**Grief & Loss Handout**

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* Definition of Grief (*What is it?)*
	+ “The keen mental suffering or distress over affliction or loss; sharp sorrow; painful regret.”
	+ The process
* Definition of Loss
	+ “The state of being deprived of or of being without something that one has had: the loss of old friends.”
	+ The event
* Types of Loss (*There are many different types, here are a few)*
	+ Death of a loved one
	+ Breakup
	+ Separation
	+ Divorce
	+ Loss of job
	+ Loss of money
	+ Rape/violent crime victim
	+ Moving
	+ Illness (loss of health)
	+ Changing schools
	+ Success (loss of striving)
	+ Loss of long term goal
* Two main loss categories
	+ Primary Loss – the event that occurs
	+ Secondary Loss – Loss after an event or loss after a primary loss
* Reactions to Loss
	+ Anger
	+ Sadness
	+ Tearfulness
	+ Exhaustion
	+ Apathy
	+ Lost
	+ Lonely
	+ Hopelessness
	+ Change in appetite
	+ Sleep disturbance
	+ Guilt
	+ Abandonment
	+ Lack of interest
	+ Trouble concentrating
* Expressing Grief (*What affects how we grieve?)*
	+ Personality
	+ Circumstances of loss
	+ View of the world
* Kubler-Ross: 5 Stages of Grief
	+ Tools to help us identify
	+ Not everyone goes through each stage in this order
		1. Denial: (shock, denial, numbness, how can I go on?, get by each day, begin to ask questions)
		2. Anger: (endless, transference, pain underneath, provides structure and strength, indication of intensity of your love)
		3. Bargaining: (making truces before a loss or after, “If only…” and “What if…” statements, guilt, bargaining with pain, negotiating way out of hurt)
		4. Depression: (deep sadness, feels endless, not a sign of a mental illness, realization that relationship is over)
		5. Acceptance: (not meaning “OK” with loss, accept reality of it, accept change has happened and adjust)
* Healthy Coping Skills
	+ Accept feelings
	+ Time
	+ Share your feelings
	+ Grief doesn’t last forever
	+ Spend time with those who support you.
	+ New Friends/Groups (if needed)
	+ New interests (if needed)
	+ Community activities/volunteering
	+ Get rest, but not too much
* Unhealthy Coping Skills
	+ Isolating yourself from others.
	+ Fighting your feelings.
	+ Getting stuck in anger, resentment, or blame.
	+ Making any major decisions right after the breakup.
	+ Coping with alcohol, drugs, or excessive food intake.
	+ Thoughts/acts of self-harm
	+ Thoughts/acts of harming someone else
* Other forms of Grief:
* Anticipatory Grief – anticipating grief before it arrives
* Complicated Grief – increasing reliance on alcohol, high risk behaviors, isolation/withdrawal, suicidal gestures
	+ Indicators – prolonged idealization of deceased person, tenacious obsessions, substance abuse, lack of emotion