

Dealing with Loss

Month: May

Week #: 35

Day: d. Thur. Time: 30 min.

A Silver Lining

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

Objectives/Aims

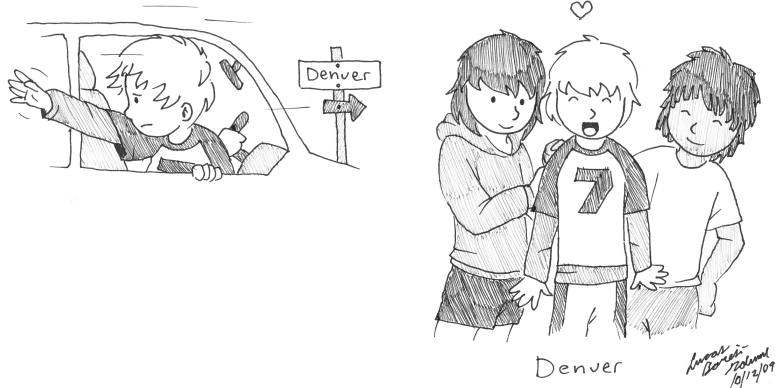
The students will: learn to adjust their attitudes so that they can once again enjoy life despite their loss.

Materials

white board, markers

Illustration

What does the saying, "Every cloud has a silver lining" mean for Number 7 as he moves from Rapid City, South Dakota to Denver, Colorado?



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

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, "Today we are going to continue our study of grief work and TEAR. Yesterday we dealt with the the 'E,' which stands for..." *A: Experience the pain of the loss.* "Yes, yesterday we explored all of the different ways that you can experience and deal with your grief. Next we're going to move on to 'A,' which means 'Adjust to the new environment without the lost object. To me (the author) this means that you need to start adjusting your attitude. Who can tell me what means to adjust your attitude? *A: In short, changing how you think about things changes how you see things, which changes your feelings.*"

2. Say, "By a show of hands, who has ever heard the metaphor, "every cloud has a silver lining"? For our purposes, we're going to imagine that the cloud represents the thoughts that you are thinking that are associated with your grief and pain. What kind of grief thoughts do you think you would have if you were grieving the loss of your pet dog?" List these thoughts under a dark cloud on the left side of the board. (e.g. I'll never see my dog again! I miss playing with my dog! etc.) "Now we're going to try and think of some 'silver lining' thoughts. In other words, what thoughts can you think that will help you remember your dog in a positive light and help you deal with your

Group Activity (continued)

dog not being with you anymore?” List these thoughts under the words, ‘silver lining’ on the right side of the board. (e.g. I’m so glad I got to spend so many years playing with my dog! My dog is in doggy heaven. I still can cuddle with my cat. etc.) “By thinking these silver lining thoughts, you can begin to cast a more positive light on your life.”

3. Take other types of loss (e.g. divorce, friend moving away, grandparent dying, losing your sight) and list both the ‘cloudy’ and ‘silver lining’ thoughts on the board.

Group Discussion Questions (Ask these question periodically as you discuss different types of loss.)

1. Is it Okay to have ‘cloudy’ thoughts?

A: Yes, they help us to grieve, as long as they’re not thoughts hurting ourselves, others or the environment.

2. Why is it also import to think ‘silver lining’ thoughts?

A: They help us to reshape our attitude so that we can once again enjoy life, even in the absence of that which was lost.

Variations/Extensions

Conclusion

Say, “It’s true. Every cloud does have a silver lining, but sometimes it’s hard to see it when we are in the midst of grieving. With time, adequate grieving and intentionally working to think positive thoughts, we can help recast our life so that we can smile again, even in spite of our loss.”

May 35 d. Thur.

Dealing with Loss: A Silver Lining



What does the saying, “Every cloud has a silver lining” mean for Number 7 as moves from Rapid City, South Dakota to Denver, Colorado?