

Supporting Individuals and Families Dealing with Change, Loss, and Grief



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BJC Hospice

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Objective

You will gain knowledge about...

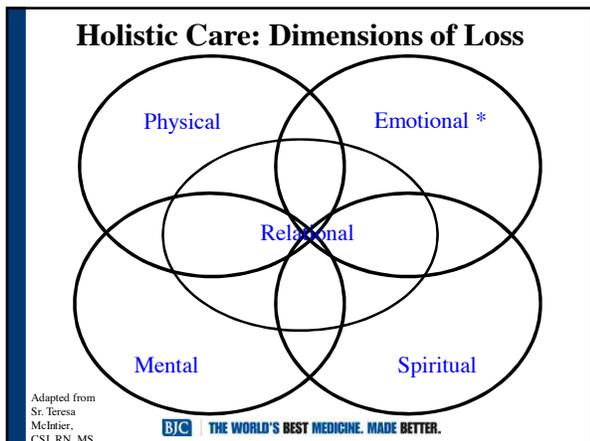
- A Guided Imagery Tool / Letting Go Exercise
- Holistic Person - Centered Care
- Dignity Therapy and the Value of Life Review for both the dying and their family
- Grief as an Ongoing Process and Tips on Companioning* Alan Wolfelt
- Expressive Therapy Tools for All Ages
- Interactive Literature & Workbooks

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“Letting Go” Guided Imagery: Know Yourself

- There are four colors of paper (5 yellow, 5 blue, 5 pink, 5 green) and each of these colors represents a category.
- Yellow → Pleasures (Things you like to do)
- Blue → Possessions (Material objects that are meaningful to you)
- Pink → Loved Ones (People important to you)
- Green → Roles you fulfill (Ex. Son/Daughter, Therapist)
- On each slip of paper you will write one item which fits the category. For example, in the loved ones category, you cannot put children/parents. You must be specific and put the name of one person on each slip.

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Holistic Person-Centered Care

- Treat the person and family in **all** dimensions – they are all intertwined
- Grief manifests itself in different ways through the Body, Mind, Emotions, and Spirit
- Grief is both Universal and Unique
- Think of the individual and the family in a holistic way

*“Winter is come and gone,
but grief returns with the revolving year.”
~ Percy Bysshe Shelley*

St. Teresa
McInier,
CSI, RN, MS

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Importance of Dignity Therapy

- Dignity therapy (DT) is a therapeutic approach designed to decrease suffering, enhance quality of life and bolster a sense of dignity for patients approaching death. It invites patients to discuss issues important to them and articulate things they would most want remembered as death draws near. DT has a growing evidence base, with positive outcomes for patients and their family members.
- BJC Hospice Lumina Programs offers patients and their families the opportunity to review their lives as well as preserve stories, values, experiences and life lessons in the form of journals, scrapbooks, memory boxes, letters to dear ones, video or audiotaped statements. Interviews are conducted in the home by intensively trained BJC Hospice staff and volunteers.

Thomas Hack
Shelley A. Johns
Susan McClement

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Lumina with Ruth

- Ruth was our BJC Home Care Vice-President who died back in the summer of 2012 from a rare blood cancer called amyloidosis

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUpQmRseRA>



Lumina with Carmen

- Carmen was a brave little 7 year old girl with a brain tumor with one older brother and 2 younger siblings
- She died back in the spring of 2012



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Lumina with Jorie

Jorie was 32 when she died on Mothers Day from a rare blood disease called paraganglioma

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6667yN7eVCI>



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Grief Support

- Normal Grief can mimic clinical depression
 - Depression is a turning inward/pressing down of life's energy
- Thinking Beyond Theories → Bereavement Work is Companionship / Preventative Work
 - Encourage the patient/family *before* and after the death to *mourn* and do "soul work" before "spirit work" (Grief to Mourning)
- Grief is an Ongoing Process that is circular, not linear
 - Microwave Syndrome
 - A Roller Coaster
- Grief interacts with and often magnifies other mental illness

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross
Alan Wolfelt, and Greg Yoder

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Expressive Therapy as an Intervention with All Ages

Expressive therapy is a powerful tool that helps individuals express and cope with experiences, thoughts and emotions sometimes without the use of words. Using art, music, play, writing and storytelling, expressive therapy:

1. Uses imagery as an aid in healing
2. Assesses and explores *awareness* of change, loss, and grief
3. Determines the person's emotional, social and psychological functioning
4. Uncovers feelings/conflicts the individual is having difficulty verbalizing
5. Provides an appropriate outlet for expressing thoughts and feelings
6. Develops a supportive, trusting and therapeutic relationship
7. Allows the patient/family to gain some relief from physical or emotional stress*
8. Helps the bereaved family work through the process of grieving/mourning and eventually healing *

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Ages and Stages: Concept of Death

Adult Years

- **Developmentally**
 - Using abstract thinking
 - More "adult" issues
 - jobs
 - family needs
 - societal expectations
- **Activity Ideas**
 - Expressive Therapy useful (art / poetry / music)
 - Examples: making a blessing basket, making a scrapbook of pictures and memories, creating a brief private "anytime" ceremony, using progressive relaxation (ex. grief bottle), and writing letters
- **Helpful Tips**
 - Support groups/ retreats helpful for sense of universality

Developmental Ages/Stages
Information drawn from
The Center for Grieving
Children

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Ages and Stages: Concept of Death *Teenage Years*

Developmentally

- Their abilities resemble those of adults, but still have not matured emotionally
- Mix of feeling immortal and realizing life is fragile
- May take on adult role
- May be more/less vocal about feelings
- Because of so many developmental issues, teens may need to postpone their grief until a more stable time

Helpful Tips

- Wait for opportunities to be a part of the teen's world
- Model Vulnerability
- Give permission to grieve
- Support groups/ retreats helpful for sense of universality

Activity Ideas

- Create Mandalas, masks, collages, memory boxes, & stress balls, and identify activities and useful music

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Ages and Stages: Concept of Death *9-12 Years of Age*

Developmentally

- Death is very personal
- Biological curiosity
- Understand finality of death
- Can differentiate between dead & alive and ask more sophisticated questions
- May revert to younger behavior

Helpful Tips

- Provide comfort/reassurance
- Give honest/simple explanations

Helpful Tips Continued...

- Give permission to grieve
- They do not like to appear different than others – help find universality in groups or through books, etc

Activity Ideas

- Make worry balloons/box, dream catchers, memory candles, & a memory book, create “hands of support,” & water balloons

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Ages and Stages: Concept of Death *6-9 Years of Age*

Developmentally

- Need more explanation for a clearer understanding
- Can comprehend own mortality and feel fear
- Realize finality of death
- Awareness of difference from others
- Ability to reach out more

Helpful Tips

- Refrain from cliches
- Reassure them

Helpful Tips Continued...

- Very important group to support because they do not yet have the developed social skills to defend themselves

Activity Ideas

- Stories are important! Use a sand tray to explain child's world
- Use “bubble breath,” puppets, work/play book, & memory garden cards.

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Ages and Stages: Concept of Death 3-5 Years of Age & 0-2 Years of Age

Developmentally 3-5 years

- Mostly live in the present
- Impressively curious
- See death as temporary
- Magical thinking (death is reversible / I caused it)
- Use non-verbal resources to understand loss (through play, art, and physical movement)

Helpful Tips

- State the facts – repeat
- Tell them what to expect
- Reassure them - Vulnerability is communicated through fears, clinging, and tantrums
- Keep routine normal

Developmentally 0-2 years

- No concept of death
- Reacts to emotions of parents/guardians

Activity Ideas

- Stories are healing! Let the child tell their story of their loved one's death / read stories
- Create pillowcases, drawings and art, a memory book filled with pictures of their loved one

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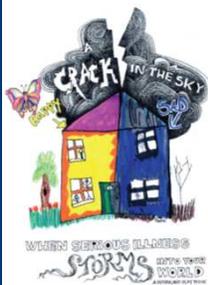
Working with the Entire Family can help them move from Grieving to Mourning

Activity Ideas

- Pillowcases
- Games
 - Life Stories game
 - Ungame
 - Family Happenings Game
- Memory Candles (5 Candle Ritual)
- Mandalas
- Dream Catchers
- Memory Garden Cards

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Expressive Therapy Tools and Useful Literature



Books can play a key role in helping a child or adult cope. It helps us recognize the uniqueness and universality of grief.



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