

Loss and Grief

Session Plan

Session	Loss and Grief
Background Information	Loss and grief are universal human experiences. Most people grieve when they lose something or someone important to them. The way grief affects us depends on a range of factors, including what kind of loss has been suffered, beliefs, religion, age, relationships and our physical and mental health. Grief is a natural response and affects people in different ways. Grief can affect our mental health and for those experiencing mental health problems grief can worsen the symptoms.
Aim	To raise awareness of loss and grief and the impact on mental health and wellbeing
Learning Outcomes	<p>Participants will be able to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dispel some of the myths surrounding loss and grief 2. List examples of different types of losses that can be experienced 3. Describe what grief is 4. Describe the impact grief can have on mental health and wellbeing 5. Discuss the different ways in which people grieve 6. Explore strategies and resources to support loss and grief
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5 hours
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT • Quiz • Presentation • Flipchart/pens • Session handouts • Evaluation

Learning outcomes	Participant Activity	Resources	Time
1. Dispel some of the myths surrounding loss and grief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myth buster 	Quiz	10 min
2. List examples of different types of losses that can be experienced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losses in Life 	Flipchart/Pens Slide	10 min
3. Describe what grief is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion 	Slide	10min
4. Describe the impact grief can have on mental health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body Map 	Flipchart/Pens Slide	15 min
5. Discuss the different ways in which people grieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	Slides	15 min
6. Explore strategies and resources to support loss and grief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do people need? 	Loss and grief resources handout	20 min
7. Looking after our own mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-care 	Slide	5 min
8. Evaluation and session close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection 	Evaluation	5 min

Loss and Grief

Facilitator notes

Slide	Notes	Time	Resources
1	Welcome participants and introduce yourself before offering an overview of the session. Have the title slide up and visible whilst doing this.	5 min	Slides
2	<p>Put up the session overview slide and read out what will be covered today.</p> <p>Emphasise this session is not to make participants experts on loss and grief but to raise awareness of these, the impact they can have on our mental health and wellbeing and available resources and support.</p> <p>Keeping safe Reinforce this is a basic awareness session and does not allow for detailed discussion. If you are concerned about a participant's mental health and wellbeing and feel they may be in distress, their Doctor should be their first point of contact. If you feel the person's life is in immediate danger please call 999 for assistance.</p> <p>Online delivery Please refer to the Healthy Minds Online Guidance if you are facilitating a session online.</p>		
Activity	<p>Loss and Grief Quiz</p> <p>Individual or Group Activity</p> <p>Let's start with looking at some of the myths that surround loss and grief.</p> <p>Distribute the quiz to participants. Ask participants to complete the quiz, true or false. This is a good starting point and gives an insight into the participant's knowledge and attitudes to loss and grief.</p> <p>Once completed, go through each of the questions to generate discussion. Use the supporting statements to provide the correct answers and information.</p> <p>Discussion point: were there any surprises? Share that this activity helps challenge some of the myths</p>	<p>10 min</p> <p>(5 min activity, 5 min feedback)</p>	Quiz

	associated with loss and grief.		
Activity & 3	<p>What significant losses can happen in our lives?</p> <p>Group Activity</p> <p>Divide the participants into groups, provide flipchart and pens.</p> <p>We are going to explore what losses can happen in our lives.</p> <p>Invite the groups to think about and discuss examples of losses that can occur in our lives. Write these down.</p> <p>Take feedback from each of the groups, one/ two examples from each.</p> <p>Put up the slide with examples of losses.</p> <p>Discussion point: ask the participants what they think this activity demonstrates? Did they think of loss in the wider sense and not just bereavement? It shows that loss is part of life, we all experience it. Some of us may experience more than others but we all experience it to some extent.</p>	<p>10min</p> <p>(5 min activity, 5 min feedback)</p>	<p>Flipchart</p> <p>Pens</p> <p>Slide</p>
4	<p>What is grief?</p> <p>Do not put the slide up until after the discussion</p> <p>Discussion point: ask the participants to call out what emotions we can experience when we lose something or someone that is of importance to us?</p> <p>Participants may call out sad, angry, guilty, relieved, devastated etc. A whole range of emotions will be given. Don't spend a lot of time on this. Only take a few examples as this will be explored more in the next activity: how does grief affect us.</p> <p>Inform the group that this emotional response is called grief.</p> <p>Now put up the grief slide and read off the information.</p> <p>Highlight that grief isn't only associated with bereavement we can go through a grief process</p>	<p>10 min</p>	<p>Slide</p>

	<p>following any loss.</p> <p>Grief is an intense emotional response. It is a normal response to something that has happened to us.</p> <p>Grief is a very personal and individual experience. People grieve in different ways, there is no “right way” to grieve and we will look at different styles of grieving later on in the session.</p> <p>Our grief response can be dependent on various factors such as what kind of loss has been suffered, beliefs, religion, age, relationships and our physical and mental health.</p>		
Activity & 5	<p>How does grief affect us?</p> <p>(Do not put the slide up until the activity is completed)</p> <p>Group Activity</p> <p>Divide the participants into groups, provide flipchart and pens.</p> <p>Now we are going to look at how grief can affect us.</p> <p>Invite the groups to draw the outline of a body and discuss the effects that grief can have on the body, considering the mental, social, emotional and physical effects. Write responses in and around the body.</p> <p>Take feedback from each of the groups, one/two examples from each.</p> <p>Put up the slide with examples of how grief can affect us. This focuses more on the emotional/mental impact grief can have.</p> <p>Highlight that grief can affect the mind and body and it can go hand in hand with a wide range of physical and mental effects. These are some examples, the list is not exhaustive.</p> <p>Discussion point: ask participants what they think this activity shows? Highlight that although the responses may appear extreme, this is a natural response to grief and we are not losing our minds.</p>	<p>15 min</p> <p>(10 min, 5 min feedback)</p>	<p>Slide</p> <p>Flipchart</p> <p>Pens</p>

	<p>Conclude that our grief response will subside over time. We survive grief but life as we know it will never be the same again. Over time most people adjust to the loss and reinvest their energy back into activities and relationships etc.</p> <p>Please note that this is not always the case and prolonged grief can be complex and this session does not offer the opportunity to discuss this.</p>		
6	<p>Different styles of grieving</p> <p>We have looked at the different losses we may experience, what grief is and how it can affect us.</p> <p>Discussion point: Ask participants if they think our grief responses are the same?</p> <p>Inform them that we are going to look at differently styles of grieving.</p> <p>As mentioned previously, grief is a unique and personal experience and there is no right or wrong way to grieve. When a loss occurs people may not express their reactions in the same way as others who may have experienced a similar loss. It is important that we have an understanding of the different ways of grieving as this can help us when it comes to supporting individuals and families and what may be helpful to support them through their grief journey.</p> <p>There are two different styles of grieving: Instrumental and Intuitive. However people can experience a blend of these and we will take a look at each one.</p>	10 min	Slide
7	<p>Instrumental Grieving</p> <p>Let's look at instrumental grieving: People who are instrumental grievers tend to be more private with this grief and less likely to show outward emotion. They tend to be more problem solving focused and direct their energies into activities eg, use their loss experience to have a positive outcome eg setting up support groups, campaigns etc.</p>		Slide
8	<p>Intuitive Grieving</p> <p>Then we have intuitive grievers. They tend to be more open and expressive with their grief emotions, they are more likely to talk about their feelings and</p>		Slide

	<p>share their stories with other. They will actively seek out support like talking therapies/support groups.</p> <p>Blended Grievors</p> <p>However you find that most people tend to experience a blend of these grieving styles but one style of grief is usually more dominant than the other.</p> <p>Remind participants that this is not about being an expert on grief but to help us recognise that we all grieve differently and our support needs may differ, what might be helpful to one may not be for another. One size does not fit all.</p>		
Activity	<p>Loss and Grief Support</p> <p>Group Activity</p> <p>This section of the session will explore what supports could be considered for those struggling with loss and grief. For the purpose of this activity, we have themed these into self-help and services.</p> <p>Divide the participants into groups. Provide flipchart and pens.</p> <p>Ask the groups to think about and discuss what individuals experiencing loss and grief might need to help protect and support their mental health and wellbeing. Remind the participants to consider the different styles of grieving in this exercise and that needs will be dependent on the loss experienced.</p> <p>Take feedback from each of the groups.</p> <p>Here are a few examples of what we help us manage grief:</p> <p>Self Help</p> <p>Talking to a friend, family member, support service to help deal with your emotions can begin the healing process.</p> <p>Recognise and accept that it is ok to feel sad. It's a healthy part of the grieving process. These emotions are ok to have, don't try and hide them or keep them contained.</p> <p>Try and keep routines in place. This helps gives</p>	<p>20 min</p> <p>(15 min activity, 5 min feedback)</p>	

	<p>structure and focus at a time when everything feels chaotic.</p> <p>Eat healthily and stay active (physically and mentally).</p> <p>Avoid misuse of alcohol. Alcohol is a depressant and will make you feel worse once the effects wear off.</p> <p>Helplines/Online Forums: there are a range of helplines and online chat forums that provide support for different losses, eg miscarriage.</p> <p>Services</p> <p>Doctor: if struggling anxiety/depression and/or sleep contact your GP.</p> <p>Counselling: can help individuals address their problems by helping them to develop strategies and increase self-awareness.</p> <p>Group support: this can provide a safe space to meet others going through a similar experience and offer a sounding board.</p> <p>Highlight that supports can look different for everyone and that one size does not fit all. Individuals may choose different supports at different times through their grief journey. They may also use more than one source of support at a time.</p> <p>Circulate the loss and grief resources handout, again highlight these are general and not an exhaustive list. Facilitators can adapt the resources handout to include any locality resources and supports.</p>		
9	<p>When do people need help?</p> <p>We have looked at different types of losses, our reaction to loss which is known as grief, the impact that grief can have on our bodies, the different ways in which people grieve and what people need.</p> <p>It is important to remember that grief is a natural response to something that has happened, however there is no instant fix and after time the grief is less likely to be at the forefront of our minds. However there may be times when people need further help to support their mental health.</p>	5 min	Slide

	<p>Here are some things to consider, read the information off the slide.</p> <p>Remind participants that grief is a very personal experience and people can have very different grief responses to similar losses.</p> <p>Conclude that it is important that it is important we have conversations about grief, despite the discomfort it may cause the few. The more we raise awareness and share experiences, the more it will encourage society to talk about it and stop people reaching crisis point.</p>		
Activity & 10	Remind participants of the importance of looking after their own mental health and provide a self-care activity.	5 min	Slide
Session Close	Thank the participants for their time and ask them to complete an evaluation.	5 min	Evaluation