



# Resilience and coping when there has been “loss, grief and trauma in one’s life”

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What does loss and  
grief mean and why  
does it occur?

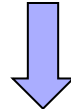
**Grief is a natural and painful process which is necessary and common to us all.**

**We experience grief when:**

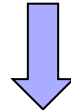
**Event**



**Feelings of loss**



**Process of grief**



**Changed Behaviours**

# Loss is a part of everyday life.

**Loss is a word used to describe -a situation in your life when you are deprived of someone you love or something you value.**

## ACTIVITY

**Share a loss you have had in the past 3 years!**

( example status from a changed job in the workplace)

**What other things changed because of the loss?**

# Categories of Loss

## 1. The loss of a significant person.

- Death – the ultimate loss- final and complete
- Also .....divorce, desertion, separation, abortion, stillbirth, rejection, employment, military service, travel, geographic moves, institutional placement (aged, mentally ill, criminal, delinquent, adoption, foster care), illness, accident, ageing.....losing the person we once knew.

# Categories continued.....

## **2. The loss of part of self**

- **Structural**....loss of limb, organ, disfigurement, loss of hair, teeth, any outward change. Loss of body image (surgery, burns, accident)
- **Functional**.....loss of function through stroke, paralysis, infertility, blindness, deafness, arthritis, etc.
- **Psychological**... loss of memory, judgement, pride, control, status, usefulness, independence, esteem, loss of values, ideals.
- **Others**

# **Grief affects our whole being- real or imagined.**

**This means all the following areas are affected.**

- **Physical**
- **Social**
- **Emotional**
- **Intellectual**
- **Spiritual**

**You just mentioned some losses and will now be able to see the connection to how your whole being was affected with that loss. That is normal!**

# Experiences of grief

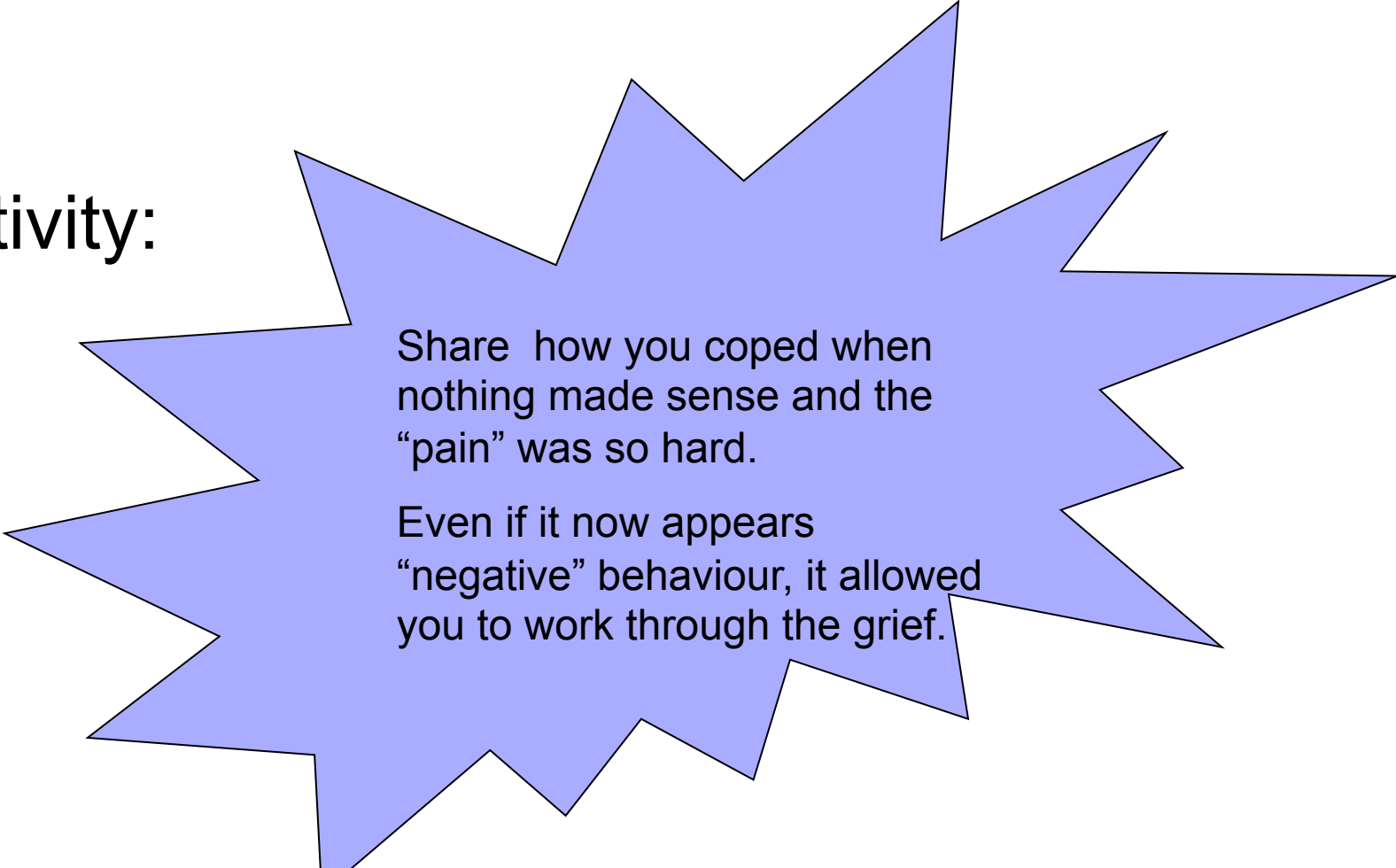
These feelings and actions fit with the above

- Disbelief, shock
- Sobbing, crying
- Physical symptoms. Why?
- Denial
- Repetition
- Reality of death confusion
- Idealisation
- Anxiety/ panic( fear of losing control)
- Bargaining
- Relief( laughter)
- Depression
- Expectations
- Preoccupation
- Lowered self esteem
- Guilt
- Anger
- Loneliness
- Despair
- Sadness
- Helplessness
- Hatred
- Envy
- Bitterness/ resentment
- Limbo
- Hope emerges
- Struggle with new life partners
- Life is worth living



# How do you cope and recover from adverse events in your life?

## Activity:



Share how you coped when nothing made sense and the “pain” was so hard.

Even if it now appears “negative” behaviour, it allowed you to work through the grief.

# Coping/ managing stress and developing resilience

**There are 5 basic strategies we need to cope with events in our lives. The following are critical to a balanced and appropriate reaction to a synthesis of any event.**

1. **Gaining information-** why? What? How? When? Information orients us, reduces anxiety, and gives us a sense of control.
2. **Expressing emotions-** ( mad, sad, glad and scared) We are born with the capability of experiencing functional emotions which help us to survive and motivate us to live.



### **3 Developing rituals-**

Our patterns of daily living are the routine rituals that keep us going each day. They give us a sense of safety and security.

### **4 Structuring attitudes**

The way we all view life and its meaning will determine whether we live happily or expend most of our energy collecting resentments.

### **5 Reaching out to others**

There are times when unconditional love and support is essential to healing. We must recognise it, ask for it and accept it.

# Strategies to build resilience in the transition to the aftermath.

**We enhance our resilience by: identifying those actions that strengthen our response to the loss. ( what brings us peace?)**

- Slowly begin to return to “usual” functioning by choosing small manageable “bits.”
- Continuity and routine is important . These normalisations help the psychological and social processes of recovery.
- Stay tuned to your own reaction and needs- learning about your own life skills can help to build strengths for the future.
- Try answering these questions:
  - “What has worked for me in terms of coping with problems in the past?”
  - “How do I manage my relationships with a lower level of tolerance because of the grief?”
  - “What will help me think through a challenge and make a decision?”



# ACTIVITY

- What thinking and behaviours strengthen you, allow you to cope and even bring a sense of peace after a loss?
- Discuss!



# **Self- Care and Coping!**

**“When you recover or discover something that nourishes your soul and brings joy, care enough about yourself to make room for it in your life.”**

**- Jean Shinoda Bolen**