

*The Art of Compassion
Support for Death, Dying,
Grief, Stress and Loss Issues*

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Centre for Living with Dying

A Program of Bill Wilson Center



What is trauma/stress?



★ Stress is the natural response to any change or loss



★ Emotional trauma is similar to physical injury



★ Types of stress:

Acute, Delayed, Cumulative, Occupational



What is the Centre?



- ★ Provides support, intervention and education for the life issues of grief, loss, serious illness, trauma and change.
- ★ Non profit program of Bill Wilson Center for Silicon Valley and surrounding areas.
- ★ Group, individual, children, family and community support and intervention.
- ★ For almost 40 years, over 1.5 million people served.



What is Grief?



- ★ Natural response to any loss or change
- ★ A normal person having a normal reaction to an abnormal event
- ★ Unpredictable waves of emotions and memory triggers
- ★ Very individual and unique, and yet our universal human experience
- ★ Grief and trauma know no time





Grief and Loss



★ Magnitude of loss

★ Spiral of Reactions



★ Sensory, Time and Memory
Reminders

★ Loss of Life meaning/purpose



★ Heart Hotel



Serious Illness and Dying



★ Diagnosis Issues
★ Spectrum of Life Changes



★ Circle of Meaning
★ Quality of Life



★ End of Life Care Issues
★ Family Dynamics



Hospice & End of Life Issues



★ Comfort care/Holistic support

★ Advanced Healthcare



Directive

★ Fears, hopes and plans



★ Meaning Quotient



Bucket List



★ Stay in the present moment.

★ What do you wish to do with your life?



★ Dream big and be specific.

★ What can you do right now to bring sweetness into your life?



★ How can you as a caregiver take care of yourself on a daily basis?



Adapted Maslow's Needs Hierarchy



★ Survival

★ Safety



★ Emotional Needs/ Relationships

★ Building the New Normal



★ Creating Meaning from the
Trauma



Signs of Stress Response



★ Out of control (OOC)

★ Anger, fear, guilt, loneliness, sadness, depression



★ Physical symptoms

★ Relationship issues



★ Loss of life purpose

Reactions in the Aftermath of a Critical Incident

A critical incident is any event that causes unusually strong reactions in the responding personnel or survivors. These reactions can occur immediately or in a delayed fashion

Immediate

0 to 24 hours

Long Term

2 weeks to 6 months

Anniversary Reaction

6 months to 3 or more years

- Tunnel Vision
- Sensory Distortion
- Rapid Heartbeat
- Inability to Function
- Lowered Short-term Memory
- Shakiness
- Nausea
- Hysterical
- Helpless
- Fearful
- Tired
- Dizzy
- Angry
- Hostile

- Excitable
- Agitated
- Clammy
- Shock

The Centre for Living with Dying

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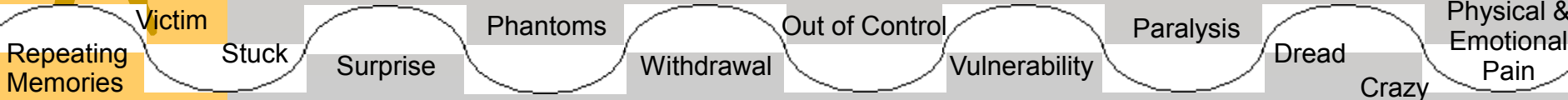
Critical Incident Stress Management

- Loss of Appetite
- Forgetfulness
- Exhaustion
- Nightmares
- Flashbacks
- Startle Response
- Depression
- Guilt

- Caregivers Delayed Response
- Alienation
- Memory Triggers
- Flashbacks
- Anxiety Response 3-4 Days Before Anniversary
- Suicidal Thoughts
- Change in Sexual Desire
- Relationship Difficulties
- Inability to Work
- Substance Abuse
- Loneliness
- Isolation

Sensory, Memory, & Time Triggers

These symptoms, feelings, reactions or events may occur at any time:





Family Dynamics



★ Judge each other on behaviors vs. reactions/feelings



★ Have specific roles



★ Conflict because each person has a different reaction

★ Focus on individual experience and needs



How to support others

Need

Don't Need



- ★ Honesty
- ★ Acknowledgement
- ★ Listen
- ★ Presence
- ★ Choice
- ★ Space
- ★ Validation



- ★ Pity
- ★ Advise
- ★ Judgment/critique
- ★ War stories
- ★ Platitudes/cliches
- ★ Ignored
- ★ Fix-it





Support Tips



★ Stay in the present moment.

★ Normalize grief/stress response.



★ Focus on most difficult issue **RIGHT NOW**.

★ Assess what is needed **RIGHT NOW**.



★ No easy way over grief, but moment by moment, we get through grief and build the **NEW NORMAL**.



Factors to consider . . .



★ Relationship

★ Self



★ Other

★ Situation





Time / Depth of Relationship



Time

Intense Connection

No connection

Depth



Personality Styles



★ Introvert/Extrovert

★ Thinking/Feeling



★ Active/Contemplative

★ Practical/Ethereal





Children, Youth and Loss



★ Honesty

★ Inclusion



★ Information

★ Choice

★ Activities that are age appropriate

★ Empower child to assist adults in grief



★ Multi-layered support system



First Trauma Drawing



- ★ Draw and write your first experience with loss or trauma.
- ★ What was the most difficult?
- ★ What did you need?
- ★ What did you get in terms of support?
- ★ What did you not need?
- ★ How could you, as an adult, have supported you as a young person?



Cultural Considerations



★ Culture of Origin traditions

★ Family of Origin traditions



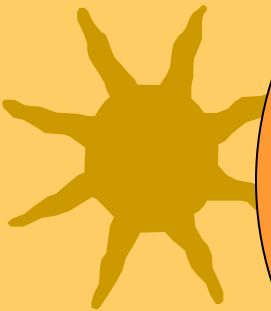
★ Cultural perspectives re: Loss issue

★ Shame, guilt, blame and banishment

★ Integrate individual needs with positive cultural traditions



★ Build family and community support



Circle of Meaning

People, activities, dreams,
beliefs, possessions



Building the New Normal



★ What gives me joy?

★ Who and what are my support systems?



★ With whom and what do I have unfinished business?

★ What action steps do I need to do?



★ Are there any unspoken appreciations, or ‘I love you’s?



Tools for Survival



★ Acknowledge



★ Express



★ Act

★ Celebrate



Verbal and Non Verbal



★ 80+% of our communication is non-verbal

★ Using silence to deepen the therapeutic relationship



★ Pairs communication

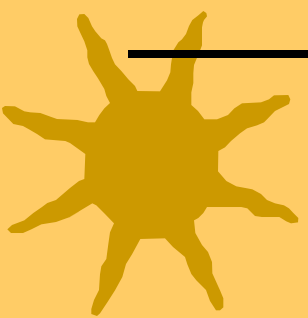
– Expression of an incident of loss or grief

– Moment of Silence





CISD Groundrules



★ No critique of operations or personnel

★ Confidentiality



★ No mandatory participation

★ Safe environment-No rank or hierarchy

★ Put the puzzle pieces together



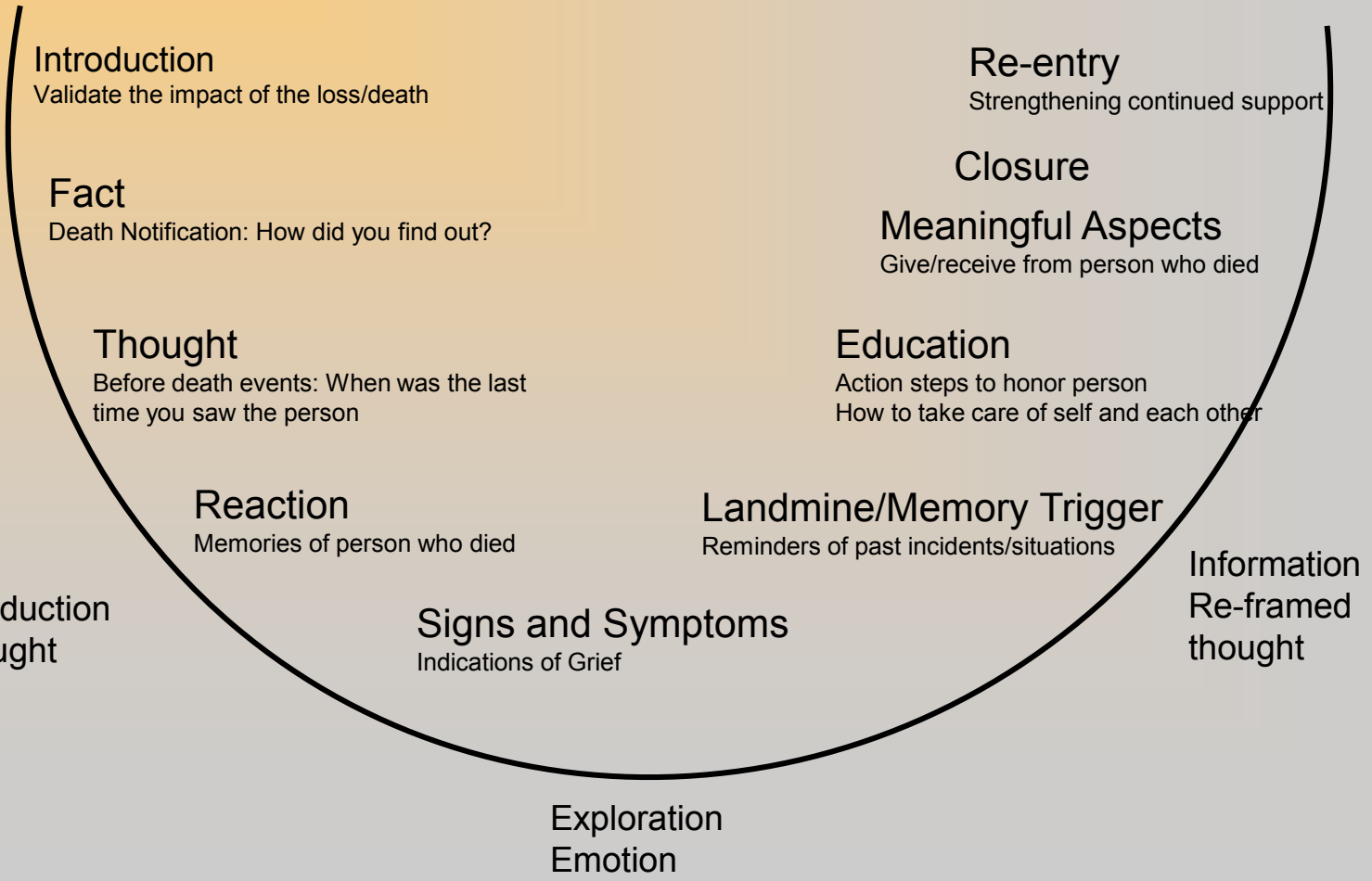
★ Normalize and validate stress reactions

★ Tools for coping in the aftermath



CISM Bell Curve

Grief Counseling Overlay



Introduction
Thought



Caregiver/Therapist Self Care



★ You are on your path. Your client is on his/her path.



★ Listen, Validate, Empower. You do not have to fix it.

★ Triggers and Landmines.

★ Grounding



★ Spiritual support



Comfort Anchors/Comfort Tasks



- ★ Support systems
- ★ Identifying comfort anchors
- ★ Delineating comfort tasks
- ★ Grounding techniques
- ★ Building the New Normal





Remember



- ★ Be gentle with your own process.
- ★ What you do does make a difference in people's lives and their ability to survive the loss.
- ★ We have today.
- ★ Do something fun and life affirming for yourself in the next 24 hours.