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LIFE AFTER LOSS

Sharing, understanding and coping with the stages of grief in the time of Covid

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Presentation Overview for Part 1

- Introduction
- What are the facts?
- What is Mental Health and Why is it Important?
- The Causes of Grief
- Understanding the Stages of Grief
- Some Truths You Need to be Aware Of
- Practical Steps to Coping with Loss
- Reaching out to those in Need



Why this Session?



- *To provide a simplified understanding of dealing with the challenges of grief during Covid-19*

What are the facts?



- According to the WHO the prevalence of mental health disorders has quadrupled.
- Up to 22% of youth suffer some form of mental anguish.
- Prevalence will be highest among medium to high-income families with mental, behavioural and neurological disorders accounting for 30% of disability-adjusted life years.
- By 2030 it is expected that the number of mental disorders in adults will increase by more than 65%



How crises affect people depends on a number of factors:

- Nature and severity of the event;
- Experience with previous distressing events;
- The support they have;
- Their physical health;
- Their personal and family history with mental health;
- Their cultural background and traditions;
- Their age and gender.



Some emotional responses...



- Feelings of suicide
- Alzheimer's diseases, Dementia
- Depression, alcohol abuse
- Insomnia, memory loss
- Poor focus
- Poor anger management
- Constantly fearful, anxious and worrying
- Mentally fatigued and physically exhausted
- Loss of appetite
- Lack of enthusiasm - moping around
- Socially withdrawn

So, what is mental health?

(According to the World Health Organization - WHO)

- *State of well being in which the individual realizes their abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and can contribute to their communities.*



Other definitions include...

- Believing your life has meaning
- Continued self development and growth
- Good quality social connections
- Believing that you can overcome hurdles
- Have a positive self concept
- Having a sense of purpose



...and why is it important?

- Act in a way that help them reach their goals
- Increase resources for future adversity
- Get enough rest
- Work towards other goals
- Increase skills
- Enhance social network



The Causes of Grief

- Death
- Divorce/Estrangement
- Financial/Material loss
- Dreaded Illness or serious injury
- Loss of status
- Identity crises
- Criminal conviction
- No longer a contributing member
- Fear of the Covid pandemic
- Future uncertainty: safety, socio-political
- Regret, remorse, anxious, fearful, guilt
- Natural disasters



Understanding the Stages of Grief (Elizabeth Kubler-Ross Model modified)

- Shock and Denial
- Pain and Guilt
- Anger and Bargaining
- Depression and Reflection
- Loneliness and Sadness
- Recovery and Hope



Some Truths You Need to be Aware of



- 1. Everything happens by the will of the Almighty
- 2. He never tests anyone beyond that which they can handle.
- 3. Whatever has transpired – that too shall pass.
- 4. Recovery from a loved one's death takes more time.
- 5. Grief is universal, griever are distinctive.
- 6. Not everyone passes through all the stages of grief or in that order.
- 7. Shock initiates us into mourning.
- 8. Grief causes depression.

...continued



- 9. Grief is hazardous to our health.
- 10. Grievers need to know that they are normal.
- 11. Grievers suffer guilt feelings.
- 12. Grief makes people angry and irrational.
- 13. Emotional upheaval characterizes grievers.
- 14. Grievers often lack direction and purpose.
- 15. Healing brings hope to grievers.
- 16. Survivors reaffirm themselves and choose life.

Practical Steps to Coping with Loss



- Seek help from the Almighty
- Express your emotions
- Talk about it whenever you can
- Preserve memories
- Do things in memory of...
- Join a support group
- Volunteer and give charity
- Read widely and do what comforts
- Travel widely, get out of your zone

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- Do what sustains and recharges.
- Draw upon your strength.
- Get professional help, if necessary.
- Strengthen your social ties.
- Count your blessings. Gratitude.
- Be content with your life.
- Find a joy to dull the pain.
- Be yourself.
- Meditate, pray and breathe.

...continued...



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Grief is an ongoing process that is a normal and necessary response to loss. Individuals need to be active participants in order to find their “new normal”.

- Maintain a normal routine.
- Keep up with your schedules.
- Get enough sleep and plenty of rest.
- Keep a balanced diet.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Get some regular exercise.
- Avoid substance abuse.
- Keep in company and reach out.
- Join professional associations.

Remember the key to happiness (Joseph Addison)

- *Something to do*
- *Someone to love*
- *Something to hope for*



Coping with loss of income

Part 3

- *Coming as part 3...*



(Problem Solving Skill)



- Listing the problems
- Choose a problem
- Define the problem
- Brainstorm solutions/options (pro's and con's)
- Decide on a solution
- Devise an action plan
- Review and evaluate

Get up, man up and show up!
Get going, keep going!



Understanding Covid 19



- It's a global pandemic affecting breathing (lungs)
- It affects everybody
- Multiple mutations
- Remove stigma from affected people
- It is especially susceptible to the elderly with pre-conditions (co-morbidities.)
- Vaccines are available and are being rolled out.
- More than 95% recovery rate.

Coping with the psychological impact of Covid



- Minimize information about the pandemic if it makes you anxious.
- Seek information only from trusted sources.
- Do not follow conspiracy theories – fact check before circulating.
- Follow the signs and the science.
- Take all precautionary measures.
- Reach out and support others. (Therapeutic)
- Hear from survivors and spread positive messages.
- Honour frontline health-care workers.
- Seek spiritual upliftment.
- Maintain social contacts (online, telephone, email etc)

Reaching out to those in Need - Offering Psychological First Aid (PFA)

- As the cases escalate, not everyone can afford psychological help;
- You don't need to be a professional to show compassion and care;
- You can offer PFA (Psychological First Aid)
- Provide practical care;
- Be a good listener, but do not pressurise them to talk;
- Comforting, reassuring and calming;
- Helping people to connect to information, services and support groups
- Protecting them from further harm



Self-Help Tools (Part 2)

Saturday, 22 May, 10h00 to 11h00

- *ABC Model*
- *Steps to Reframing*
- *Future Orientation*



Way forward...

- Part 2: Sat, 15 May, 10h00
- Three Special Coping Tools
- Part 3: TBC
- Dealing with Loss of Income
- Presentation can be downloaded
- WhatsApp group will remain
- On completion of three sessions –
- **Certificate of Achievement**



***In memory of my best friend, close colleague,
brother soul-mate, special confidant...***



Thank you...



- *Stay strong*
- *Stay safe*
- *Stay focused*
- *Stay blessed*



Contact details



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