Therapeutic Webinars

CBT Stream

Coping With Fear & Losses While Maintaining Our Sense of Hope and Security

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Disclaimer

- **These webinars are not therapeutic or clinical encounters.** They are informational sessions. Presenters cannot provide individualized input to participants.

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- **We cannot address acute safety concerns** within the context of these webinars. If you are feeling unsafe with yourself, please leave the webinar and contact crisis services, such as Tracom: 514-483-3033 or ultimately 911.
Plan

- Pandemic & Our Sense Of Loss…
- We Need To Feel Connected
- Defining: Grief, Mourning, Bereavement…
- Staying Connected With The Deceased While Accepting Your Loss
- Self-Talk & Beliefs: Coping With Losses And Its Personal Meaning
- Hope, Reconstruction Of Meaning And Personal Growth
Pandemic & Our Sense Of Loss…
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Losses</th>
<th>Secondary Losses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of freedom (lockdown)</td>
<td>Losses of relationship, recreation, and social support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss / Reduction of emotional and physical intimacy</td>
<td>Loss / Reduction / Less intense intimate relationships (family, friends, partners)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Physical distancing)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of loved ones</td>
<td>Losses of companionship, sexual intimacy, and family role</td>
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<td>Job loss</td>
<td>Losses of financial security, independence, healthcare, and sense of future</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple losses (Within a constricted time period)</td>
<td>Risk of bereavement overload (Physical and mental health issues)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambiguous loss</td>
<td>Physical separation with family and staying emotionally and psychologically connected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stigmatized loss</td>
<td>Being blamed for propagation of virus</td>
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Pandemic & Young Adults:

• “Experiencing challenges maintaining friendships remotely
• Missing out on academic and extracurricular celebrations and milestones
• Coping with school closures
• Transitions to distant learning
• The displacement from the school campus settings” (Efuribe, 2020)

“If possible, getting back all/or most of my missed opportunities.” (Efuribe, 2020)
Pandemic: The Challenge of Managing Worry, Fear, Stress, Isolation, and Bereavement might feel like “A Heavy Burden”
## Grief Is A Natural Response To Any Loss...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Grief:</strong> a natural response to any loss; &quot;living with the presence of absence&quot; (Kirkpatrick, 2016)</th>
<th><strong>Depression:</strong> Perceiving oneself and/or the world as fundamentally flawed, inadequate, and / or worthless.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A focus on identifiable loss</td>
<td>Loss might not be present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some guilt might be associated with events or some aspects of the loss</td>
<td>Generalized guilt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fluctuating: Variety &amp; Wide range of emotions</td>
<td>Emotional paralysis fixed emotions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to feel pleasure is not lost but fluctuates</td>
<td>Inability to experience pleasure or satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive: Sharing feelings, connection, closeness</td>
<td>-Often isolated &amp; cut from social support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can have an effect on the body. Individuals with prolonged <strong>grief</strong> might get functionally <strong>impaired</strong>.</td>
<td>Burden of the functional impairment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes the desire to feel close to the deceased triggers death thoughts as an expression of a strong wishes to be reunited with the lost loved one</td>
<td>Frequent or recurrent thoughts of death related to inability to cope with:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- a sense of worthlessness,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-an intense and fixed emotional pain associated with perceived past failures or self-blame</td>
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</table>
We Need To Feel Connected
Our Needs…
(Maslow, 1943)

Self-actualization
Being self-aware of personal growth and concerned about fulfilling own potential

Self-esteem
Status, mutual self-respect, recognition, personal worth

Love / Belonging
Sense of connections to others: Intimacy, family, friendship, community groups

Safety
- Safety and illness prevention being aware of protecting against risk of injury, accidents, illness
- Financial safety (employment, resources, property)

Physiological
Breathing, water, food, sleep…

Transcendence

Basic needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
Attachment: Forming & Maintaining A (Secure) Relationship Even As We Grieve, Mourn, Bereave...

The Healthy Role of Continued Symbolic Bonds
We All Need To Feel Connected

“(…) connections can also be as simple as my walk. A pleasant interaction with a store clerk, a shared laugh-out-loud joke, even a text message to a family member, can all, to some degree, satisfy our innate need for community.”

(Signer, 2018)

Sharing our attention and time to reduce the isolation:
• Play an online game
• Write a letter
• Virtual date with friends

(…)}
Defining: Grief, Mourning, Bereavement…
Grief, Mourning, Bereavement...

GRIEF

LOSSES: Illness, death, unemployment, relationship...

BEREAVEMENT
Intense grief and a period of mourning after a loss (death of a loved one)

TIME (Process of Mourning)
Recovering From the Loss of a Loved one (1, 2)

- Loss of a loved one: A wound that needs healing
- Acknowledge emotional pain: Make a list of emotions/thoughts
- Acknowledge other memories, thoughts: Consider comforting feelings: pride, laugh...
- Experiencing waves of emotions, roller coaster, an emotional pendulum
- We tend to believe that our thoughts (like: “If only I’d talked to my father…”) are the only way to perceive reality...Consider additional ways to see the situation...
- Focus on what (who) is still meaningful in your life & ACT on your values with self-compassion

“We can learn to acknowledge and accept our loss and its emotional impact without pushing it away” (2)

Experiencing Grief, Bereavement

Common stages of grieving:
• Shock, denial and isolation
• Anger, rage, envy and resentment
• Bargaining
• Depression
• Acceptance

Symptoms / Feelings (which subside after a while):
• Crying, anger (towards God, the deceased), irritability, insomnia, lack of appetite
• Difficulty in sharing feelings to others
• Fear of the future
• Coping with reminders after the loss (song, event, flagrance...)

And Meaning Reconstruction

Meaning Reconstruction in the first two years bereavement study (Holland, 2006)
“(…) sense-making emerged as the most robust predictor of adjustment to bereavement”
“When I began trying to cross the river of grief, I felt as if the cold water of the river was rushing over me. I felt alive and aware but also exposed, raw, and numb. Others reached out to me to extend a hand and help me to cross the river.” (Cohen, 2011, p. 4)
Coping with Bereavement As An Oscillation Process (1)

LOSS-ORIENTED

- Continuing Bonds
- The presence of an ongoing inner relationship with the deceased person

RESTORATION-ORIENTED

- Relinquishing Bonds
- Coping with issues related to the changes brought on by the loss

(1) Adapted from: Strobel & Schut, 1999;
Dual Process Model of Coping with Bereavement + Multiple Losses “Overload” (1)

(1) Adapted from: Strobel & Schutt, 2016
High And Sustained Grief Reactions (1)

People are:
- Caught up in rumination about the circumstances of the death,
- Worrying excessively about its consequences,
- Show excessive avoidance of reminders of the loss.
- Unable to comprehend the finality and consequences of the loss,
- Tossed helplessly on waves of intense emotion. (Shear, 2012 p. 119)

Prolonged grief (7 years)
- Greater functional impairment
- Felt more “depressed”

from: Aoun, et al., 2020
Staying Connected With The Deceased While Accepting Your Loss
In this time of a world-wide pandemic, it is important to keep in mind the high level of resilience that individuals, families and communities evidence. In order to support and bolster such resilience, I am making my book **ROADMAP TO RESILIENCE** available for FREE to help individuals cope with ongoing adversities and losses.

This Website is set up with TWO APPENDICES:

**APPENDIX A** is set up with SIX different FITNESS areas: Physical, Interpersonal, Emotional, Cognitive, Behavioral and Spiritual (PIE CBS). Individuals will be able to Click on any item and retrieve the corresponding Coping ACTION PLAN.

**APPENDIX B** is set up in ALPHABETICAL order and folks can just look up the specific need they have at that moment and access the corresponding Coping ACTION PLAN.
The Context of COVID

"Looking back at the Zoom memorials, he was grateful to hear stories about how one elderly couple met and fell in love 50 years ago”


1- “Stayed connected to the deceased and created a new relationship, while recognizing the reality of the loss.” (Meichenbaum, 2020)

1. I examined the feelings and thoughts that kept me from forming an enduring connection with the deceased, such as the fear of what others would think of me, guilt, shame, humiliation, disgust, or thoughts of anger, revenge or being preoccupied with my grief.

2. I participated in practices, such as visiting the grave or memorial site, celebrating special occasions, prayer and candlelight vigils, public memorials, or commemorative services.

3. I commemorated the deceased’s life with words, pictures, things, or created a small place of honor for the deceased, which I could visit any time I chose.

4. I thought about what I received from the deceased and the legacy and mission to be fulfilled. I became involved in a cause or social action that was important to the deceased or myself.
2- “Stayed connected to the deceased and created a new relationship, while recognizing the reality of the loss.” (Meichenbaum, 2020)

5. I created a legacy such as planted a tree, started a scholarship or charity in the deceased’s name, started an internet blog, or launched new family or community practices.

6. I allowed myself to talk to the deceased and allowed myself to listen. I wrote a letter to my loved one and asked for advice.

7. I asked for forgiveness, shared joys and sorrows, and constructed a farewell message.

8. I accepted that sadness was normal and learned how to be with my grief. I learned how to contain my grief to a time and place of my choosing. However, I understood that intense upsurges of grief may arise unexpectedly and without warning, and I developed coping strategies to handle such events.
3- “Stayed connected to the deceased and created a new relationship, while recognizing the reality of the loss.” (Meichenbaum, 2020)

9. I used imagery techniques, shared stories and photos of my loved one, or purposefully used reminders such as music or special routines to recall positive memories. I cherished and hung onto specific, meaningful possessions (objects, pets, etc.). I actively reminisced, holding onto our relationship in my heart and mind.

10. I reached out to help and support others who are grieving for their loved ones. Helping others is a way to reengage in life and combat loneliness and tendencies to withdraw and avoid social contacts.
Self-Talk & Beliefs: Coping With Losses And Its Personal Meaning
<table>
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<tr>
<th>IRRATIONAL (Rigid) BELIEFS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“My life is worthless without her, him, my job...”</td>
<td>“Since my spouse passed away, my life has changed forever.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“I cannot think of it. It’s horribly shocking. Her absence is intolerable.”</td>
<td>“Living with the awareness of her absence is difficult.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I cannot think of it. I just want to avoid thinking about it and thinking about anything else.”</td>
<td>“I feel sad and I very much miss him.; there is a big hole in my life.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Everything feels meaningless since my mother passed away.”</td>
<td>“I think of her great ways to deal with conflicts when I deal with my teenagers.”</td>
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Adapted from: Malkinson, 2010, p. 295.
“Predictions About How Coronavirus Will Change The Future Of Work”
(Brower, 2020)

<table>
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<th>Expected Improvements / Possible Changes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employee support systems</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Companies have been forced to consider employee wellbeing more holistically—in terms of not only the physical, but also mental and emotional wellbeing.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mental Health</strong></td>
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<td>&quot;a greater appreciation for its importance and for the ways companies can provide solutions (...)&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership &amp; Organizational Culture</strong></td>
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<td>&quot;(...) companies will increasingly acknowledge the importance of culture as context for performance and employee engagement (...)&quot;</td>
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**IRRATIONAL (Rigid) BELIEFS**

“My life is worthless without my job…”

“I will never get back to exactly the same job again.”
How to change unhelpful thinking patterns

**Evaluate our thoughts and generate alternative, more balanced thoughts**
- Self-monitoring negative thoughts to practise cognitive restructuring

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Situation / Context (Who, what, when, where?)</th>
<th>Emotions</th>
<th>Thoughts</th>
<th>Evidence that support the thought</th>
<th>Evidence that does not support the thought</th>
<th>Alternative/Balanced thoughts</th>
<th>Rate emotions now (0-100%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. What did you feel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a. Write an alternative or balanced thought.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Rate each mood (0-100%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Rate how much you believe in each alternative or balanced thought (0-100%)</td>
<td></td>
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From: Anestin, A. S., Dr. Foley, E., Lisa Jewett, J. 2020 - The 2nd Therapeutic Webinars - CBT Stream - "How to Identify, Challenge and Reframe Unhelpful Thinking Patterns in Order to Alleviate Some Emotional Distress."
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<td>At home alone in the afternoon during confinement, listening to news about the situation in seniors' homes where more cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed.</td>
<td></td>
<td>“I should be at the bedside to care for my mother. She likely will die alone without any of us being with her.”</td>
<td></td>
<td>I follow the sanitary measures; I self-isolate; The Home Foundation bought tablets to palliative care patients. And my mother can communicate with me when she feels well.</td>
<td>- It is understandable and normal to feel sad when grieving (80%) - I talked to a nurse and she will set up the device for my mother. She did assist my mother for video Communications with all family members (90%)</td>
<td>-Guilty (40%) -Sad (40%) -Angry (10%)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>-Guilty (90%) -Sad (50%) -Angry (30%)</td>
<td>“I am the only one in my family who lives in the same city.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling connected 10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Feeling connected 10%</td>
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Hope, Reconstruction Of Meaning And Personal Growth
Hope: “A Personal Rainbow of The Mind” (Snyder, 2002, p. 269)
“(…) I know more or less how to live through my life now. But I want to know how to live what’s left with my eyes open and my hands open; I want to stand at the door in the rain listening, sniffing, gaping. Fearful and joyous, Like an idiot before God. (…)”

(Hardie, 2011, p. 53)
Questions
Thank you for joining!

Additional resources can be found on our website: www.jgh.ca/icfp

Next CBT Webinar: Monday June 15th 2020, 10:00 AM
Topic: Exploring the notion of acceptance


Fiore, J. (2019). A Systematic Review of the Dual Process Model of Coping With Bereavement (1999–2016) Omega, 0(0) 1–45
References


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