



MODULE 2

GRIEF AND LOSS

| TRAINING MANUAL

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Introduction to the Training Program

Welcome to The Older Men's Network Inc Training Program. This Training Program focuses on information which has been specifically developed in order to raise awareness of the specific challenges which face men as they move through the ageing process. For the purposes of all the Training Programs, the term 'older men' is used to refer to men aged 50 and above.

The Training Program has been separated into five Modules. Modules 1, 2 and 5 address issues facing older men such as ageing, retirement, grief and loss and suicide. Modules 3 and 4 focus on developing communication skills and team building appropriate to the facilitation of older men's groups.

Each Module includes a number of topics which would take approximately one hour if presented to a group. Some optional additional information and activities are suggested in places to enable the presenter to expand the presentation where appropriate. All of the ice-breakers, activities and discussion questions are suggestions only. Presenters are encouraged to tailor presentations to the specific needs of the group where possible.

Overview of Modules

Modules 1, 2 and 5 provide relevant information about issues which are very important but often overlooked in relation to older men. Staff in community organisations may find these modules useful for their own professional development or for delivery to older men's groups. The primary aim of using these modules with older men's groups is to encourage discussion and questions and support men to share their own personal experiences by finding a place of acceptance and understanding.

The first Module focuses on issues specific to older men, including approaches to ageing, myths and realities of ageing, the six phases of retirement, how to age successfully, recognising and combating social isolation and how to provide social support to older men. Module 2 focuses on grief and loss, in particular the stages and phases of grief, managing grief and how to support grieving men. Module 5 discusses the sensitive issue of suicide in older people and how to identify and respond to those at risk of suicide.

Modules 3 and 4 focus on developing effective communication and team building skills appropriate for the facilitation of older men's groups in the community. These modules can be used in situations where a men's group desires to become a more cohesive and supportive group for their members, or where there may be older men working as a team of volunteers who meet and interact regularly. The information in these modules aims to cover some of the areas most likely to enhance the functioning of group dynamics by addressing basic skills in communication and team building.

How to use this training material

This training material is provided to assist with the presentation of information sessions or facilitation of discussion groups around issues facing older men. The scenarios and activities provided are only suggestions and may be changed as needed by the presenter to suit the group or location of the training.

Every group should be informed that they are welcome to ask questions as the material is being presented and that they should feel free to discuss, agree or disagree with the information being presented.

Each Training Package provides training notes for the presenter, a session plan for a one hour presentation, handouts for photocopying and a PowerPoint slide presentation on a CD which can be used with a laptop and data projector to make the presentation more interesting and to help participants retain the information as it is presented.

This training material is not competency based and does not align with any Nationally Accredited Training Package.

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MODULE TWO: GRIEF AND LOSS

Module Two: Grief and Loss covers four key topics:

1. An Overview of Grief and Loss
2. Stages and Phases of Grief
3. Managing Grief
4. Men's Grief Processes

Note to the Presenter

Before the presentation commences it is important to go through some simple introductory remarks to clarify any concerns that the participants might have which may reduce their ability to enjoy the session.

Start with welcoming the group to the presentation and introduce yourself to them. You may want to give a bit of personal background to help them feel that you have relevant experience in their issues and to help them get to know you.

Be sure to cover general housekeeping issues such as the location of the toilets; the expected finishing time of the training and the timing of any breaks if taken; the evacuation procedure in case of fire; the location of the exits and where participants can smoke safely.

It can also be useful to ask participants to set some ground rules prior to starting – things like showing respect to everyone even if their opinion differs from yours, no verbal or physical expressions of anger, respecting people's privacy and their decision not to share and maintaining the confidentiality of people in the group by not discussing what you have heard with anyone else. You may write these up on a whiteboard as they are suggested so that they act as a visual reminder to the group during the session.

Icebreakers

Many training programs commence with an icebreaker to help people feel more comfortable with each other, particularly if they haven't met each other before. Knowing other people's names is very important during group discussions to prevent embarrassment when referring to others and to help everyone feel part of the group and acknowledged.

The following icebreakers are optional activities which take anywhere from 2 minutes up to ten minutes to complete. The willingness of the group to participate can determine how long an activity takes but if they are enjoying themselves, it usually makes the rest of the discussion much more rewarding.

Even if some reluctance to participate is noted it is best to present an icebreaker as an enjoyable activity and proceed regardless, as hesitation on your part can make the group

feel more uncertain about joining in. Usually reluctance is only due to people feeling shy and not wanting to stand out in the crowd. The icebreakers, refer page 7, were selected because they are fairly 'low-key' and non-threatening and should be presented as such.

A major benefit of using an ice-breaker to start is that some topic material is highly sensitive and may arouse feelings of grief, sadness and loss in the participants. Starting the session by 'warming' people up to each other will help the discussion flow more easily, start to build trust in the group and reduce the feeling that the participants are disclosing personal information to total strangers.

Feel free to select from the icebreakers included or to introduce your own. The Ice-breakers below plus other excellent activities can be found in the book '*100 Training Games*' and '*103 Additional Training Games*' by Gary Kroenhert (1991, McGraw-Hill Australia, Sydney).

Suggested Icebreakers

What is Your Name?

Time required: 10 – 15 minutes

1. Tell the group members that at the end of this exercise they will hopefully know the names of all the other participants. If they have name tags on, ask them to turn them over.
2. Tell the group that each person will introduce themselves by name and share one unusual thing about themselves. For example “My name is Jack and I have a rose garden”.
3. The next person is then to repeat the previous person’s name and the unusual thing they told the group about themselves and then give their name and one unusual thing. The remaining participants have to follow the same procedure – but recall the names and unusual things about all the people who came before them.

Ref. Kroehnert, G. 1991, *100 Training Games*, McGraw-Hill Australia, Sydney p. 49

Fact or Fiction?

Time required: 10 – 15 minutes

1. Provide the group members with a pen and a slip of paper and ask them each to write down three surprising things about themselves, two of which are true and one which is made up.
2. Each person in turn reads their list and then the rest of the group votes on which ‘fact’ they feel is actually ‘fiction’.
3. If the group does not accurately pick the person’s made up ‘fact’ then that person wins. The group may have more than one winner. The winners get a small treat for ‘deceiving’ the rest of the members.

Ref: <http://www.deskdemon.com/pages/uk/venues/icebreakers?cl=wn-jan-icebreakers>

First or Worst?

Time required: 10 – 15 minutes

1. Each group member tells the others about their first or their worst job. This simple icebreaker allows team members to spark conversation with each other and to have some fun commenting on the jobs that they each have done.

Ref: <http://www.deskdemon.com/pages/uk/venues/icebreakers?cl=wn-jan-icebreakers>

MODULE 2 – TOPIC 1 – AN OVERVIEW OF GRIEF AND LOSS

Intro:

Introduction: Module 2 Topic 1 – An Overview of Grief and Loss

5 Minutes
PPT 1

The primary focus of Module 2 is on older men and the challenges that grief and loss can bring in the later stages of life.

While the module can be presented as a stand-alone package it is intended to complement other modules, all of which play an integral part of the training program. The entire Module aims to provide volunteers with information about key grief and loss issues for older men and offer skills in addressing them.

These issues covered in all 5 topics include:

- A general overview of grief and loss
- Stages and phases of grieving
- Managing grief
- Men's grieving processes
- Supporting grieving men.

2 minutes
PPT 2

The Focus of the Topic

To discuss grief and loss and the factors that influence how we respond to it.

*Presenter's Notes: To start the session it is useful to have everyone focused on the primary topic by asking them to share in groups of three, what words, feelings or emotions the term **grief** reminds them of. Ask someone from each group to list down all the words and phrases suggested by the group on a piece of paper so that they can be read out at the end of a few minutes. Ask each group to read out their responses to the other groups. This will give you as presenter a better idea of the wide variety of responses and feelings that the word 'grief' has drawn out of the participants and will help others to realise that not everyone sees grief the same way.*

5 minutes
PPT 3

What is Grief?



A bond is formed when we become attached to someone or something. When the bond is broken and the person, dream or object is lost, grief results. Grief is not necessarily about bereavement (death of a person or loved one) although that is what often first comes to mind. Feelings of grief can arise due to many different experiences, in particular when we experience a loss.

5 minutes
PPT 4

What is Loss?



Question for participants:

Losses resulting in grief are many and varied. Before we explore some of these, *what types of losses can you think of or have you experienced, which cause feelings of grief?*

For example:

- Ending a relationship
- Loss of career or employment
- Death of a pet
- Loss of a significant role or position of status in an organisation or in the community
- Loss of health or general feeling of wellbeing
- Loss of certain hopes, dreams, plans or a goal

As we have discussed, grief is not limited to death, but can be the result of two types of loss: actual and symbolic.

Actual losses are those which are tangible such as the loss of an existing relationship, a life partner or job or the destruction of existing life patterns caused by things such as moving out of your home or to a new community.

Symbolic losses may include things such as the loss of a dream, a plan or hopes or future potential. Symbolic losses are not as easy to point to in order to explain to someone else how the loss has affected you; but nonetheless, they are important parts of our lives. To see a dream, plan or goal disappear after thought and energy has gone into willing it to happen, can cause deep feelings of loss and helplessness.

When a person experiences a major loss such as bereavement, this may trigger a range of other losses at the same time, which also have to be grieved and adapted to. These losses may include:

- Loss of income or financial security/stability
- Loss of routine, stability and order
- Loss of a future together or a future where the deceased person had a role
- Loss of home or accommodation requirements
- Loss of mutual friends
- Loss of opportunities for social gatherings and interactions that you used to attend with the deceased person or because of them.

5 minutes
PPT 5

Grief and loss

Grief and loss are part of the human condition. That is, they are likely to affect all of us at some point in our lives and often throughout our lives. From the time we first lose a beloved pet as a child, we are faced with the prospect that grief and loss are not easily escaped from and in fact, are often an opportunity to recognise the value that the person, dream or object brought to our lives.

Grief and loss are major factors impacting on older people. As losses due to bereavement become a more frequent experience as people age, the losses may appear to accumulate, leaving the person with fewer friends, family and perhaps without a life partner after many years. Associated with this are all the other changes that may need to occur due to the bereavement, leaving the older person feeling depressed, exhausted and even suicidal.

Support for the older person may initially be strong but this can tend to fall away after several months; often because people less affected have moved on with their lives or those also in states of grieving are dealing with their own struggle and pain. Whilst it is normal for grief to take some time to ease as grieving essentially is the anguish related to recognising at an emotional level that the loss cannot be retrieved, grief is often relieved by having someone to talk to and a shoulder to cry on.

10 minutes
PPT 6

Older Men and Grief

We can all acknowledge that in general terms, men and women take different paths when grieving. The detail of how men manage their grief will be discussed in Topic 3 of this training program, however broadly speaking, women address their grief by seeking out support for themselves and supporting each other. Men however, often prefer to manage their grief by mulling things over by themselves and needing privacy and aloneness before

they are ready to experience and face their emotional pain.

This desire to deal with grief only when they feel ready, can result in many older men carrying unresolved grief into later life by consistently postponing or avoiding the emotional pain related to grief and loss in their life. When grieving is postponed for a prolonged period it builds up inside and can result in explosive anger or grief later on.

On the one hand, accumulated grief can become a burden in later life and difficult to cope with. On the other hand, merely by being an older man he may now have the time, will and opportunity to deal with his losses and grief and resolve them in his own way. Grief can be a form of debt we owe to the lost person or object.

People supporting older men either as friends or volunteers, need to be aware of their own grief and loss issues prior to helping someone else cope with theirs. We cannot effectively assist others if the pain of our own losses rises up to greet us every time we try. The feelings experienced by those whom we serve in a volunteer role must be the focus of our attention if we want to be truly useful and effective. If our own emotions such as anger, denial or depression take over the support being provided, the grieving person will not feel supported and in fact may feel that they are now responsible for supporting us.

10 minutes
PPT 7

Grieving Processes

A period of grieving between 1 and 3 years is seen as a normal period of time to readjust to bereavement, especially where the person has been significant. The initial intensity of the pain and anguish wears off over time as the individual begins to come to terms with the loss and its impact. A benchmark of the end of the grieving process is when the person is able to think of the deceased without pain in the body or intense crying. There may be sadness in those thoughts but not the gut-wrenching agony experienced in the early stages. The person may also be reinvesting his or her emotions back into life and living each day more purposefully.

Chronic grief is that which endures over a longer period (e.g. many years) and does not relent. People may say "I'm not getting back to living" or "This is never ending for me." The person may feel overwhelmed and stuck in their grief forever. They do not accommodate or implement the necessary changes to their life brought on by the loss but instead continually interrupt their healing processes. This form of grief should be addressed with the help from

a grief counsellor or psychologist.

Having said this, grief is a unique response to loss, and depends on the individual concerned as to how long the process will take and what emotions will be experienced.

5 minutes
PPT 8

Factors influencing grief responses

How severely we experience grief and for how long may depend on a range of factors including what the loss meant to us, how significant the person or the object was to our sense of well being or security; how involved we were with the person or object and our state of mind, health, and emotional resilience at the time.

10 minutes
PPT 9 and 10

For example, the death of a very close family member caused by a tragic unexpected road accident will usually have a more shocking effect than a peaceful expected death at the end of a long life. The latter may still have an effect and these feelings should not be dismissed.

- History of loss
- Thoughts, expectations, beliefs, values and attitudes
- Cultural norms
- Lifestyle, e.g. isolation versus support
- Personality traits, e.g. positive versus negative
- Health e.g. a history of depression

Closing the Topic

Check with participants that all the information was provided by recapping this final slide.

- What is grief and what is loss?
- How older men respond to grief
- Grief processes
- Factors influencing grief responses

If there is time ask for any last minute questions.

- Hand out an evaluation form if required.
- Thank participants for their attendance and provide them with your contact telephone number or brochure if they should need to follow up with you.

References:

Macnab, F., 2002 *Traumas of Life & their Treatment*, Spectrum Publishing, Melbourne

MODULE 2 – TOPIC 2 – THE STAGES AND PHASES OF GRIEF

Intro:	Introduction: Module 2 Topic 2 - The Stages and Phases of Grief
5 Minutes PPT 1	<p>The primary focus of Module 2 is on older men and the challenges that grief and loss can bring in the later stages of life.</p> <p>While the module can be presented as a stand-alone package it is intended to complement other modules, all of which play an integral part of the training program. The entire Module aims to provide volunteers with information about key grief and loss issues for older men and offer skills in addressing them.</p> <p>These issues covered in all 5 topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general overview of grief and loss • Stages and phases of grieving • Managing grief • Men’s grieving processes • Supporting grieving men.
2 minutes PPT 2	<p>The Focus of the Topic</p> <p>To discuss the 5 stages of grief the people commonly experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It must be noted here that these stages do not relate only to experiences of death and dying, although that is where they are most commonly applied. These stages may not happen in this order and not all stages are experienced by all people. In addition, some people will go through several of these stages more than once, so they are not to be seen as a path that all people will follow in this order.
5 minutes PPT 3	<p>Stages of Grief</p> <p>Grief is a unique experience and therefore, there is no set pattern. Grief has several stages which do not necessarily follow a strict order and vary greatly from person to person. The stages can be repetitive, that is, a person may fluctuate between feeling better and then feeling sad again for some time.</p> <p>There is no ‘right or wrong’ way to experience grief however sometimes grief can become ‘complicated’ which means that the person may have failed to grieve, have prolonged grief, have delayed grief or exaggerated grief responses. In these circumstances grief therapy with a counsellor is a recommended strategy.</p> <p>Elizabeth Kubler-Ross in her work on death and dying suggested that there</p>

were 5 stages of grief that many people she worked with experienced. However she did not assume that these stages applied only to people experiencing death or dying. They also apply to people experiencing any sort of catastrophic personal loss such as a loss of a job, income, freedom etc.

These 5 stages are not a process, as in they don't follow a logical order that everyone goes through in the same way or the same time. People may skip a stage or go through a number of stages several times. The 5 stages are simply a model that helps to understand our own and other people's reactions to personal trauma and change, regardless of the cause. When we understand something we can often deal with it a little better.

5 minutes
PPT 4

1st Stage: Shock and Denial



Many people react to learning of the loss with numbed disbelief. They may deny the reality of the loss at some level, in order to avoid the pain. Some appear to be emotionally detached from the situation or operate in a dreamlike state which may last for minutes, hours or weeks.

The purpose of being in shock is that it provides emotional protection from being overwhelmed all at once. When we deny the loss, our denial is a conscious or unconscious refusal to accept the facts, information or reality relating to the situation concerned. Denial is a defence mechanism and perfectly natural, however some people can become locked in this stage when dealing with a traumatic change that can be ignored. The death of a loved one is not usually a traumatic change that can be ignored indefinitely.

5 minutes
PPT 5

2nd Stage: Anger



Anger is a common emotion associated with being or feeling powerless or losing one's sense of order and control. Being unable to alter or change the outcome of an event can lead to extreme frustration and hence anger. Angry

people may say “Why me, it’s not fair!” or “No! No! How can you accept this?”

Anger can manifest in different ways. People dealing with emotional pain can be angry with themselves and/or with others, especially those close to them. People who are angry at others around them may be so because the person needs someone to blame for what has happened. Knowing this can help a support person remain detached and non-judgemental when experiencing the anger of someone who is very upset. It is common to also be angry at the person who has gone as people feel deserted and betrayed that they are now alone. “How could you leave me?” is a common emotional expression of the pain that the surviving person may feel.

5 minutes
PPT 6

3rd Stage: Bargaining

Traditionally the bargaining stage for people facing death can involve attempting to bargain with whatever God the person believes in. Pleas such as “I’ll be a better person if you take this away” or “Just let me live to see my children graduate” are common during the desperation phase that people feel when faced with a terminal situation.

People facing less serious trauma can bargain or seek to negotiate a compromise. For example “Can we still be friends?” when facing a break-up. People may bargain with the person who is losing their health. ‘If you stop smoking you’ll get better and be around for your grandchildren’, or ‘If you follow the doctor’s orders we’ll be able to go on our lifetime holiday together’.

Bargaining rarely provides a sustainable solution, especially if it's a matter of life or death. Sooner or later people realise that the bargain can't be kept or that the other person is not interested in pursuing what we may have thought was the only solution, despite all the promises and wishful thinking.

10 minutes
PPT 7

4th Stage: Depression

Also referred to as preparatory grieving. In a way it's the dress rehearsal or the practice run for the 'aftermath' although this stage means different things depending on whom it involves. It's a sort of acceptance with emotional attachment. It's natural to feel sadness and regret, fear, uncertainty, etc. It shows that the person has at least begun to accept the reality.

Just when friends may think the person should be getting on with their life, a long period of sad reflection may overtake them. They may say things like “I’m

so sad, why bother with anything?" or "I'm going to die anyway...what's the point?"

This is a normal stage of grief, so people should not be "talked out of it" by well-meaning outsiders. Encouragement from others is not helpful during this stage of grieving. During this time, the person finally realizes the true magnitude of their loss, and it depresses them. The person may isolate themselves on purpose, reflect on things they did prior to the loss, and focus on memories of the past. They may sense feelings of emptiness or despair.

**5 minutes
PPT 8**

5th Stage: Acceptance and Hope

People start to adjust to the situation and find that everything becomes a little calmer and more organised. Their physical symptoms lessen and the depression lifts slightly. They may say things like "It's going to be OK" or "I can't fight it, I may as well prepare for it."

They may find that their mind starts working again and they begin to seek realistic solutions to problems. In relation to someone who has died, the person begins to reconstruct their life without him or her.

**10 minutes
PPT 9**

3 Phases of Grief Recovery

The following order is only a guide to these phases:

The initial stage: experiencing the loss e.g. shock, numbness, disbelief. This stage generally lasts for several weeks.

The intermediate stage: Active grieving e.g. crying, despair, pain, sorrow, disorganisation, intense searching and yearning. This stage may last for two to twelve months.

The final stage: re-establishment e.g. recovery, reorganisation, reinvestment in a new interest. This stage may take approximately one to three years.

Note: The duration of each stage is only an approximation. However, a much longer duration may indicate chronic grief which should be addressed.

**5 minutes
PPT 10**

Purpose of Phases of Grief Recovery

Each phase of grief has a purpose.

Phase one prevents the person being overwhelmed by the pain/sorrow and allows time to develop coping mechanisms to deal with the loss.

Phase two is the expression of grief.

Phase three is the acceptance of the new reality.

Note: Anticipatory grief is expressed in advance of a loss which is seen as inevitable, e.g. with an aged person or pet or when a terminal diagnosis has

been made. When death occurs, much of the grief may have already been expended.

2 minutes
PPT 11

Grief Cycles of Emotional Energy

In the early stages the person is consumed by grief and is only just surviving. The person may not eat, not clean up and not care about anything else around him/her.

2 minutes
PPT 12

In the second stage the person puts increased energy into looking after him/herself, however grief is still a significant part of life.

2 minutes
PPT 13

In the third stage the person is putting the same amount of energy into surviving. Grief is reduced a little and people start life enhancement (LE) activities such as taking an interest in people and hobbies.

2 minutes
PPT 14

In the fourth stage the person finds that life enhancement activities fill more of life. However there is always a wedge of grief which is often felt most during anniversaries.

2 minutes
PPT 15

Closing the Topic

Check with participants that all the information was provided by recapping this final slide.

- 5 Stages of grief
- 3 phases of grief recovery
- Purpose of phases
- Grief cycles of emotional energy

If there is time ask for any last minute questions.

- Hand out an evaluation form if required.
- Thank participants for their attendance and provide them with your contact telephone number or brochure if they should need to follow up with you.

References

<http://www.recover-from-grief.com/7-stages-of-grief.html>

Weber, Z.A. 2001, *Good Grief*, Double Bay: Margaret Gee

Worden, J.W. 2003, *Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner*, Third Ed. Springer Publishing Company, New York.

MODULE 2 – TOPIC 3 – MANAGING GRIEF

Intro:	Introduction: Module 2 Topic 3 - Managing Grief
5 Minutes PPT 1	<p>The primary focus of Module 2 is on older men and the challenges that grief and loss can bring in the later stages of life.</p> <p>While the module can be presented as a stand-alone package it is intended to complement other modules, all of which play an integral part of the training program. The entire Module aims to provide volunteers with information about key grief and loss issues for older men and offer skills in addressing them.</p> <p>These issues covered in all 5 topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general overview of grief and loss • Stages and phases of grieving • Managing grief • Men’s grieving processes • Supporting grieving men.
2 minutes PPT 2	<p>The Focus of the Topic</p> <p>In this session we will be covering the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose and task of grieving • Recognising grief • Dealing with loss • Warning signs of complicated grief • Some practical coping strategies
10 minutes PPT 3	<p>The Task of Grieving</p> <p>We have previously discussed the stages of grief and how these stages are a typical and normal process for the person involved in grief and loss to go through. We have also discussed the time phases of grief, being a typical experience of time that it takes to heal from a significant loss.</p> <p>William J. Worden describes four tasks of grieving which he uses to explain how the grieving person may become involved in their healing process and actively participate in passing through the phases of grief, rather than sitting back passively waiting for time to heal all things. Worden does not mean to suggest that you can speed up the mourning process by completing the tasks</p>

more quickly. Rather he suggests that until the four tasks have been addressed, mourning will continue.

There are four tasks of grieving according to Worden:

1. Acceptance of the reality of the loss – this first task is about facing head on the reality that the person is dead and gone and will not be returning. For some people, denial of the death may continue for a short while but the person should be able to face up to it soon after. Prolonged denial is cause for concern and the person may need grief therapy to assist them through this first task.
2. Working through the emotions of grief – the sheer force and nature of the emotions associated with the loss of the loved one is something that many newly bereaved people are unprepared for. It is necessary to acknowledge and work through this pain or it can manifest itself through physical symptoms or some form of aberrant behaviour. Anything that allows the person to avoid or suppress this pain will delay the task of mourning.
3. Adjusting to the new environment where the deceased is missing. The 3 key adjustments are:
 - a) External adjustments: how the death affects one's everyday functioning in the world, for example, the roles that the deceased person played which now have to be learnt by the person left behind.
 - b) Internal adjustments: how the death affects one's sense of self, for example, how the death affects the person's self esteem or sense of self-efficacy. The person may have seen themselves as one half of a couple but now need to see themselves as an entire person in their own right and on their own.
 - c) Spiritual adjustments: how the death affects one's beliefs, values and assumptions about the world; for example whether the person searches for meaning in the loss and how this might challenge their view of the world.
4. Reinvesting emotional energy in new relationships: This task involves the person finding a way to be connected with the deceased but in a way that will not preclude him or her from going with life. This is often the most difficult task to accomplish for many people. People may get stuck in this phase and later realise that their life in some way stopped at the point the

loss occurred. However it can be accomplished.

5 minutes
PPT 4

How to Recognise Grief

Because it is unique, grief can be expressed in many different ways. There are four main categories: Our feelings, thoughts, behaviour and physical well being. Examples are given below and these are by no means complete. Everyone's response is different and should be respected.

1. **Feelings:** Common emotions may range from shock, numbness, horror, sadness, devastation, exhaustion, worry, anxiety, depression, loneliness, hopelessness, feeling suicidal, shame, betrayal and even relief (this is often followed by guilt).
2. **Thoughts:** The range of thoughts or cognitions include disbelief, confusion, forgetfulness, self-blame, memory loss, hallucinations, obsessions, ideas of suicide, pre-occupation with lost object, dreams, nightmares & disillusionment with our view of the world.
3. **Behaviour:** This may include being agitated, angry, crying, social withdrawal, inappropriate joking, lethargy, sleep walking, hyper-activity, eating and drinking alcohol to excess, taking drugs, lack of personal care, taking risks.
4. **Physical Signs & Symptoms:** Perspiring, vomiting, dry mouth, shortness of breath, fainting, headache, shaking, insomnia, loss of appetite, fatigue and exhaustion.

5 minutes
PPT 5

Dealing with your loss



It is important that grief is dealt with as soon as possible as further loss compounds the grief even more and can lead to severe depression. Speak to someone about your loss and feelings of grief – a psychologist or a well-qualified grief counsellor. It may be difficult and ineffective with a friend who perhaps does not understand how you feel, or a family member who is also grieving. Grief needs to be addressed, no matter what the cause. There is no shame in grief counselling; it really can alleviate the pain of loss. Look for qualified professionals.

5 minutes
PPT 6

The Aims of Counselling

1. To contain and reduce your emotional pain
2. To help you express your grief in a private, non-threatening environment
3. To understand and validate your feelings
4. To offer support and help you adjust to the new reality (*Helmond, 2006*)

10 minutes
PPT 7 and
8

Warning Signs of Complicated Grief

Complicated grief occurs when the person fails to grieve. This may happen for many different reasons including the type of relationship the person had with the deceased, the circumstances surrounding the loss, historical factors related to previous complicated grief reactions, personality and social factors.

We will look at some of the more common warning signs that indicate a person may be in complicated grief.

- Denial of feelings about the loss; no external signs of grieving – as if nothing had happened
- Being unable to talk fully about, acknowledge, or express the loss, or express feelings about it. Can't seem to be able to cry
- Unending, unchanging or prolonged distress, sadness, depression or guilt. Still intensely preoccupied with the person who died
- Acting out of character:
 - Making major changes in lifestyle or activities
 - With money, such as spending extravagantly
 - By being sexually promiscuous
- Self neglect: disinterest in personal appearance, eating properly or taking prescribed medication
- Excessive use of alcohol or sedatives
- Feeling agitated, restless, or manic
- Prolonged lethargy, fatigue; noticeable physical and mental slowing down
- Hearing voices or seeing strange things other than hearing or momentarily seeing the deceased person.

Warning Signs of Complicated Grief (cont.)

- Exhibiting symptoms once those of the deceased
- Have become very absorbed in, and preoccupied with, helping and supporting others

- Using work (working more than before and most of the time) or some other activity, as a way of keeping busy; ‘getting on with things’, in order not to have to feel the pain of grief
- Unnerving fear (or phobia) about illness or death
- Being careless, reckless, taking unnecessary risks (e.g. driving fast or dangerously)
- Having thoughts about suicide, death, or self-harm
- Feeling strong guilt about things other than actions taken or not taken at the time of death
- Have been functioning very poorly for a prolonged period
- Strongly fixated on self worthlessness

10 minutes
PPT 9 and
10

Practical Coping Strategies



- Get some time to yourself each day to reflect.
- Write down your thoughts.
- Spend time with supportive people.
- Have a good cry.
- Take one day at a time.

Practical Coping Strategies



- Avoid making major decisions for the first year.
- Talk about the person with others.
- Write letters to the person.
- Create a memorial.
- Commemorate them on special days.

2 minutes
PPT 11

Closing the Topic

Check with participants that all the information was provided by recapping this final slide.

- The purpose and task of grieving
- Recognising grief
- Dealing with loss
- Warning signs of complicated grief

- Some practical coping strategies

If there is time ask for any last minute questions.

- Hand out an evaluation form if required.
- Thank participants for their attendance and provide them with your contact telephone number or brochure if they should need to follow up with you.

References

Ashfield, J. 2008 *Taking Care of Yourself and Your Family: A resource book for good mental health*, Peacock Publications, South Australia.

http://www.elizabethhelmond.com.au/about_grief.html

Worden, W.J., 1991 *Grief Counselling & Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner*, Third Ed. Springer Publications, New York.

MODULE 2 – TOPIC 4 – MEN’S GRIEF PROCESSES

Intro:	Introduction: Module 2 Topic 4 - Men’s Grief Processes
5 Minutes PPT 1	<p>The primary focus of Module 2 is on older men and the challenges that grief and loss can bring in the later stages of life.</p> <p>While the module can be presented as a stand-alone package it is intended to complement other modules, all of which play an integral part of the training program. The entire Module aims to provide volunteers with information about key grief and loss issues for older men and offer skills in addressing them.</p> <p>These issues covered in all 5 topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general overview of grief and loss • Stages and phases of grieving • Managing grief • Men’s grieving processes • Supporting grieving men.
2 minutes PPT 2	<p>The Focus of the Topic</p> <p>In this session we will be examining the methods that men use to grieve and how they can support themselves during the grief process.</p>
10 minutes PPT 3	<p>Men and women tend to grieve in different ways.</p> <p>Every person will grieve in their own unique way and men and women tend to use different methods of grieving. In order for men to receive the type of support they need, it is important to understand how their way of grieving differs from that of women. Due to differences in the male biology (such as brain functions and structures and hormonal systems) and in conjunction with the roles that society has placed on men (provider / hunter / strong-silent type), men require different types of support for their grief and will use different methods to cope.</p> <p>Women tend to grieve openly, giving expression to their feelings and emotions and actively seeking out support for themselves and supporting each other.</p> <p>Men tend not to seek out help as actively as women and distance themselves</p>

from the emotional content of their grief in order to remain in control and vigilant towards others. Men need more time and have to make a more conscious effort to connect with their emotions.

They often prefer more privacy in order to 'mull things over'. They may also exhibit more anger than women do in relation to their grief and will resist pressure to be public with their grieving.

Men benefit much from the company of other men (or working alongside other men), not necessarily in order to discuss their grief but just to have another man 'present' who cares but doesn't intrude.

10 minutes
PPT 4

How do men's roles affect how they experience and respond to their emotions and grief?



- The protector / provider role of men puts pressure on them to be seen as not caring too much about their own emotional pain.
- Therefore they are often reliant on women for emotional stability.

In addition men:

- May tend not to be as self caring emotionally as women
- May have to connect more consciously with their emotions or grief than women need to do
- May need privacy and a sense of being personally safe before they can face their emotions
- May need time away or alone to think things through, or to express their emotions
- May exhibit and express more anger than women appear to do
- Will likely not respond favourably to being expected to be more public or obvious in their emotions than they feel comfortable with
- May tend to move in and out of their grief issues and emotions more than women appear to do
- Can often achieve the same progress in grieving through ritual activities (such as doing or making something) as women, who may talk and cry out their grief
- May be more comfortable expressing their grief through action and activity (including thinking things through)

Ref: Grieflink

10 minutes
PPT 5

How can grieving men best help themselves?

- By showing courage in allowing themselves to experience the painful emotions of grief (rather than pushing them underground)
- By communicating clearly to others their need to be alone and to deal with their feelings in private
- By not shutting others out, but keeping communication open in their relationships
- By tuning into their bodies (because feelings that have built up can often be discovered there and released into experience)
- By consciously using rituals and activity through which to express and work with their grief
- By slowing down and making time for being reflective and to connect with their grief (making time to grieve in order for there to be time to heal)
- By staying close to reliable friends and talking to them
- By making time to garden or be out in the natural environment
- By keeping up good health through moderate exercise, good food and plenty of sleep and not consuming too much alcohol

Ref: Grieflink

5 minutes
PPT 6

Things that may be helpful when grieving



Accepting your feelings

There is no right or wrong way to feel after losing someone you care about. Accepting the feelings you have and acknowledging you are going through a stressful experience may be helpful in managing your reactions. Many people wrongly think the intensity of their feelings means they are going mad.

It's okay to smile:

After you have lost someone it may be helpful to talk about the memories and good times you have had with that person. There are likely to be many happy memories and fun times. It is OK, to enjoy those memories and have a laugh about the fun you have shared. This is not a sign that you miss the person any less.

Saying goodbye is important

Part of the grieving process is letting go of the person who has died. Saying goodbye to the person helps you to do this. You may want to do this by:

writing a letter, going to the funeral, having your own memorial service. It is important to say goodbye in your own way and in your own time. There is no right or wrong way for doing this.

Avoid bottling things up

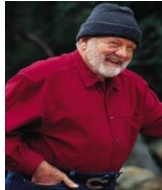
Keeping things to yourself may mean that the tension builds up inside you. Finding a way to express how you are feeling may help you to feel better. You may like to talk to someone, write your thoughts down, draw or punch some pillows.

Having a massage may be a nice way to help you release some of that tension that can build within you.

Ref: Reach Out

10 minutes
PPT 7

Self Care Strategies



Self care is important to prevent further stress to the body. The following have been found to be helpful in coping with grief:

- A regular daily routine. Have set times for getting up, meals and going to bed.
- A balanced diet. Include: breads and cereals; meat, fish and dairy products; fruit and vegetables.
- Avoid too much coffee and tea to help you sleep at night.
- Outdoor activities, such as going for a walk or gardening take you away from the stress, and refresh you mentally.
- Exercise, such as swimming, walking and team games, will produce chemicals called endorphins in the body which help to counteract depression and make you feel good. The exercise does not need to be strenuous. If you have doubts about your fitness consult your doctor.
- Relaxation: meditation, massage, music.
- A relaxing pre-sleep routine: winding down before bed and not watching television.
- Avoiding seeking relief through alcohol, smoking, medication and other drugs.
- Consulting the doctor about physical symptoms, for a blood pressure check, for practical help, for medical certificates, and for help with the grief.

Be patient, tolerant and gentle with yourself as you grieve.

5 minutes
PPT 8

More Strategies

- Live one day at a time.
- Do something special for yourself every day.
- Do NOT make any major decisions, such as selling the house, in the first year if possible.
- Talk to a caring friend, pastor or counsellor.
- Join a bereavement support group.
- Read books on grief.
- Write letters to the person you have lost to express your feelings or as a way of saying goodbye. You can then keep these in a safe place, or bury them under a bush you plant in their memory, or scatter the pieces in a significant place.
- Keep a journal as a record of your own journey of grief.
- Commemorate the person you lost on special days, such as birthdays, Christmas, Father's day. Light a candle, drink their favourite bottle of wine and talk about them. Then go and do something special for yourselves – you deserve it! Plan these activities with the rest of the family.

2 minutes
PPT 9

Closing the Topic

Check with participants that all the information was provided by recapping this final slide.

Did We Cover Everything?

- How women and men grieve differently
- Men helping themselves
- Self care strategies

If there is time ask for any last minute questions.

- Hand out an evaluation form if required.
- Thank participants for their attendance and provide them with your contact telephone number or brochure if they should need to follow up with you.

References

<http://www.grieflink.asn.au/men.html>

Reach Out! – Suggestions for managing grief <http://www.reachout.com.au>

http://www.dva.gov.au/health/menshealth/04_grief.htm

MODULE 2 – TOPIC 5 – SUPPORTING GRIEVING MEN

Intro:	Introduction: Module 2 Topic 5 - Supporting Grieving Men
5 Minutes PPT 1	<p>The primary focus of Module 2 is on older men and the challenges that grief and loss can bring in the later stages of life.</p> <p>While the module can be presented as a stand-alone package it is intended to complement other modules, all of which play an integral part of the training program. The entire Module aims to provide volunteers with information about key grief and loss issues for older men and offer skills in addressing them.</p> <p>These issues covered in all 5 topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general overview of grief and loss • Stages and phases of grieving • Managing grief • Men’s grieving processes • Supporting grieving men
2 minutes PPT 2	<p>The Focus of the Topic</p> <p>In this session we will be discussing how to support men in grief and what to be aware of as a support person.</p>
10 minutes PPT 3	<p>Supporting Someone Else</p> <p>The following suggestions are a basic guide for helping someone else to cope with grief.</p> <p>Provide practical assistance. Often more than anything else, a bereaved person appreciates help with practical things such as work related tasks and responsibilities (mending fence, getting a tractor in for repair, dealing with stock issues), childcare, bill paying, mowing a lawn, domestic chores or cooking. It may ring hollow to wish a person well if what they are most needful of is practical help.</p> <p>Don’t be afraid to visit and ask how they are, or to mention the deceased. Maintain contact, preferably in person, but also consider using a telephone, or sending a note or card. Support is often needed most once all the initial activity has subsided (after the funeral), and numbness gives way to raw painful emotion (sometimes persisting for several months).</p>

Talk about the person who has died using straight-forward language

Be aware of particular dates, anniversaries or times of the year that might be upsetting to the bereaved. Be available, call in and see them, telephone or send a card, to indicate your care and support.

Try your best to be a good listener: Maintain concentration, be patient, and show by your body language, eye contact and attentiveness, that you are interested.

Accept their behaviour (unless it is unsafe) and their ways of dealing with the emotional pain of grief. Allow for emotion, expressions of blame, guilt, anger, and regret. Just let it be; just be present.

If it seems appropriate and needful, offer the comments (not advice) that:

- Grief takes time (just like a physical wound, that is painful before healing)
- That everyone grieves in their own way and in their own time

10 minutes
PPT 4

Discussion

Facilitator's Notes: It might be useful to divide the group into smaller groups of 3-5 at this stage and ask each group to consider the questions below. They can jot down any ideas or suggestions on butcher's paper at their table and then share these ideas with the larger group. You will get a greater range of ideas this way which may be helpful to others in the group.



10 minutes
PPT 5

Questions for Participants:

- How have you successfully supported a grieving person?
- How would you like to be supported in your experience of grief and loss?

Things for Supporters to Know

- Respect the dignity and independence of the bereaved person. 'Put yourself in their shoes' and imagine, "how would I feel in these circumstances – being spoken to like this?"
- Avoid giving advice, but if a matter of safety is involved tell them clearly what your concerns are.
- Try not to talk about yourself, your own problems, or your own grief,

unless you are asked and, even then, be sparing in what you say.

- Don't say "I know how you feel." How you felt in *similar* circumstances was not exactly the same.
- Avoid lecturing or imparting theory about grief. You could give them something to read on grief if you think they would be receptive to that.
- Avoid suggesting any time frame about the duration of their grief.
- Don't trivialise their grief ("Everybody experiences grief") and don't catastrophise their grief ("It's a terrible thing. Some people never get over it").

5 minutes
PPT 6

Additional points for further discussion.

Facilitator's Notes: If there is time, you may wish to add these additional points for further discussion if they haven't come up already.

- Before you offer support, decide what your commitment will be. It is most unhelpful to withdraw your support along the way because you're not really committed or because you find their emotion too uncomfortable.
- Avoid using clichés or platitudes; these most often come across as insincere and patronising.
- Don't give false assurances or talk a lot because the situation feels awkward for you.
- Don't take over, and don't 'rescue'. The last thing a person needs is to have to expend energy on avoiding unwanted help, or figuring out how to tell a well meaning rescuer to leave them be!
- Be conscious of not shifting the focus away from the bereaved person because what they are saying is tedious, uninteresting, or uncomfortable.
- Though the content of what they say may be repetitious and full of familiar emotion, they may be helped considerably by being able to express it to someone they trust.

10 minutes
PPT 7

Discussion

Facilitator's Notes: Given the number of points raised during this segment, it might be useful for the group to have a moment of quiet reflection on which of these points are important for them to remember on a personal level. Then

ask them to share these with the person next to them if they are not too personal. We share these points with others because speaking about awareness that we have made about ourselves helps to solidify it in our unconscious and makes it more likely that we will remember that it was important to us.



5 minutes
PPT 8

Questions for Participants:

- Which of the mentioned supporter awareness points do you think are important for you?

Local Back-Up Support

- TOMNET 4638 9080
- Lifeline 131114
- Mensline 1300 78 99 78 (24/7hrs)
- Salvo Crisis Line 1300 363 622
- Suicide Callback Service 1300 659 467 (10.30am – 8.30pm)
- Depression Support Network 4638 0112 (10.00am – 12pm)

2 minutes
PPT 9

Closing the Topic

Check with participants that all the information was provided by recapping this final slide.

2 minutes
PPT 10

Did We Cover Everything?

- Supporting someone else
- Things supporters need to know
- Local back-up support services

If there is time ask for any last minute questions.

- Hand out an evaluation form if required.
- Thank participants for their attendance and provide them with your contact telephone number or brochure if they should need to follow up with you.

References:

Ashfield, J. 2008 *Taking Care of Yourself and Your Family: A resource book for good mental health*, Peacock Publications, South Australia.