


A S C A W E B I N A R S E R I E S



**AMERICAN
SCHOOL
COUNSELOR
ASSOCIATION**

Webinar When Grief Strikes: Using Mindfulness to Help the Grieving Student

Dr. Natalie Spencer & Dr. Lee Edmondson Grimes
January 5, 2018

A S C A W E B I N A R S E R I E S



**AMERICAN
SCHOOL
COUNSELOR
ASSOCIATION**

Who Are We?

- Dr. Natalie Spencer
- Dr. Lee Grimes





Learning outcomes

- Upon completion of this webinar you should be able to:
 - Identify the different types of grief
 - Develop an understanding of mindfulness
 - Discuss different types of grief and mindfulness techniques
 - Develop a small group for grieving students



Who Are You?

- Please indicate which age group you work?
 - 1. Elementary
 - 2. Middle School
 - 3. High School
 - 4. K-12
 - 5. K-8
 - 6. Other



Demographics

- Where is your school located
 - A. Urban
 - B. Suburban
 - C. Rural



- What are the types of loss your students experience?





Types of Grief

- Anticipatory Grief- Prolonged illness(cancer) or memory impairment (Alzheimer's). Start grieving the loss of “former self” long before death
- Sudden Loss- Happens suddenly, unexpectedly, traumatic. Generates shock and confusion




Stages of Grief

7 Stages of Grief

(Modified Kubler-Ross Model)

Shock*	• Initial paralysis at hearing the bad news.
Denial	• Trying to avoid the inevitable.
Anger	• Frustrated outpouring of bottled-up emotion.
Bargaining	• Seeking in vain for a way out.
Depression	• Final realization of the inevitable.
Testing*	• Seeking realistic solutions.
Acceptance	• Finally finding the way forward.

*The model is extended slightly from the original Kubler-Ross model, which does not explicitly include the Shock and Testing stages. These stages however are often useful to understand and facilitate change.




AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

ASCA WEBINAR SERIES

NO!

Grief is not linear!



AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

ASCA WEBINAR SERIES

Grief and Children

Children will have grief “bursts” followed by play and normal activities.

Children may not be able to verbalize how they feel.

Instead they demonstrate feeling through play and behavior.



What are some examples of this behavior?

Sadness

Anger

Regression - i.e. bedwetting when potty trained



Grief and Children



Before Age 5- Most children do not realize people will die, including themselves

By Age 9 most children develop an understanding of death and the person is not coming back. Death is final



Grief and Teens

In adolescence, anger allows teens to counteract grief.

Watch for *suicide risk*



Grief and Teens

- **Self esteem** and **identity** issues. In adolescence, anger allows them to counteract grief. Watch for suicide risk.
- Feelings of **guilt**, forced to address issues for which they are not developmentally prepared.
- *Body language* and acting out which can lead to **poor** school performance.



What is Mindfulness?



Mindfulness and Grief

Mindfulness is becoming aware of the present
Goes beyond meditation and yoga
Goal is to experience each day fully and become
aware of your feelings and emotions

*DON'T IGNORE YOUR
THOUGHTS*



Mindfulness is a mental push up!



It takes practice to build strength!



Mindfulness and Grief

Techniques

DEEP BREATHING
BODY SCAN
GUIDED IMAGERY
MINDFUL WALKING
MINDFUL COLORING
EXPLORING EMOTIONS
BOUNCING BACK



Let's look at an example activity

Mindful Walking for Grief-

Use a script or repeat a mantra
 Help relax and focus on thoughts. Use deep breathing.



Mindfulness and Grief Case Study

Kelly is in 4th grade and her dog , Gizmo died suddenly three weeks ago. Gizmo was the family dog and has been with the family since Kelly was a baby. Kelly is heartbroken. Her father told you about Gizmo's death. You met with Kelly and she burst into tears at the mention of Gizmo's name. You give Kelly a tissue. What are some mindful techniques you can use?

AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION ASCA WEBINAR SERIES

How to Help Kelly?

Sit with her & Sit in silence

Introduce mindful breathing

Slowly breath in and out
Or
Use the mindful Walking Activity

What else?



AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION ASCA WEBINAR SERIES

School Counselors and Grief

Remind students school is a safe place to grieve
Talk about death

Learn about grief
Get help! Visit local hospice and religious organizations - if desired and welcomed.



Developing a Small Group

Create a small group where you introduce stages of grief and mindfulness techniques.

Goal is to help students learn how to regulate feelings and grief

Screening is important- Some students at different stages of grief/ development



Group Outline

Introduction

Loss Profile

Stages of Loss/Grief

Introduce Mindfulness

Decision Making

Support Network



AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

ASCA WEBINAR SERIES

Wall of Gratitude



A photograph of a 'Wall of Gratitude' featuring a large number of colorful sticky notes pinned to a brown corkboard. A white sign at the top center reads 'Give Thanks'.

AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION

ASCA WEBINAR SERIES

Find more Resources

<http://bit.ly/2tpVD5M>

Natalie Spencer- nfspence@ncat.edu
Lee Edmondson Grimes- legrimes@valdosta.edu



Thank you

