



The De-Stress Press

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The Western New York Stress Reduction Program Newsletter

3359 Broadway, Cheektowaga, NY 14227

Out of clutter, find simplicity. From discord, find harmony. In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.
~Albert Einstein~

Help With Grief and Grieving

By Dan McGuire, FAAETS, BCETS

The loss of someone who is special to you can be a very difficult experience. When we lose someone close to us (personal family or work family) we can experience many emotions, feelings and reactions. Some of these responses can include shock, disbelief, denial, sadness, anger, hopelessness, personal pain, fear and, at the right time, acceptance. These reactions can often become intense, especially if the loss is unexpected or tragic in nature.

These feelings and emotions are to be expected, should be seen as individualized to each person, and not be viewed as wrong if another person is not feeling or reacting the same way. As individuals, each of us will experience a loss differently from our peers, our family members and those we work with. We as individuals will each mourn and grieve differently too, since we are just that— individuals.

A sudden loss can be a particular source of increased pain, sadness and the other emotions listed above. We tend to feel guilty or partly responsible for the loss since we feel that we 'didn't do enough' to help, we didn't tell the person how we felt about them, and we regret not having more time with them.

Steps to help you move through this experience include:

- Recognize the loss and understand that it has occurred.
- Allow for your own feelings and emotions. This is not the time to allow others to dictate how to feel, react or what to say.
- Recall the times you did have with the person and find comfort in the positive experiences you have gained from knowing them.
- Begin to realize and accept that your life will be different without them.
- Find time for yourself to begin the acceptance of the loss, realize that you feel sad, angry or are in disbelief that they are now gone. (continued on page 2)



Fast Facts

- ❖ Generally it takes 18-24 months to stabilize after the death of a loved one. It can take longer when the death was a violent one.
- ❖ Most people report physical symptoms that accompany grief.
- ❖ Use of support systems and reliance on spiritual practices are two of the most effective means of promoting healing and recovery.

- Also realize that you will have to re-adjust to the loss and that this takes TIME! We will all process and proceed through the loss at our own pace and others may 'bounce back' sooner or may take longer. Peer support at a time like this can be invaluable!
- Put yourself first by eating sensibly, getting adequate rest, reduce caffeine, sugars and fats, increase the amounts of water you drink and get some moderate exercise to help relieve a portion of the stresses you may be experiencing.
- **Asking for this level of help does not in any way mean that you are crazy, weak or that there is something wrong. It means that you cared about the person who died.**

In summary, the death of someone close to us is a very sad and painful encounter. Realizing that our close friend, loved one or spouse is no longer with us can be frightening and traumatic. However, using this basic advice can assist you through this difficult time. It is completely normal to miss that special person and think about them often. As the days ahead turn into weeks and months, you will be able to work through this sense of loss and grief. We ask that if you know of someone who is experiencing grief and may be having difficulty, please share this informative article with them.

Dan McGuire, President of CISM Perspectives, has 27 years experience as an EMT and 15 years experience as a CISM responder. He is a Board Certified Expert in Traumatic Stress, a Certified Grief Counselor, and a Fellow of the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress. Please visit Dan's website at: www.cismperspectives.com

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

This month's issue of the newsletter deals with grief and grieving. It is a universal emotion that we deal with many times in our life as individuals and as Peer Counselors during interventions. It is not something that just goes away. Grief is part of the healing process that we need to actively deal with. This issue provides advice on how to cope following a significant loss. Have a safe and happy summer. We are proud to be serving Wyoming, Erie, Niagara, and Genesee Counties. Stay safe and if you need us, call us - we'll be there.

~ Michael Walters, Executive Director ~

How You Can Help

The Western New York Stress Reduction Program, Inc. is a proud participant in the United Way of Buffalo & Erie County *Community Care* Campaign and Donor Choice program for 2007. The United Way *Community Care* Campaign provides donors with a unique opportunity to support a diverse network of human services. A gift to United Way *Community Care* ensures that critical needs are met in the community. In addition to your gift to United Way *Community Care*, you may consider adding a gift designated to the Western New York Stress Reduction Program.

How to Contact the Team

Information & Education: 716-681-6070
 Immediate Assistance:
 Erie County: 716-898-3696
 Genesee County: 585-343-3313
 Niagara County: 716-898-3696
 Wyoming County: 585-786-8867
 Website: www.erie.gov/depts/wnystress
 Email: wnystress@yahoo.com

Additional Resources

www.hospicebuffalo.org
www.griefnet.org
www.istss.org

Training Opportunities

August 24th & 25th, 2007: *Stress Management*
 September 21st & 22nd, 2007: *Assisting Individuals in Crisis*
 October 12th & 13th, 2007: *CISM: Group Crisis Intervention*
 Please contact Cheryl Kennedy at 716-829-2975 x609 or clk2@buffalo.edu for registration information.