristics given for the age groups are general. Children may not experience all or any of the reactions listed.
- Young children may:
 - Think the deceased is sleeping or on a trip.
 - See death as temporary or reversible
 - Think the deceased will continue to do things (eat, sleep etc) but only in the sky
 - Wonder what the deceased is doing
 - Think that if you walk on the grave, the person will feel it.
 - Develop an interest in the causes of death (i.e. violence, old age, sickness, etc).
 - Be unable imagine life without mom or dad
 - Search for culpability (i.e. Whose fault was it? Where did daddy go?)
- Young children should be included in mourning rituals. Talk to the child at their level. Be truthful, but only give them as much information as they ask for.

Page 13 – Self-Care

- Emotions may run high after providing support to family members. Those emotions will drain your energy, so it’s important to practice self-care.

Page 14 – Summary

None

Page 15 – Questions

None

Page 16 – Resources

None

Page 17 – Thank You

None