



International
School Counselor Association

Grief and Loss, Transitions, and Hope during a Pandemic

July 7, 2020

TAISM Counselor/Parent Coffee Hour Summer Series 2020

Goals of today

- Continue to support self-care for you and your families
- Grief (anticipatory grief)/Transitions
- Pandemic of grief and mourning
- Nurturing hope
- Resources/tools to help

*Be aware of your current sensitivities. Grief can be many things (examples that have already come up).

Check In / Check Out

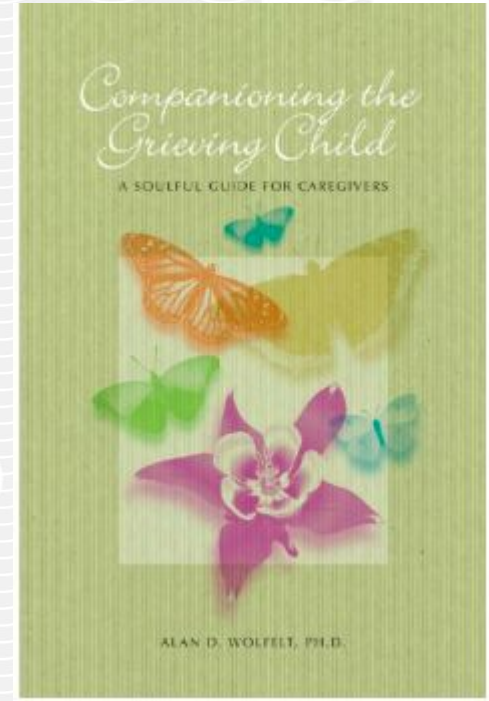
- Since the pandemic started, can you share a time you or your child experienced feelings of grief or loss?

This Pandemic of Grief

- Supporting each other - many wonderful resources and experts:
 - [That Discomfort You're Feeling is Grief](#) (anticipatory grief information)
 - [David Kessler and Brené Brown on Grief and Finding Meaning](#)
 - [In the Time of Corona: Strategies for Grief & Loss, Transitions & Celebrations, Giving and Gratitude](#) (ISCA Article)
 - [Families First - Grief Resources During Covid 19](#)

This Pandemic of Grief

- Dr. Alan Wolfelt's thoughts ([This Pandemic of Grief](#))
 - We grieve when:
 - Attachments are harmed
 - Experience / Feel
 - shock, disbelief
 - worries, fear
 - sad, lonely, angry
 - guilty, regretful
 - Sum total of all of this is our grief
 - Anticipatory grief...[That Discomfort You're Feeling is Grief](#)



This Pandemic of Grief

- Our pandemic grief will:
 - *“change from day to day and week to week. This virus is fast. As it sweeps across continents and we collectively take action to “flatten the curve,” new rules and limitations are popping up every day. Restrictions are mounting and growing increasingly severe. As circumstances grow more dire, our grief will change.”*

This Pandemic of Grief

- To help ourselves emotionally, socially, and spiritually we need to mourn
 - *“Mourning is being aware of your grief, giving it the attention it needs and deserves, and expressing it outside of yourself.”*
 - *Acknowledge the reality of the pandemic as well as your grief*
 - *Honor all your feelings*
 - *Practice gratitude for the good in your life*
 - *Be kind to yourself*
 - *Search for meaning*
 - ***Reach out to others and give and accept support***
 - As we have already mentioned, sharing our resources and supporting each other in our TAISM community is important during this time.

All the Things We Have to Mourn Now

Six experts explain how to recognize the many new faces of grief during a pandemic

The loss of having answers to questions, the loss of a routine, the loss of freedom to go out and do what we please, the loss of being able to hug our loved ones and be with our friends—those are all major losses, and they have to do with the relationship between ourselves and the changing world. These losses are not the ones we have sympathy cards or rituals to deal with, and grief for these losses often gets stuck because there are no supports for it. When nobody notices or acknowledges it, that makes it so much harder for the people who are experiencing it. What we need to do now is name these losses. You can't cope with something until you have a name for it.

Pauline Boss, a professor emeritus of family social science at the University of Minnesota and the author of *Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live With Unresolved Grief*

Discussion

- What resonated most with you about the information shared on grief and loss?

Nurturing Hope

- Optimism: belief that things will get better, that there is a silver lining.
 - in and of itself, does not lead to change
- Hope (verb): belief that things can get better.
 - tied with **goals** and **agency**

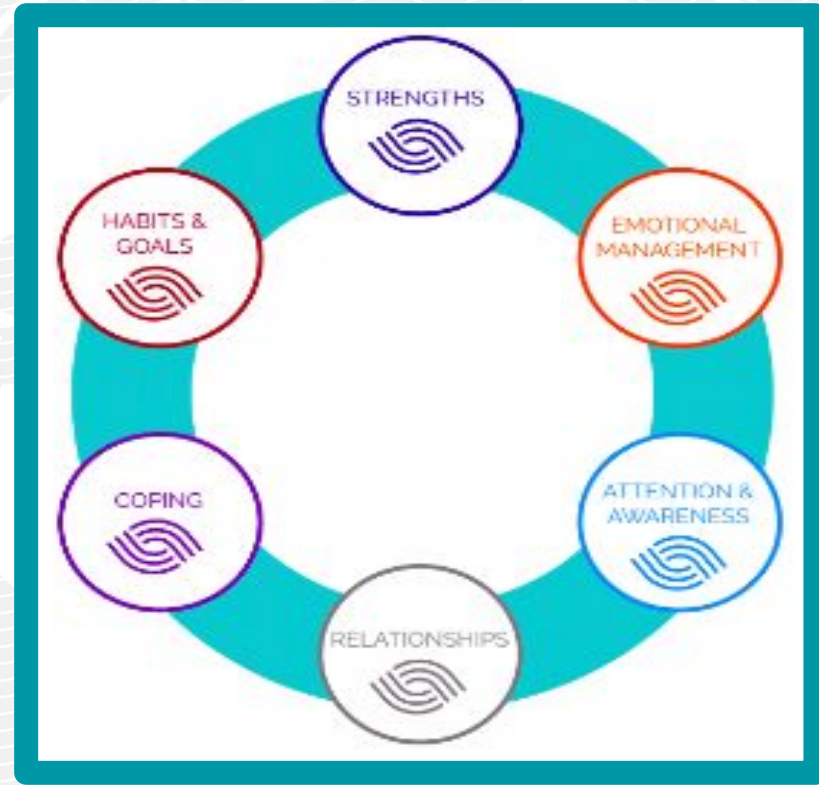
“In these uncertain times, we need a public narrative of hope, calm and resilience.”
-- Dr. Taha Sabri

Exercises to Nurture Hope

- *Visualize your best possible self one year from now. This might be your best self in a relationship, at work, in your community or just everyday life. Consider how to use your highest character strengths to reach your best possible self.*
- *Set a goal you would like to accomplish. Boost your hopeful thinking by writing down at least three ways to reach your goal, as well as the many reasons why you can reach it.*
- *Journal about one good event and one bad event in your life each week. Consider why the good events will last and the bad events will pass.*
- from Ryan Niemiec, Psy. D., www.viacharacter.org

Building Hope & Resilience

- [Visible Well-Being](#): Free online resource from Professor of Positive Psychology Dr. Lea Waters to build resilience during COVID-19 for teachers, students, & families
 - Strengths
 - Emotional Management
 - Attention & Awareness
 - Relationships
 - Coping
 - Habits & Goals
- The Guardian - The Good Place
 - [Dr. Lea Waters - Articles & Videos](#)



Other Tools to Build Hope & Resilience

- [Posttraumatic Growth](#): Positive change experienced from trauma.
 - -- *does not mean that the trauma was positive*
- [Upside of Stress](#): How you think about stress impacts how your body responds to stress
- [Navigating Transitions](#): Class taught through www.viacharacter.org
- [Family Calming Strategies](#)

Virtual Tools to Support Students and Families

- **Online Referrals** - helping families:
 - [Truman Group](#) (online counseling)
 - [Betterhelp.com](#) (online counseling)
 - [The Dougy Center](#) (resources and virtual support groups)
 - [Grief.com](#) (resources and virtual support groups)
 - Local resources - many Muscat resources providing virtual support

Talking to Your Children about Grief

- In addition to [The Dougy Center](#) and [Grief.com](#):
 - [Child Mind Institute - Supporting Families During COVID-19](#)
 - [Grief Resource Guide](#)
 - [The Grieving Process: Coping with Death \(Wellcast Video\)](#)
 - [Hope Again - Hope in Grief \(video\)](#)

Check In / Check Out

- Since the pandemic started, can you share a time you or your child experienced feelings of hope or gratitude?
- Share a takeaway about nurturing hope.

What's Up Next...

- Grit and Growth Mindset
 - “The Little Engine that Could”
 - Applying these concepts at this time in our life.

