

# FINDING HOPE IN LOSS

# LOSS

- ◎ All CHANGE produces LOSS
- ◎ All LOSS produces GRIEF
- ◎ GRIEF is painful

# ATTITUDES TOWARD GRIEF

- ◉ Most commonly associated with death
- ◉ Fast paced culture >
  - “So get over it already!”
- ◉ Little social guidance

# ATTITUDES TOWARD DEATH

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- Several generations since we experienced death routinely
- Death separated from the mainstream of life
- Death Institutions
  - Hospitals,
  - Nursing Homes
  - Funeral Homes
- Sensationalized and less real contact

# WE GRIEVE IN A SOCIAL CONTEXT

- Among family and friends
- At work
- Within faith communities
- In the general culture

# GRIEF

## AFFECTS EVERYTHING

- ◉ Emotions / Feelings
- ◉ Thoughts
- ◉ Physical Sensations
- ◉ Behaviors
- ◉ Spiritual Well Being

# FEELINGS

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- Shock
- Numbness
- Relief
- Emancipation
- Sadness
- Yearning
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Anger
- Guilt
- Loneliness
- Helplessness
- Hopelessness
- Abandonment

# THOUGHTS

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- **Disbelief**
- **Confusion**
- **Inability to concentrate**
- **Preoccupation with thoughts of the loss**
- **Loss of control - "I'm going crazy!"**
- **Dreams**
- **Extra-ordinary experiences**



# PHYSICAL SENSATIONS

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- **Gastrointestinal Disturbances**
- **Heart palpations**
- **Tightness in chest**
- **Breathlessness**
- **Weakness and or tension in muscles**
- **Dry mouth**
- **Loss of sexual desire**

# BEHAVIORS

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- Sleep Disturbances
- Appetite Disturbances
- Crying
- Sighing
- Absent-minded Behavior
- Restless Over Activity
- Visiting or Avoiding places that remind one of the loss
- Social withdrawal
- Inability to initiate & maintain routine activities
- Taking on mannerisms or behaviors of deceased

# SPIRITUAL

- Values and expectations undermined
- Assumptions about life challenged
- Doubts about goodness and presence of God

# PHASES OF GRIEF

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● Avoidance

● Assimilation

● Accommodation



# THE BEREAVED

## NEED TO KNOW ...

- ◉ It is safe to talk about the pain, cry, ask questions, be angry
- ◉ They are not going crazy
- ◉ Survival and healing are possible
- ◉ They are not alone
- ◉ It is OK to heal.
- ◉ It will take a life time because everything has changed
- ◉ Help is available

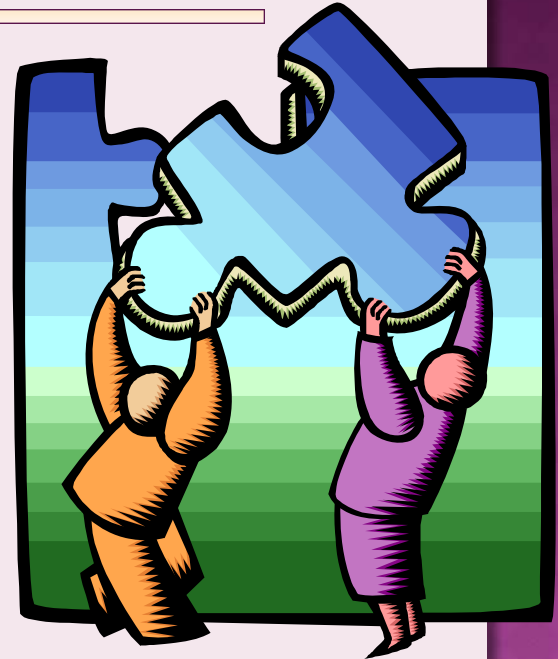
# RE-TELLING THE STORY

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- Re-Member

- Re-Frame

- Re-Focus



# RE-MEMBERING THE STORY

- Working through and releasing feelings
- Affirming the reality of loss
- Opening to the pain



# RE-MEMBERING SELF

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- **Acknowledge and explore one's pain, guilt and failure**
- **Honestly express feelings of despair and even suicidality**
- **Recognize personal strengths that have helped**



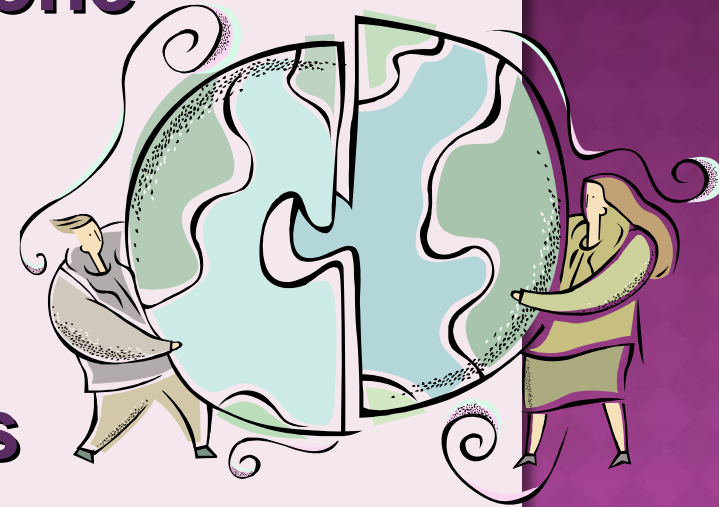
# RE-MEMBERING THE LOVED ONE

**Say the name of the loved one**

**Recalling strengths and accomplishments**

**Remembering funny stories and favorite activities**

**Recognizing the relationship continues in new and different ways**



# RE-FRAMING IN HOPE

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- ◉ Help is available
- ◉ It does get better
- ◉ Forget the big picture



# **RE-FOCUS ENERGY**

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**Finding the “New Normal”**

**Finding Meaning**

**Reaching Out**

# CONTACT INFORMATION

**C. Karen Covey Moore**  
**71 Harbor Drive, Apt. 8**  
**Claymont, DE 19703**

**302.798-1478- Home**  
**302-478-5707- Office**  
**302-650-0790-Cell**

**[chabereth@verizon.net](mailto:chabereth@verizon.net)**