

Leaders Grieve Too!

HeartLight Center
Virtual Summit
August 2023

Introduction

Learning Objectives

- * Learn the language associated with grief, mourning, burnout, compassion fatigue, & COVID
- * Determine who is at risk
- * To implement self care/prevention plan

Purpose/Goal

- * To enlighten professionals by exploring these formerly taboo subjects and their **impact** on our well being
- * To equip professionals with knowledge & tools for self care & prevention, thus improving client care

Poll

- * Death of a loved one (close)?
- * Death loss within the last 3 years (since the pandemic)?
- * Covid-19 loss?
- * Make final arrangements?
- * Grief support?



Get to know me!

Fun Facts

Likes/*Dislikes*

- * Help others heal
- * Dance & have fun
- * Being a Dog Mom
- * *Seeing others hurting*
- * *Critters of any kind*
- * *Time wasted*

Mister Cunningham &
Bentley Sebastian Cunningham



Steel Magnolias

What grief looks like...



What does grief look like?

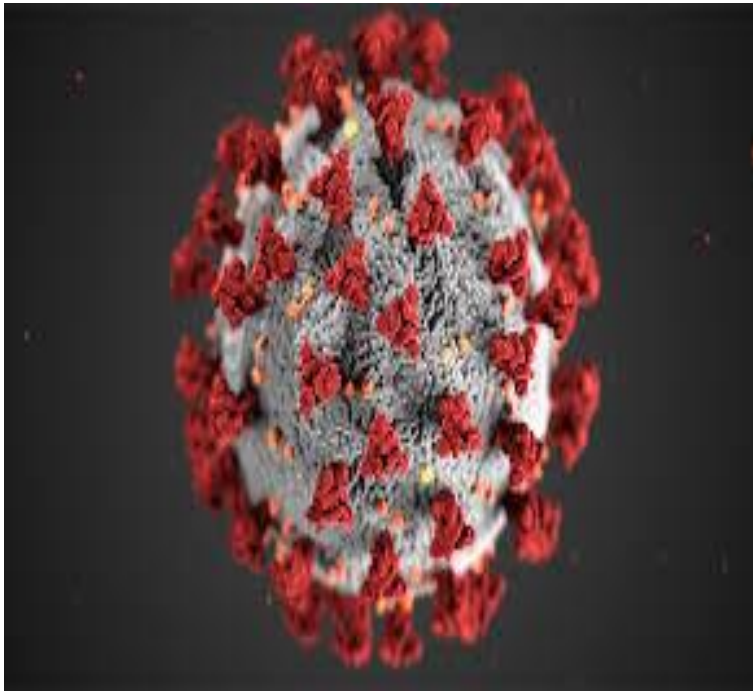


People tend to believe that grief shrinks over time



What really happens is that we grow around our grief

Grief... no longer taboo!

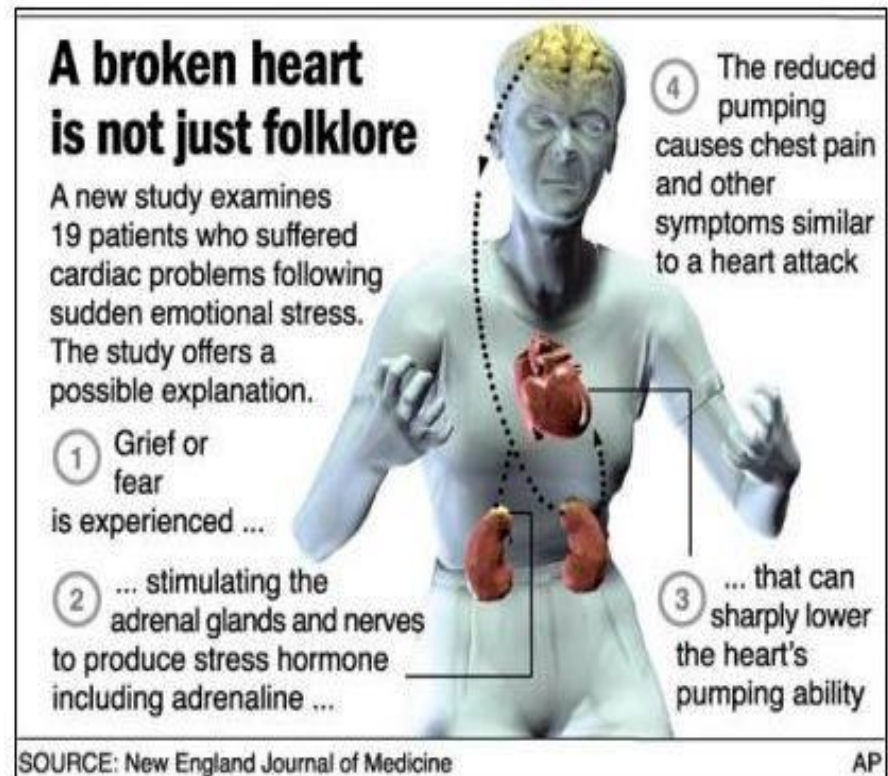


Mass Trauma



Pulse Check – How's your heart?

- * Covid 19 death count in the millions
- * Political unrest
- * Shootings
- * Ukraine war, etc
- * Suicide rate increased
- * Pandemic aftermath – ambiguous grief: can I go back to my normal life?



The Pandemic changed our world

Then

- * Live
- * **Grief/Loss** & Final Disposition
- * Worship
- * Healthcare
- * Mental Healthcare

Now

- * Societal embrace of complexities of mental health
- * Awareness heightened

Language of Grief

It's about loss

Grief

- * Death
- * Employment
- * Home
- * Disaster
- * Divorce
- * Broken Relationship
- * Health
- * Incarceration
- * Relocation

Pandemic Awareness of Loss

- * Normalcy
- * Stability
- * Trust
- * Safety
- * Belief
- * Identity
- * Presence

Grief is about loss

things we grieve

the loss of a loved one

the loss of a pet

a breakup or a divorce

things we might also grieve

major life transitions

being unable to
achieve a goal or
fulfill a dream

a diagnosis

not living the life we
hoped we would live

the effects of big
decisions (even
when those
decisions are
ultimately good
for us)

losing a job or
switching
careers

a friendship breakup

the person we were before
something traumatic or
life-altering occurred

moving to a new location

a faith transition or a
shift in our other beliefs

Grief is universal

- * No one is exempt
- * A natural, internal **emotional and chemical** response to ANY loss



Language of Grief

- * Don't get over it but adjust to it
- * Everyone grieves differently (untruth); everyone grieves the same, mourns differently
- * If you don't deal with it, it will deal with you

Language of Grief

- * Affects our total person: physically, spiritually, emotionally, and behaviorally
- * Not orderly or predictable; inevitable; none are immune!
- * Time alone does not heal all / up to 5 years

Griefwork



“I feel drained!”

- * The psychological process of coping with a significant loss

Language of Grief

Mourning

- * Grief gone public
- * Outward expression
- * The external response to loss
- * Strongly influenced by culture/society
- * “In order to live well, we must mourn well.” Dr. Alan Wolfelt

Common Grief Responses

- * **Physical** – appetite change, crying, insomnia, fatigue, etc.
- * **Spiritual** – unable to pray or attend religious activities, reject God, enter into relationship with God, nature, moral values, etc.

Common Grief Responses

- * **Emotional** – confusion, shock, disbelief, etc.
- * **Behavioral** – disorganized, forgetful, disoriented, etc.

Iceberg Theory

- * GRIEF of current loss is attached to undealt w/issues
- * RCA – identify the origin of a problem using specific steps



We Must Deal with Our Grief/Issues



Tools for Toolbox - Prevention

- * Practice what you preach
- * Identify & use your support system
- * Set boundaries – life outside of work

Tools for Toolbox – Self Care

- * Exercise, rest, eat healthy
- * Deep breathing
- * Fun, laughter
- * Meditation, time alone to sit in grief
- * Massage Therapy
- * Participate in grief support of some kind
- * Journaling
- * Gardening
- * Volunteering
- * Visit physician
- * Dancing

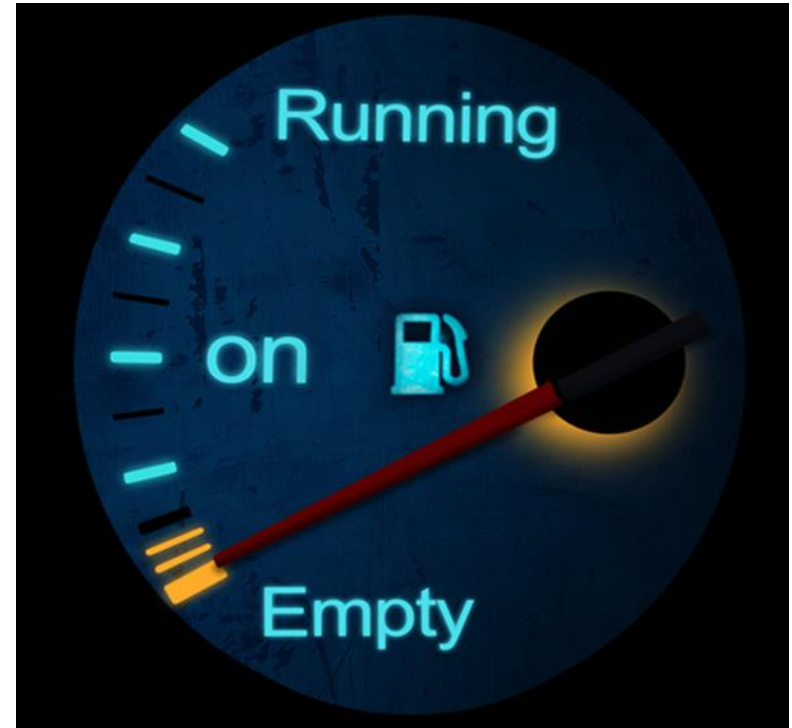
How you can help your clients

- * Self care – take care of YOU!
- * Encourage self care for client
- * Deal with them where they are
- * Provide resources
- * Participate in continuing education
- * Empower them
- * Acknowledge & validate their grief/loss(es)
- * Remember them on special days
- * Be patient

Serotonin Break!



Is this you?



Herbert J. Freudenberger

Coined BURNOUT as a technical term in 1975

- * A state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward.
- * 3 components:
 - * Emotional Exhaustion
 - * Depersonalization
 - * Decreased sense of accomplishment
- * (Burnout, Nagoski & Nagoski 2019)

Burnout

- * A lot of Americans experience Burnout
- * Mentally, Emotionally, Spiritually & Psychologically exhausted
- * Overcompensate too long & you need a break
- * You CAN recover through positive self care!

Compassion Fatigue

term coined by Johnson, 1992

- * The physical, emotional, and spiritual result of **CHRONIC** self-sacrifice and/or prolonged exposure to difficult situations that renders a person unable to love, nurture, care for, or empathize with another's suffering. (Harris & Griffin, 2014, p.82)
- * It's more than being overworked, and it's a threat to the safety of your patients, your own wellbeing, your relationships, and your career. (Pepsi Non Profit)
- * For some people, it may be time for another career / transition time

Survey says!

- * Employee burnout is a global concern. In a marketplace survey of over 1000 respondents by Deloitte, **77% say they have experienced burnout at their current job.** 91% say that unmanageable stress or frustration impacts the quality of their work, and 83% say burnout can negatively impact personal relationships.
- * US professionals explored the drivers & impact of employee burnout, while also providing insight into the benefits & programs employees feel can help prevent or alleviate burnout versus those their **companies are currently offering.** 2015

Who is at risk?

- * Mental Health Professionals
- * Healthcare providers: nurses/aides, doctors, paramedics, respiratory therapists
- * Fireman
- * Law Enforcement
- * Hospice/Palliative Care
- * Educators/Teachers
- * Clergy
- * Lawyers
- * Chronic caregivers
- * Funeral Directors/Morticians
- * Veterinarians
- * Military personnel

BURNOUT Red Flags

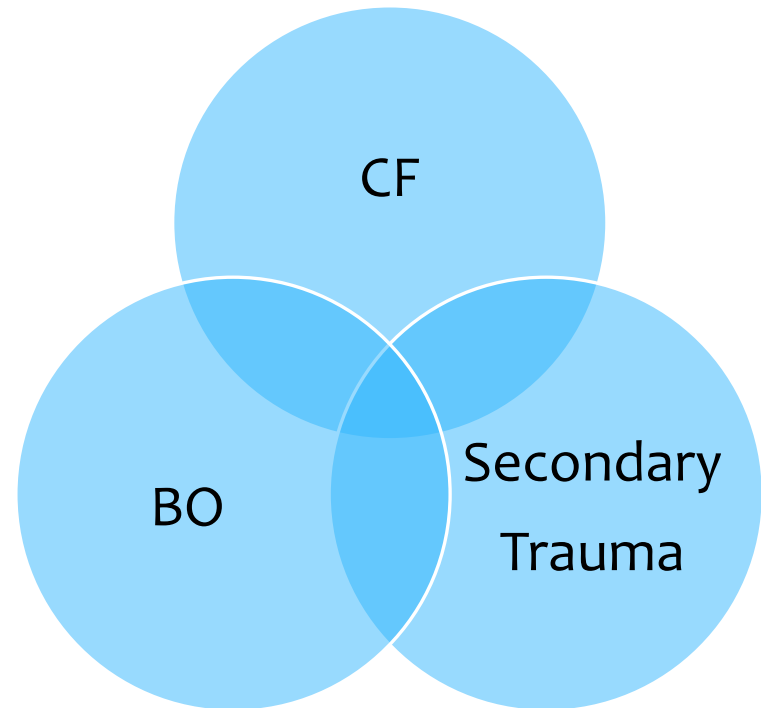
- * Emotional Exhaustion
- * Irritability or Anger
- * Detachment
- * Dread of working w/certain people or going to work
- * Reduced performance
- * Alienation from work related activities
- * Excessive absences
- * Physical complaints
- * Blame others for your mistakes

COMPASSION FATIGUE Red Flags

- * Intrusive negative thoughts
- * Skepticism, Frustration
- * Loss of hope; tiredness
- * Questioning one's contribution
- * Physical problems (lethargy, headaches, gastrointestinal distress, insomnia)
- * Lack of perceived managerial support
- * Complex patient/family needs; conflictual interactions
- * Expanding workload

Compassion Fatigue

- * Consists of two main
- * main elements: burnout and secondary trauma
- * Journal of Public Health, 2/2021



COVID Pandemic Affect Burnout, CF, and Compassion Satisfaction in Healthcare Personnel

- * The main results we found showed an increase in the rate of burnout, dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and compassion fatigue; a reduction in personal accomplishment; and levels of compassion satisfaction similar to those before the pandemic.

Prevention Plan – same as in grief

A few additions...

- * Communicate you are experiencing CF
- * Rest
- * Vitamins/Probiotics/ Minerals 50 years of age & up
- * Stay in tune with bloodwork: thyroid, hormones, vitamin D
- * Unplug / Getaway (not vacay)

Tools to help the healing process continue

- * Set boundaries w/coworkers, families, clients, etc.
- * Work / Life Balance
- * Rotate care of difficult families
- * Meditation / Quiet time alone
- * Deep breathing
- * Be organized
- * Socialize

You only get ONE YOU!

- * If unaddressed, burn out can become a serious mental health issue
- * CF can lead to death



Call to Action!

- * By the end of the day of TODAY, determine your self care plan and start implementing ONE THING from that list
- * Assessment – Professional Quality of Life Scale (PROQOL)



Always remember...

**RECOVERY IS NOT
FOR PEOPLE WHO
NEED IT, IT'S FOR
PEOPLE WHO
WANT IT.**



Questions/Comments

A 3D rendering of the words "Thank You!" in a blue, metallic, sans-serif font. The text is positioned on a light gray, reflective surface that creates a soft shadow beneath the letters. The background is a dark gray gradient, and a bright light source from the left creates a circular highlight on the surface behind the text.

Thank You!