

## Grief, Loss and Bereavement

### Module IV

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### Objectives

- Identify symptoms of grief response
- List different types of grief the Hospice Aide may encounter
- Verbalize role of Hospice Aide in assisting patient and family with grief, loss & bereavement
- List the stages of grief

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### Grief

- Grief is an emotional response to loss
- Grief is a process that starts before the death for the patient as well as their loved ones
- It is individualized as to how people move through the process

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Kubler Ross:  
Five Stages of Grief

Denial  
Anger  
Bargaining  
Depression  
Acceptance

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New Stages of Grief

- Numbness
- Disorganization
- Reorganization

-Temes

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Feelings related to Grief

- Loneliness
- Sadness
- Guilt
- Peace
- Relief
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Numbness

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### Physical Symptoms of Grief

- Tired/Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss/gain
- Shortness of breath

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### Behaviors that May be Related to Grief

- Irritability
- Crying
- Outburst of Anger
- Withdrawal
- Isolation
- Silence
- Insomnia, restlessness

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### Questions: The Elephant In The Room

- Have you ever been exposed to an end-of-life situation where it felt like “an elephant in the room?”
- How did it make you feel?
- Why do you believe it is hard to talk about death and dying?

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## Types of Grief

- Anticipatory Grief
- Normal or Uncomplicated Grief
- Complicated Grief:
  - Chronic Grief
  - Delayed Grief
  - Exaggerated Grief
  - Disenfranchised Grief

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## Anticipatory Grief

- We grieve the physical changes
- We grieve over the difficult trips to the doctor's office
- We grieve the loss of feeling in control & competent in our daily lives

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## Anticipatory Grief, cont.

- We grieve our old ways of relating to others in our social world
- We grieve financial stability
- We grieve the old family
- We grieve our old selves

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### Psychological Symptoms

- Sadness
- Guilt
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Depression
- Loneliness

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### Social Responses

- Learn new skills
- Social isolation
- New roles to manage day to day activities
- Changes in interaction with others

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### Spirituality

- May be stabilizing
- Provide a sense of belonging
- A sense of peace
- May create doubt about beliefs

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## Loss

- Losses result in grief
- Mourning is the outward expression of loss
  - Influenced by:
    - Cultural
    - Religion
    - Tradition
    - Customs

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## Bereavement

- Bereavement is the state of having experienced the death of a significant other
- Influenced by:
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Cultural background
  - Religion
  - What caused the death—terminal illness, tragedy

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## Caring for Patients/Families Dealing with Grief/Loss

“Caring is an interpersonal process involving an emotional commitment to, and a willingness to act on behalf of, a person with whom one has a significant relationship.”

Medical Dictionary

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## The Key to Caring

“Empathy for the distress of others.”

Dale Larson

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## Why is Caring so Important to the Hospice patient/family

- Feel alone
- Isolated
- Friends/family avoid people who are dying
- May feel a burden to others
- No good left in them
- Can't afford this financially
- Exhausted, emotionally drained
- Nobody to listen

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## Presence=Caring

“Presence may in fact be our greatest gift to these patients and their families.”

Borneman & Brown-Saltzman, 2010

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### Behaviors that Demonstrate the Hospice Aide Cares

- Asking questions:
  - How was your night?
  - Are you having any pain?
  - How is your your appetite?
  - What else I can do for you today?

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### Behaviors that Demonstrate the Hospice Aide Cares

- Arrive on time, call otherwise
- Listen when they talk. Respect their feelings
- Ensure bath is complete, linens clean and dry
- Patient left in a comfortable position
- Reassurance that you will be back & when they may expect you

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### Behaviors=Caring

a touch  
a smile  
a kind word  
a listening ear  
an honest compliment  
the smallest act of caring

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## To Maintain that Caring Approach

- Utilize team for support and feedback
  - Remember you don't have to do it all or know it all
  - Be knowledgeable of the experts on your team-call upon them
- Maintaining your own health/well-being
- Protecting your professional boundaries

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