

Dealing with Loss

Month: May

Week #: 35

Day: c. Wed. Time: 30 min.

Bringing Us to TEARs

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

Objectives/Aims

The students will: understand the grief work associated with the acronym, 'TEAR'; learn different ways to deal with their grief.

Materials

white board, marker, enough pencils and scrap paper for each student

Illustration

This boy and girl are experiencing the pain of their losses. How did they get this pain out?



Background

After the first step of a loss being accepted is completed, the next step involves what counselors commonly call "grief work." This grief work is best summarized and explained by the acronym **TEAR**:

T = To accept the reality of the loss (meshes with the final stage of Kubler-Ross's)

E = Experience the pain of the loss

A = Adjust to the new environment without the lost object (= attitude adjustment)

R = Reinvest in the new reality

Group Activity

1. Say, "Yesterday, you learned about what is involved in the initial acceptance of a loss, the five stages of Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. However, the process does not stop there. The next step involves what counselors call 'grief work.' They use the acronym TEAR (write acronym on the board) to help summarize and explain the process."

2. Say, "Yesterday we dealt with the first letter, 'T' which means: To accept the reality of the loss. When we finished yesterday, we ended with the person accepting his loss, which is the first stage in TEAR. Today we're going to deal with the second letter 'E', which means: Experience the pain of the loss. When we lose something special and dear to our hearts, we experience pain. If we 'shut off' the experiencing of this pain, it will usually still come out one way or another. Maybe we'll get angry and upset easily. Maybe we'll hit or kick those around us or call them names. It might even make us emotionally or physically sick. I (the author) had a highly gifted classmate in high school. He was so sad about the death of his brother that while attending a math contest at a college campus, he walked off the tenth floor balcony of a dormitory, killing himself. So it is important to deal with the pain, to get the pain out. This is a gross analogy, but it fits: when you're sick with the flu, and you feel like you're about to throw-up, how do feel right before you throw-up?"

Group Activity (continued)

A: Really sick or nauseous. “And how do you feel after you throw-up?” *A: You feel better.* “It’s the same way with grief. It’s often not pleasant getting the pain out, but when you do, you feel better. Maybe not totally healed, but better.”

3. Say, “I’m going to give each of you a pencil and a scrap piece of paper. On this piece of paper, I want you to either draw or write down all of the ways you use to get your grief out. Maybe you punch a pillow, maybe you talk to your sister, cry, etc. Get down as many ways as you can think of. Don’t worry about spelling or making perfect drawings. You have five minutes to complete this task. Go.”

4. Say, “Time’s up. Who would like to share some of their ideas?” List the ideas on the board. Make sure the list includes talking to parents or other adults. Especially be sure to affirm the idea of going to a professional counselor.

Group Discussion Questions

1. Which of these ways is the best way or the right way to get your pain out or to grieve?

A: There is not one ‘right’ or ‘best’ way to get your pain out. What works for one person might not work for another person. Just make sure that it does not physically hurt yourself, others or is destructive to things. If your pain does not lessen over time, then you should consider going to a counselor. When you’re physically sick you go to a doctor. When you’re emotionally sick and not getting better, you go to a grief counselor.

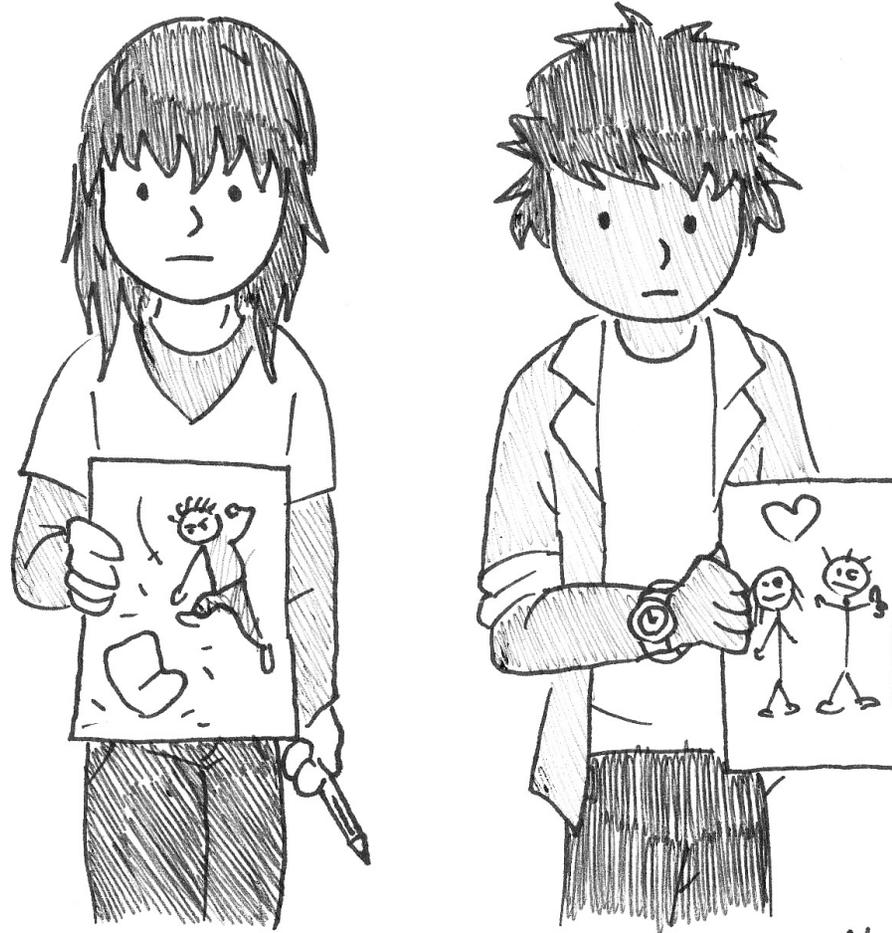
Variations/Extensions

Conclusion

Say, “Nobody likes getting sick, but it’s part of life. With time, sleep, plenty of fluids, and perhaps with the help of a physician, we get better. It’s the same way with grief. If we deal with the pain, we will feel better, we will be able smile again. Sometimes we need a grief counselor to help us get there.”

Dealing with Loss: Bringing Us to TEARs

T.E.A.R.



Lucas
Corcio
10/12/09

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How did they get this pain out?**