

# Coping with Grief

SEL Webinar

*Date: 4/29/2020*

*Presenters:*

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# Objectives

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- Participants will learn about grief
- Participants will learn strategies to talk with youth about grief and common reactions youth may display during grief
- Participants will learn the effect of grief upon youth and adults during the Covid-19 Era
- Participants will learn tips and strategies that are helpful to youth during the grieving process

# Grief Defined

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- Grief is defined as the response to loss, particularly to the loss of someone or something that has died, to which a bond or affection was formed.
- Grief is not limited to the loss of people

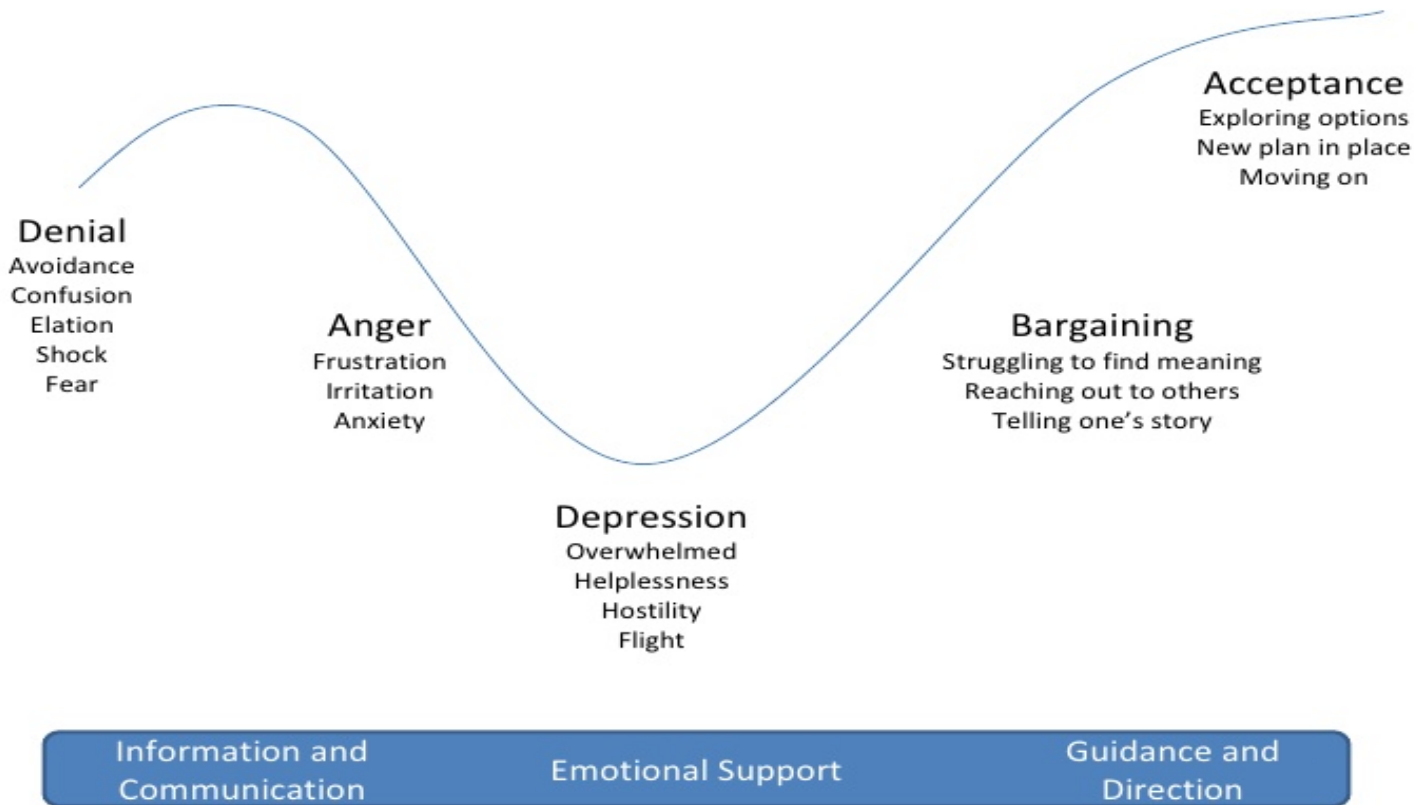
# Disenfranchised Grief

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- Death of a pet
- Divorce
- Loss of a home
- A best friend moving away
- Job loss
- Health
- Identity
- Break-up of a relationship/friendship

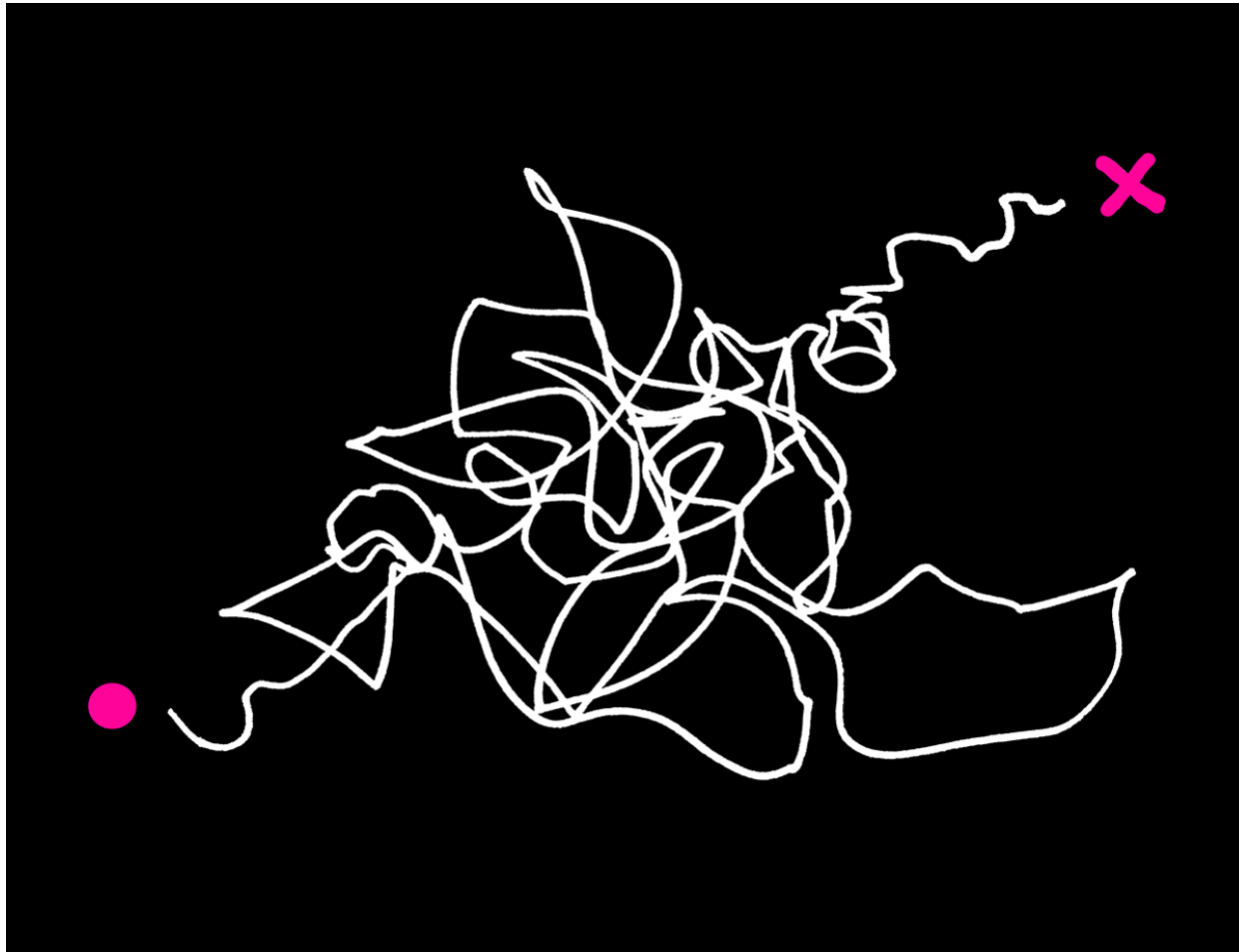
# Grief Cycle

## Kübler-Ross Grief Cycle



# Grief Cycle

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# Talking To Youth About Grief

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## Talking To Youth About Grief: Elementary Level



- Use truthful words like “dead, dying, died.
- Children at this age need to understand that death is irreversible.
- Be honest and keep your responses clear and brief.
- Provide comfort and listen.
- Express emotions and show patience.



## Talking To Youth About Grief: Secondary Level



- Be available
  - Sit with teen, listen to them, and answer their questions.
  - Allow them to express their grief experience.
- Model appropriate expressions of emotion.
- Acknowledge their feelings, thoughts, and opinions.

## Talking To Youth About Grief: Secondary Level (cont.)



- Explain that feeling a range of different emotions is normal.
- Allow teens to grieve in their own way.
  - Validate their grief process and feelings and do not minimize.
- Be patient and open-minded.
- Give your teen time to heal.

# Common Reactions to Grief: Elementary Level

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- Sleep Changes
  - Denial
  - Confusion
  - Nightmares
- Temper Tantrums
  - Regression
  - Bedwetting
- Physical Complaints
  - Fear
- Appetite Changes
- Inconsolable Crying
  - Clinginess
- Aggression/Anger
  - Guilt
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Questioning
- Decreased Academics

# Common Reactions to Grief: Secondary Level

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- No appetite
- Inconsolable Crying
  - Clinginess
- Aggressive Behaviors
  - Agitation
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Withdrawal
- Defiance
- Worrying
  - Guilt
  - Anxiety
- Masking Emotions
- Decrease in Academic Performance
- Risk Taking Behaviors

# Reminders on Grief

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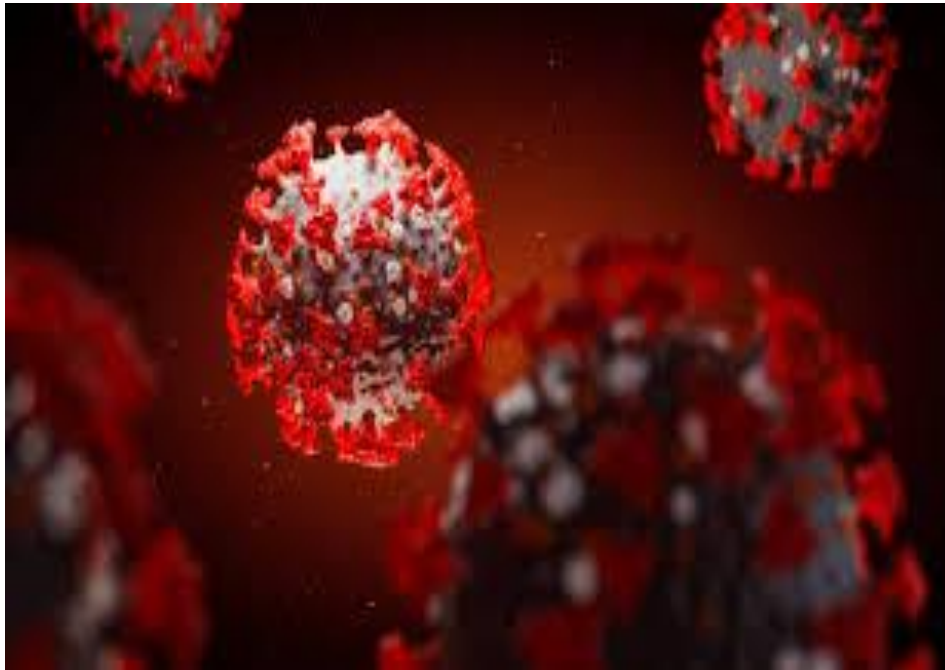
- ✓ Youth responses to stressful events are unique and varied
- ✓ New and challenging behaviors are natural responses to grief, and adults can help by showing empathy and patience
- ✓ Reassure safety, routines, and emotional regulation.

# Grief

Grief <u>IS</u>	Grief is <u>NOT</u>
➤ A journey/process	➤ A linear step of stages
➤ Having waves of emotion hitting you at all different times	➤ Quickly getting over it and moving on
➤ An individual experience	➤ Not the same for everyone
➤ Dealing with difficult and heavy emotions	➤ Ignoring and wishing emotions would go away
➤ Normal	➤ Something you should hide from others
➤ Taking time to remember memories	➤ Forgetting and moving on
➤ Being okay with not being okay	➤ Pretending to be okay

# Grief: Covid-19 Era

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# Grief: Covid-19

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## Collective Grief

- Educational System
- Health Care System
- Work Force
- Social Systems





# Grief: Covid-19

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- Milestones
  - Graduations
  - Proms
  - Birthdays
  - Weddings
- Security
  - Jobs
  - Identity
  - Predictability
  - Health
- Social Connections
  - Friendships
  - Physical Touch
  - Being in community with others



# General Tips for Grief

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- Maintain routines as normally as possible
- Ask questions to ascertain the youth's understanding of the event and emotional state
- Give the youth permission to grieve
- Provide age and developmentally-appropriate answers
- Connect the bereaved with helping professionals and other trusted mentors and adults
- Encourage students to adopt adaptive coping strategies, particularly ones that will involve interaction with other students (e.g., sports, clubs)
- Educate caregivers about what is healthy grief and how to support the student

\*<https://www.nasponline.org/>

# General Tips for Grief: Adults

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- Self-Care
- Normalize Feelings
- Maintain a Routine
- Virtually Connect
- Physical Activity
- Reach out for Professional Help

# Helpful Activities

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## Secondary

- Mandalas
- Arts and crafts
- Memorial planning
- Stone painting
- Zen Art
- APPS (Calm)
- Journaling
- Spending time with friends



## Elementary

- Mandalas
- Arts and crafts
- Calming toolbox
- Coping journals
- Drawing pictures of a happy memory
- Puzzles

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# Grief Resources- Harris County

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- Bo's place: 713-942-8339
  - A non-profit, free-of-charge bereavement center
  - [info@bosplace.org](mailto:info@bosplace.org)
- Harris Center: 713-970-7000
- Texas Children's Hospital-Trauma and Grief Center: 832-822-3829

# Resources

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- Email the Social and Emotional Learning Department at: [hisdsl@houstonisd.org](mailto:hisdsl@houstonisd.org)
- Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text line: Text “Talk” to 741-741
- Always call **911** in the event of an emergency
- HISD Employee Assistance Program (EAP): 1-833-812-5181

# Helpful Websites

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- <http://nasponline.org/>
- <http://www.dougy.org/>
- <http://childrengrieve.org/>
- <http://www.grievingstudents.org/>

# Thank You

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