



Slide Deck

Notes



The Grief of Gen Z in a Phone-Based World: Canaries in a Coal Mine

David Gladson, BCC, LMSW



The Grief
Of Gen Z in a
Phone-Based World

Canaries in the Coal Mine



Northeast Georgia Medical Center
HOSPICE

Hospice of Northeast Georgia Medical Center Bereavement Team

Jennifer Sorrells, LCSW
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Improving the health of our community in all we do!

- Grief 101 Community Education
- Children and Adolescent School Groups
- Summer Camp Braveheart for Children
- Specialized Groups (Anxiety, Daughters, etc)
- Intensive Education for Professionals and General Public
 - Georgia Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (GHPCO)
 - Annual Holiday Grief Seminar



Northeast Georgia Medical Center
HOSPICE

Introductions...

David B. Gladson, BCC, LMSW

Bereavement Counseling

Hospice/End of Life

Clinical Management

Behavioral Health

Certified Addictions Counselor (CACII)

CPE Hospital Residency

Board-Certified Chaplaincy (BCC)

Inpatient Psychiatric/Substance Abuse

NICU/Neuro, ICU, CCU

Masters in Religious Education

Minister of Youth, Children, and Students

Masters in Social Work at UGA with MFT



Gen Alpha

Gen X

Gen Z

Gen Y



Who are you?

- What roles and fields are represented?
- What schools? Ages?
- How many are you caring for?
- What is your experience with suffering both personally and professionally?





Builders
Born: 1925-1945



Baby Boomers
Born: 1946-1964



Generation X
Born: 1965-1979



Generation Y
Born: 1980-1994



Generation Z
Born: 1995-2009



Gen Alpha
Born: 2010-2024



Listening to deeply understand...

"Listening with empathy means you listen in such a way that the other feels you are really listening, really understanding, hearing with your whole being – with your heart... Only that can give him a feeling of relief."

Deep listening, compassionate listening is not listening with the purpose of analyzing or even uncovering what has happened in the past. You listen first of all in order to give the person relief, a chance to speak out, to feel that someone finally understands him or her. Deep listening is the kind of listening that helps us to keep compassion alive while the other speaks, which may be for half an hour or forty-five minutes. During this time you have in mind only one idea, one desire: to listen in order to give the other person the chance to speak and suffer less. This is your only purpose. Other things like analyzing, understanding the past, can be a by-product of this work. But first of all, listen with compassion."

- Thich Nhat Hanh

Complicated Bereavement



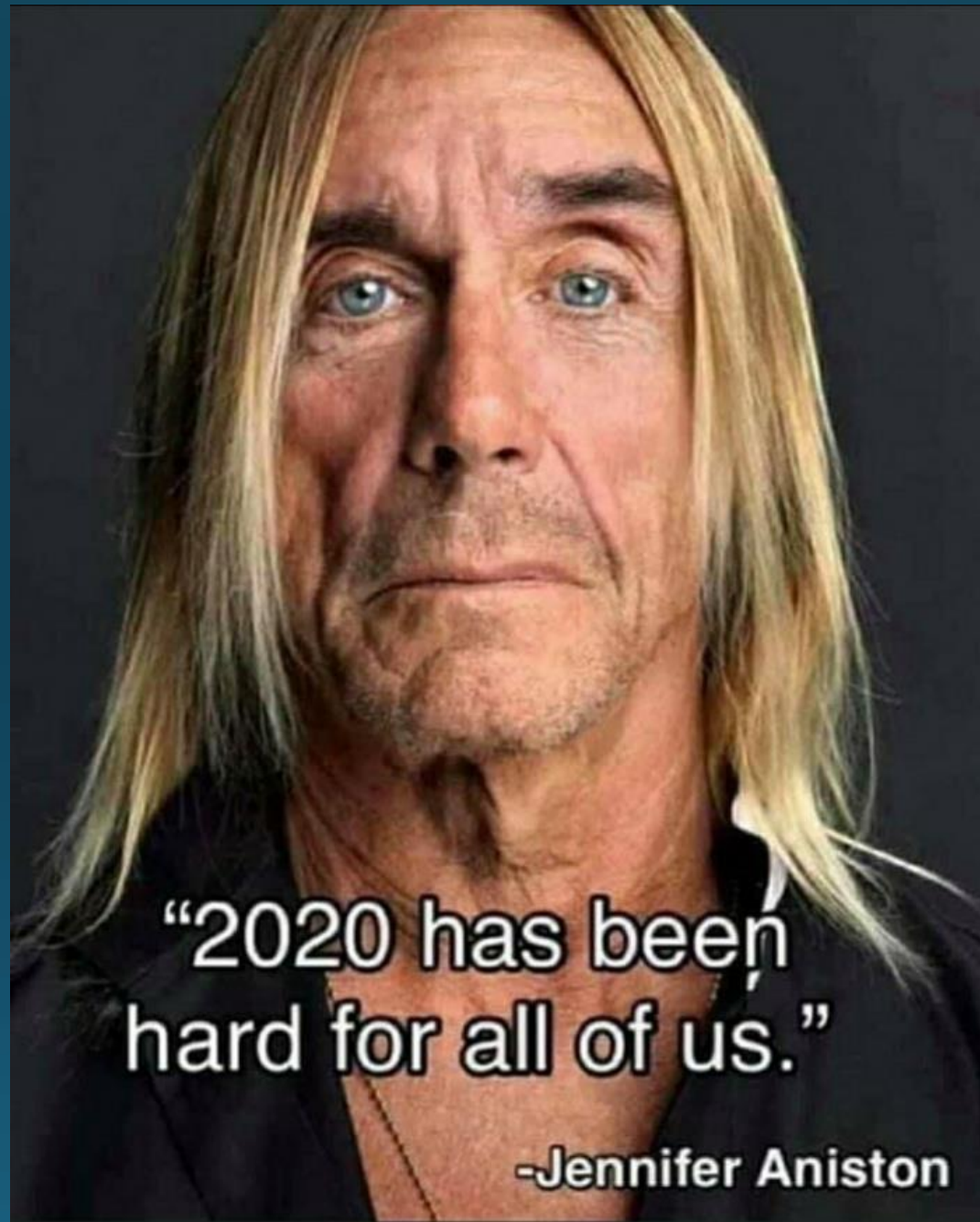
Complicated

- Protracted, compromised response
- Struggle is rooted in individual's capacity to cope
- Grief is secondary to existing struggle

Complex

- additional stressors compound grief
- rooted in situational context
- Struggle primarily due to circumstance.

Kristine Munholland, Ph.D., MSW. "Complicated Grief", 2012.



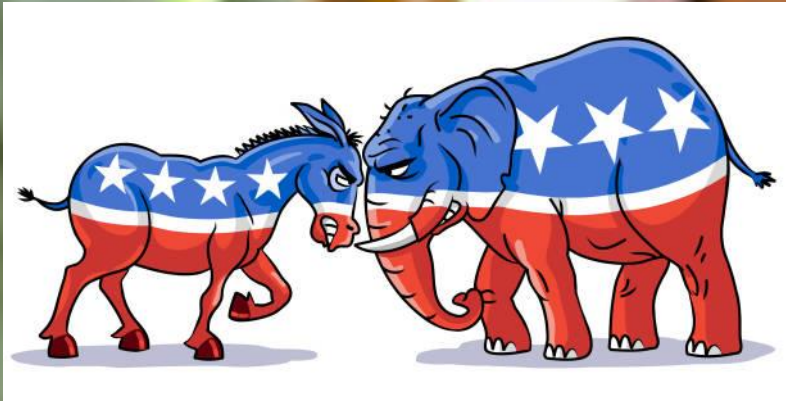
2020



Changing Spiritual & Social Landscape

% in 2015	Ethnic/Religious Demographic in America
17%	White Evangelicals (including megachurches)
13%	White Mainline
12%	White Catholic
2%	White Orthodox
1%	White Mormon
25%	Non-White Christian
5%	Other Religions
23%	Religiously Unaffiliated (Nones) – up 7% in 7 yrs
3%	Don't Know (Multiple Religious Identities?)

- Butler-Bass based on Pew and PRRI





1. **Intrusive Thoughts**
2. **Avoidant Behaviors**
3. **Persistent Arousal**
4. **Cognitive Schemas &
Mood Alterations**



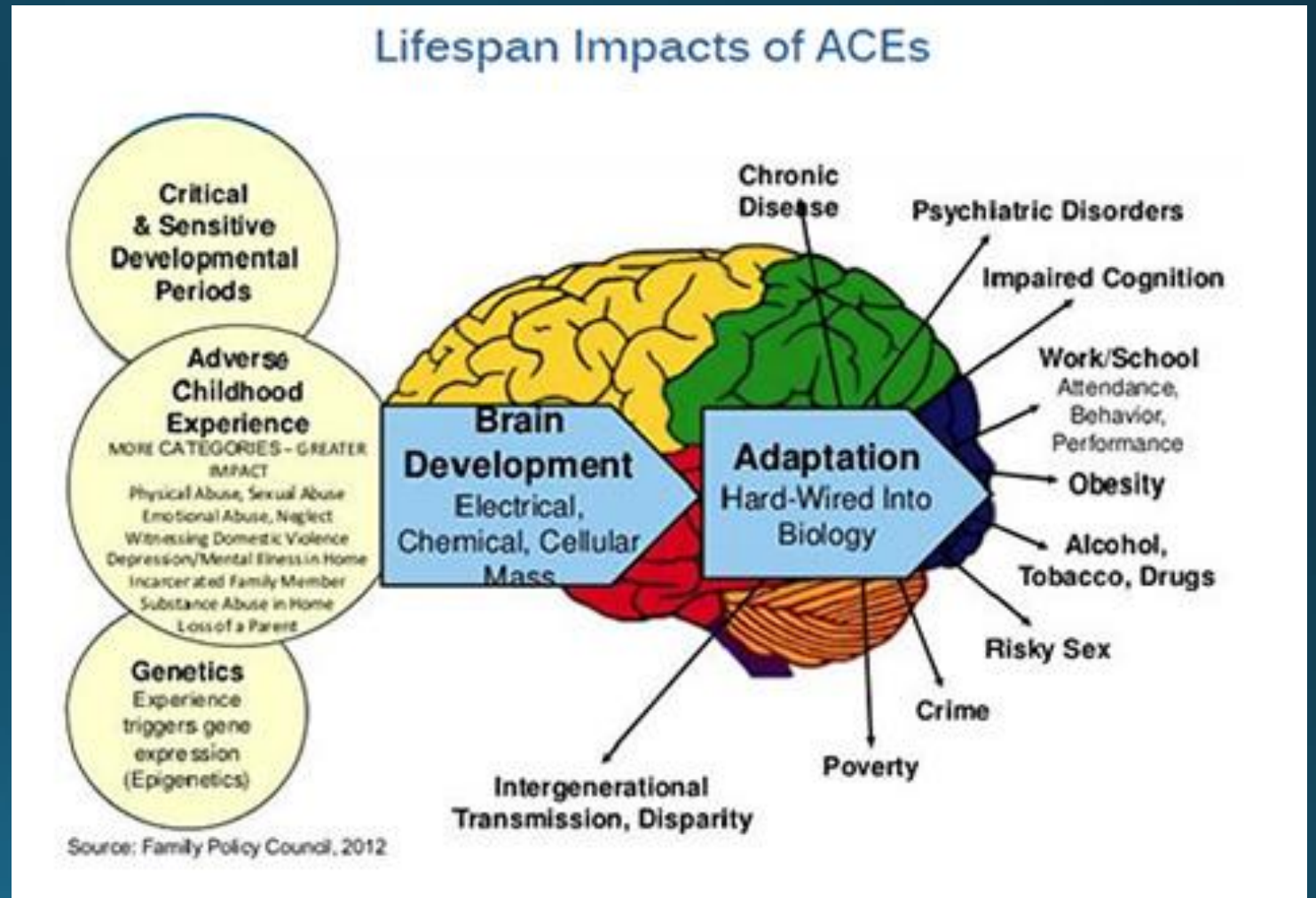
Adverse Childhood Experiences

Original 10 Categories

- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Mother Treated Violently
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Illness
- Parents Divorced or Separated
- Incarceration
- Emotional Neglect
- Physical Neglect

Expanded Studies Include

- Bullying
- Community Violence
- Unsafe Neighborhoods
- "Felt-Discrimination"
- Foster Care



Effect of ACEs

- Affects 20-50% of Americans
- If 4 or more? Exponential Risk!
 - 2-4 times more likely to have heart disease, cancer, STIs
 - 4 to 12 times greater risk for:
 - alcoholism, addiction, depression, and suicide.
- Higher risk for:

vocational dysfunction	liver disease
absenteeism	broken bones
teen pregnancy	prescription drug use
sexual assault	early death
domestic violence	



The Mental Health of Gen Z

- 10% plunge in risk-taking behaviors since 2009 (2020).
- 10% drop in workforce presence of 16-19 y/o since 2005 to 35% in (2018).
- 20% drop in 18 y/o with driver's license in last two decades to only 60%.
- 75% have left a job due to mental health reasons (Harvard Business Review).
- 10-12% of 12th graders: "People like me don't have much chance at a successful life." (Up 5% from 2009 to 2021).
- 20-25% of undergraduates diagnosed with depression or anxiety (2019).
- 29% of boys and 57% of girls in high school persistently feel sad or hopeless (2021).
- 10% of boys and 30% of girls ages 12-17 had major depression in the last year (PRE-Covid 2020).
- 14% of boys and 30% of girls seriously considered suicide (2021).
- Self-harm (non-suicidal) has doubled among girls 15-19 and quadrupled among girls 10-14 since 2009 (2020).





10 - 11



The great rewiring of childhood: 2010-2015

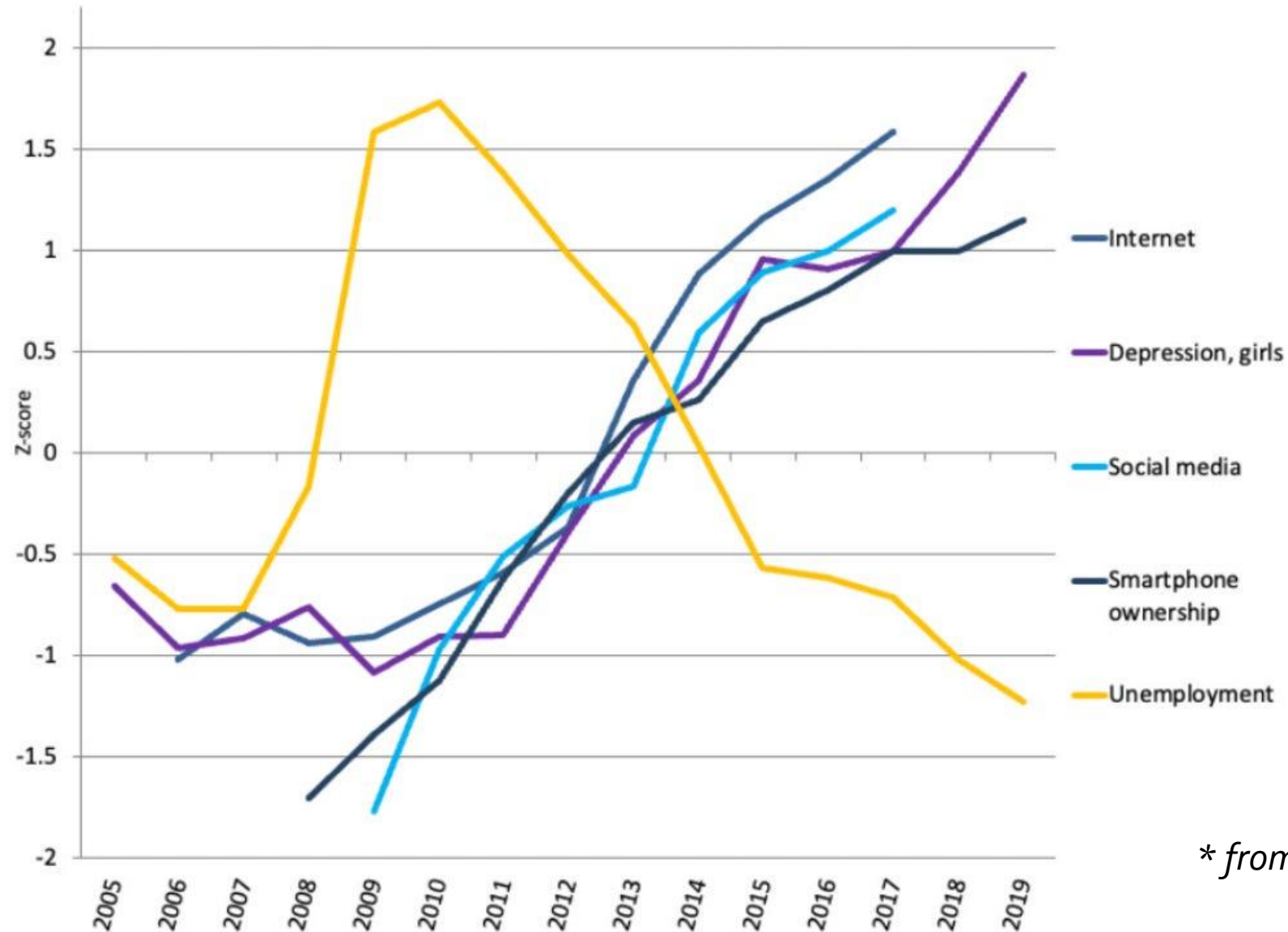


to



** from Jonathan Haidt*

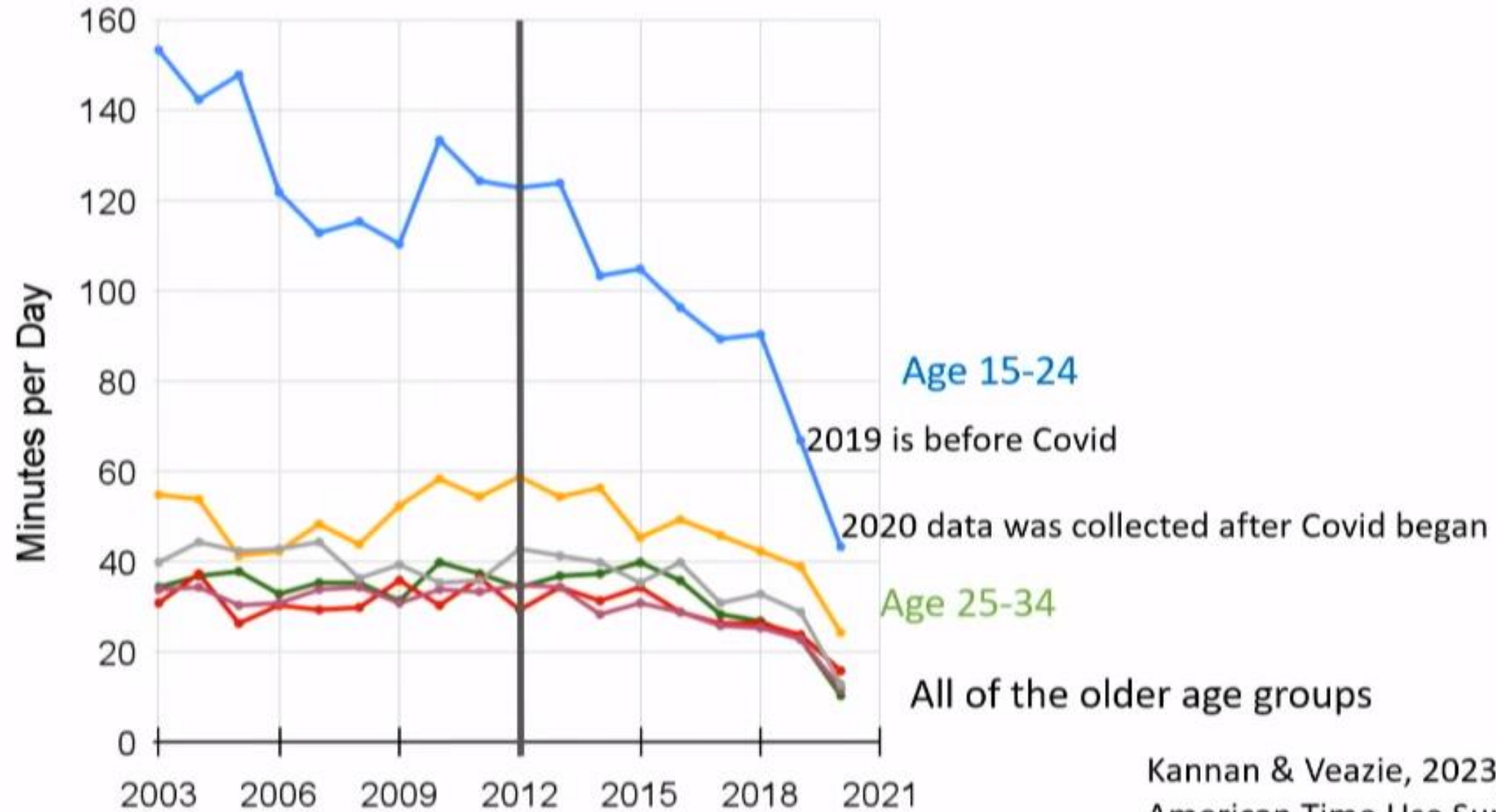
Teenage Girls Depression Rates and Possible Causes



** from Jonathan Haidit*

Daily average time with friends (minutes)

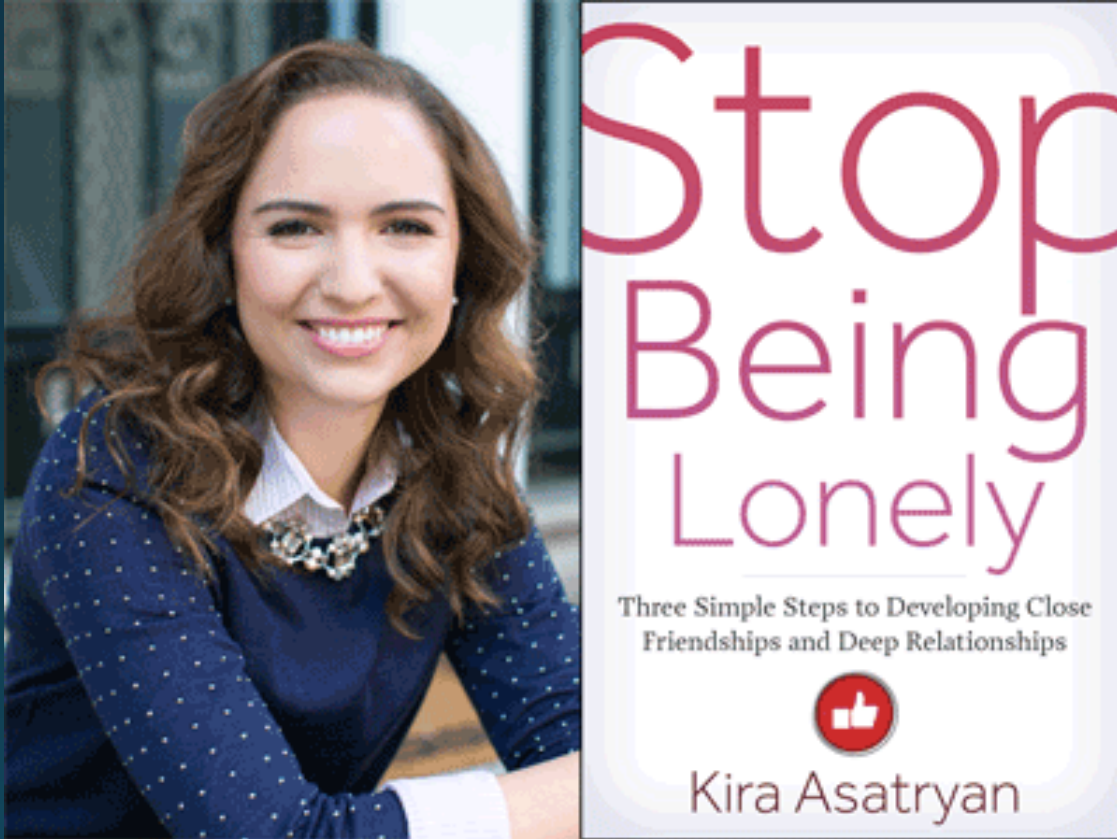
**from Jonathan Haidt*



Kannan & Veazie, 2023, From
American Time Use Survey

00:47

We Treat Our Relationships like EFFICIENT Cell Phones



- Feeling Closeness
 - 1. Knowing and Being Known
 - 2. Caring and Being Cared For
- Genuine Interest vs a Pound of Flesh
- Turning the Spotlight Around
- The Power of Just Showing Up

The 5 stages Model

- Developed by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross during her work with dying patients.



“Stages” may be helpful,
yet deceiving...



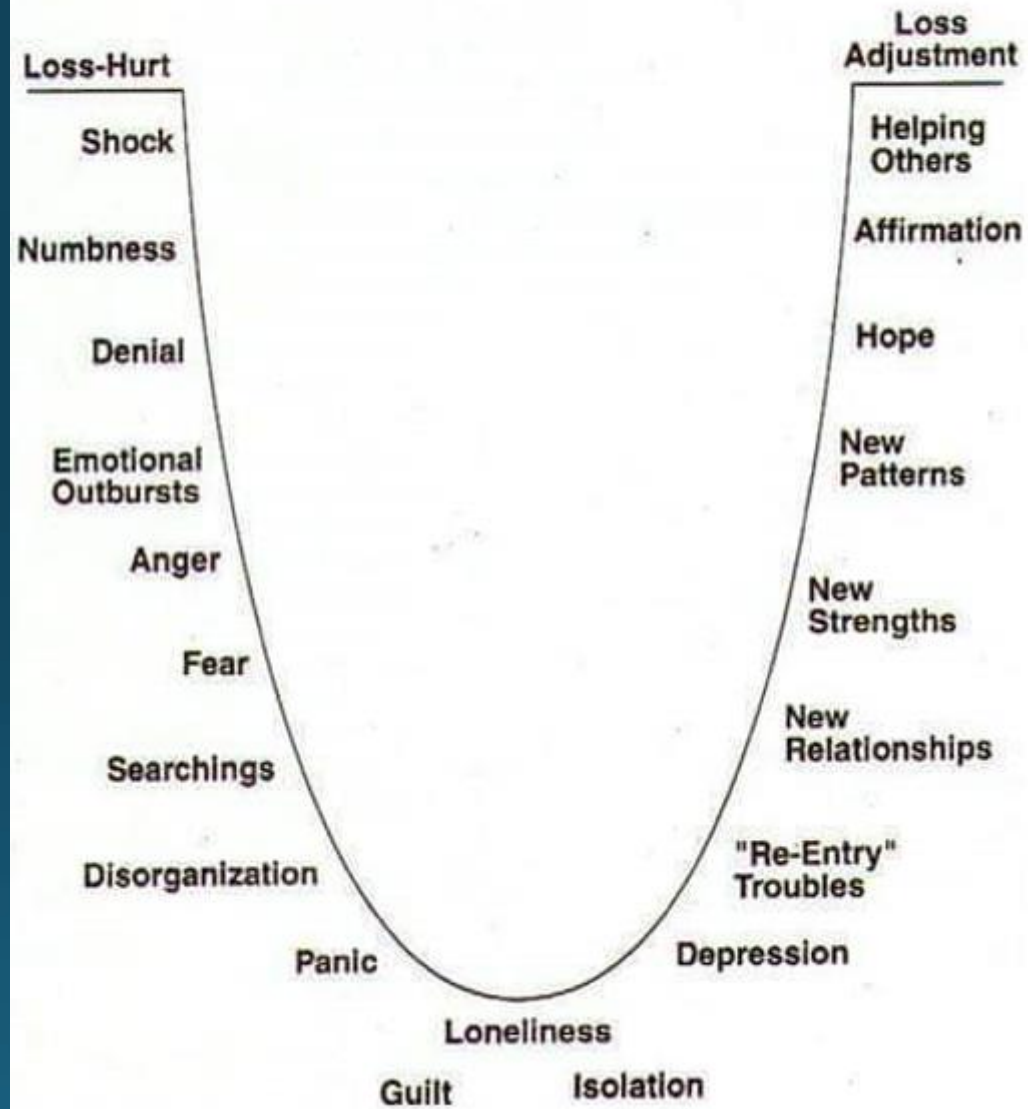
Grief is not like this....



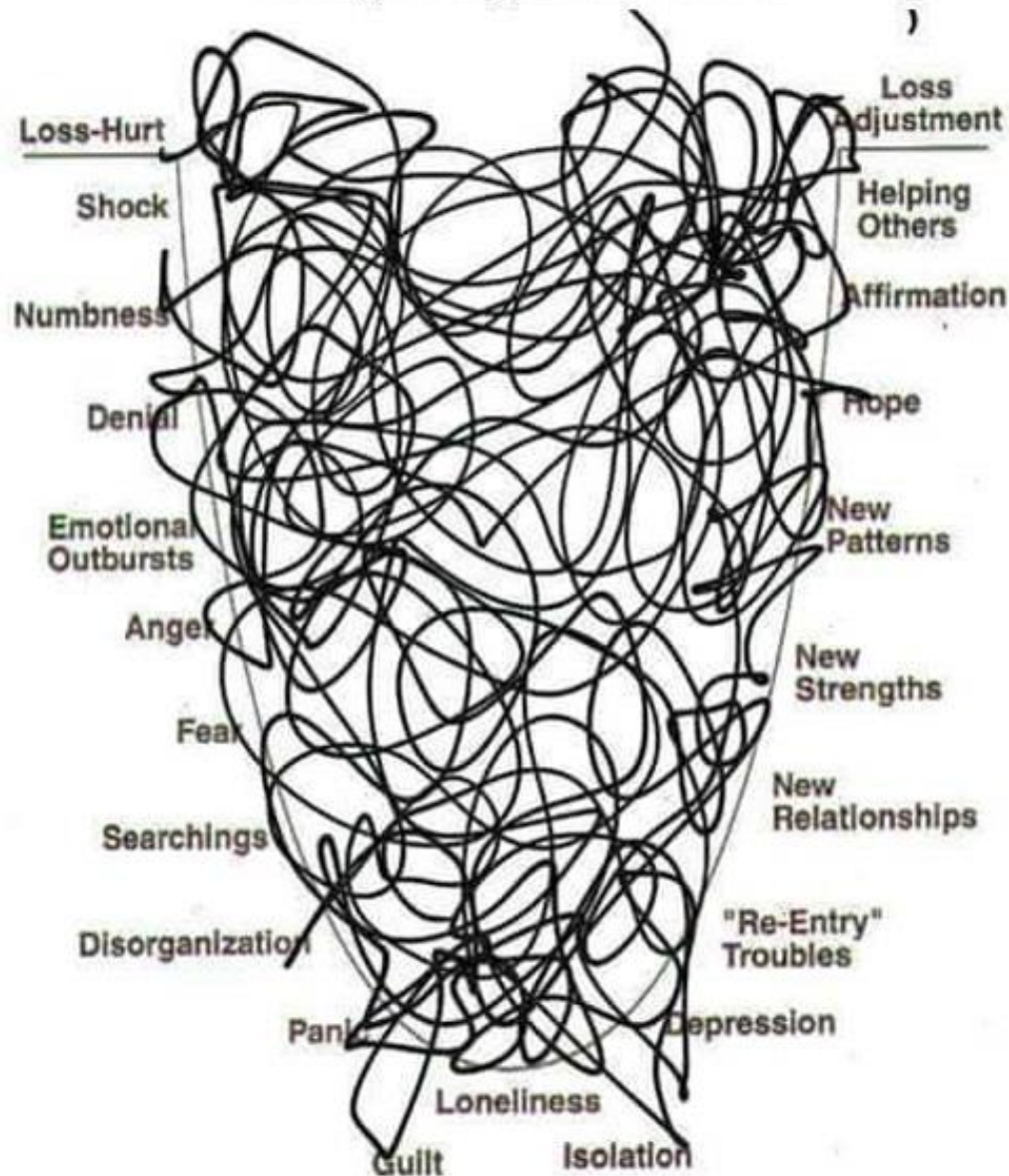
It's more like
this.

(People don't progress in an
orderly way.)

STAGES OF GRIEF



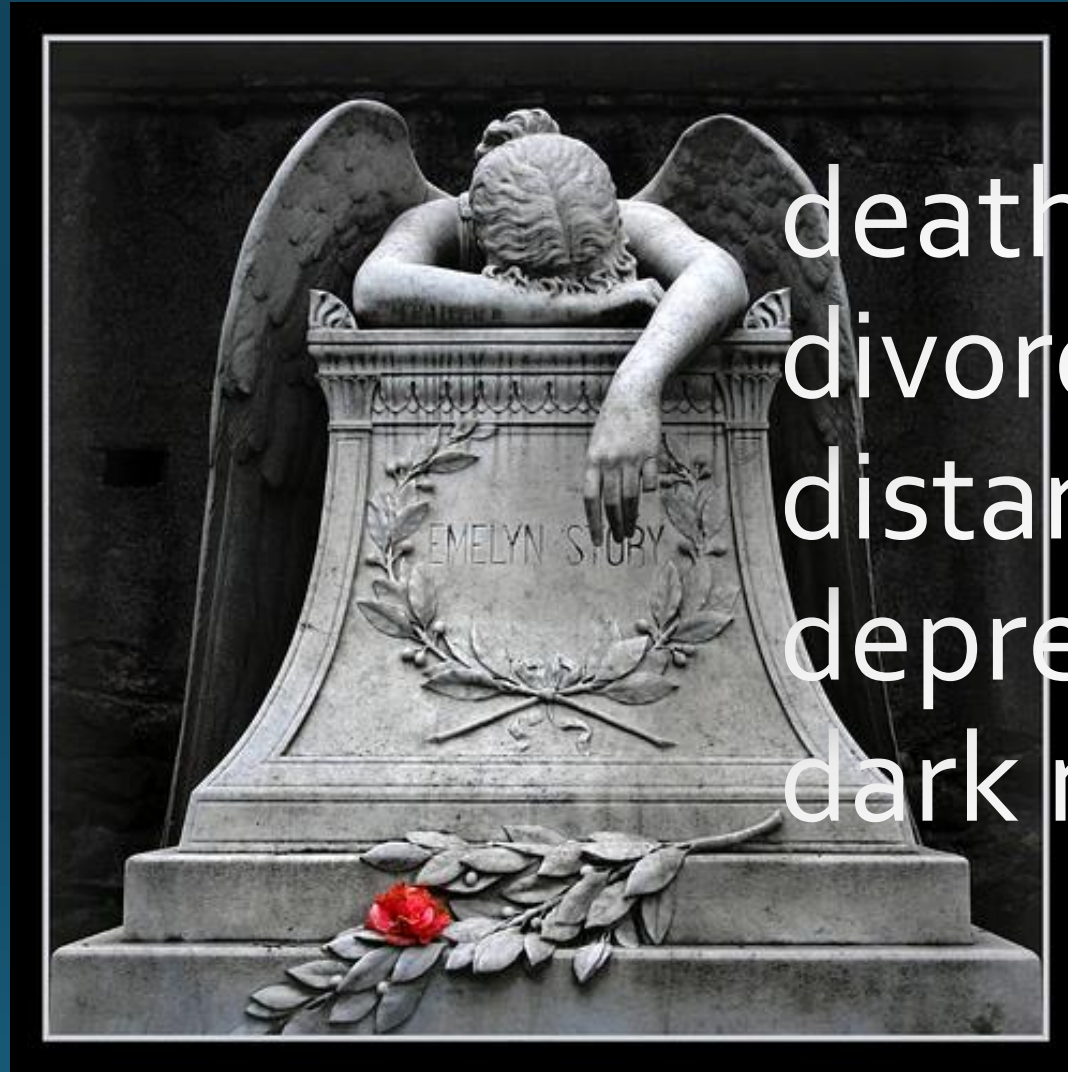
My experience



Grief and Mourning

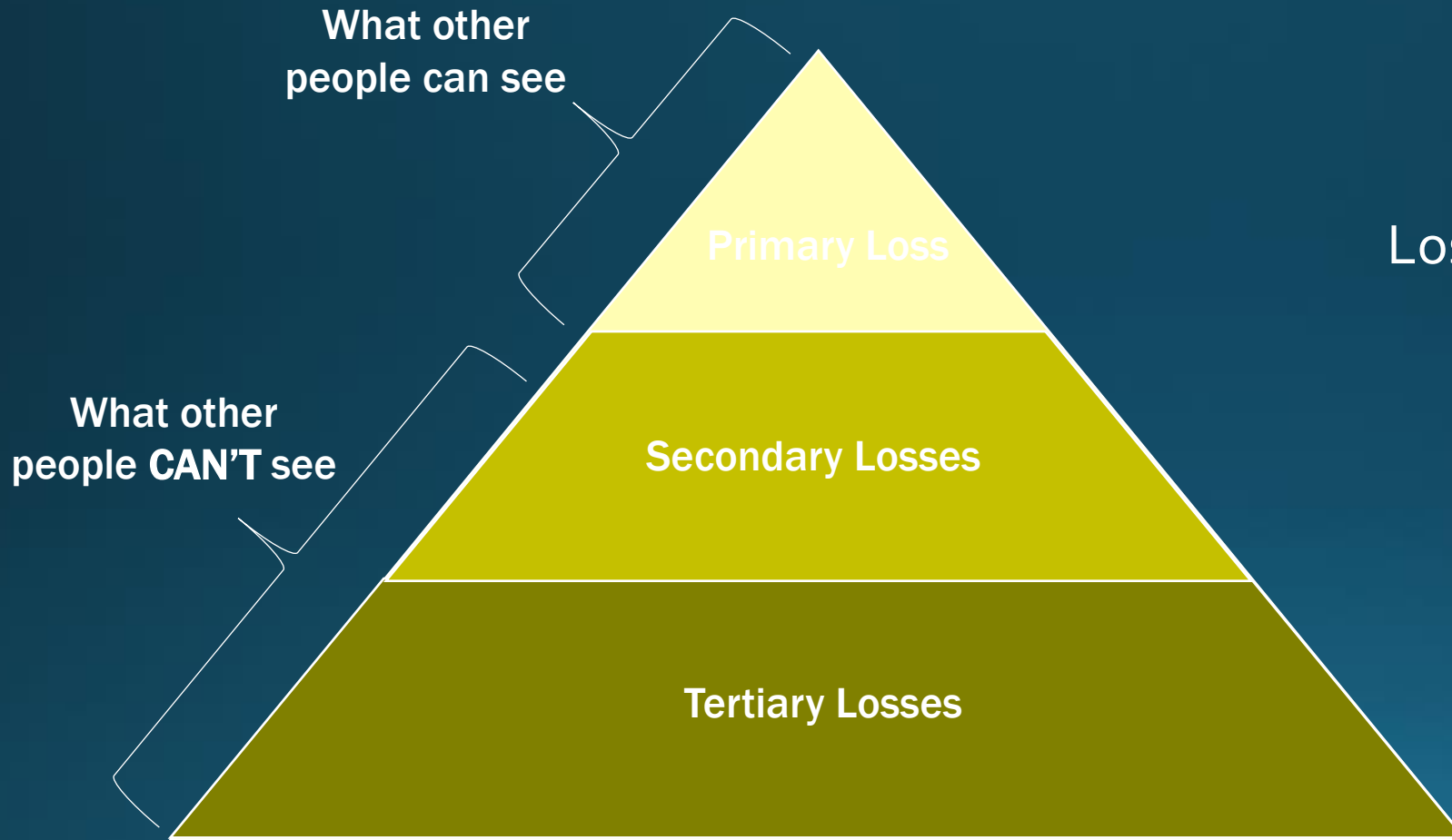
- Grief is a NATURAL, normal response to loss
 - with NO TIMETABLE
- Grief is our INTERNAL processing of the impact.
- Mourning is the OUTWARD expression of our experience.
- It affects people in various ways:
 - Emotionally: “emotional whirlwind”
 - Mentally: “peanut butter brain”
 - Physically: sleep, appetite, stress, heart
 - Spiritually: earthquake or tsunami





death
divorce
distance
depression
dark night

Iceberg of Loss



Loss of identity

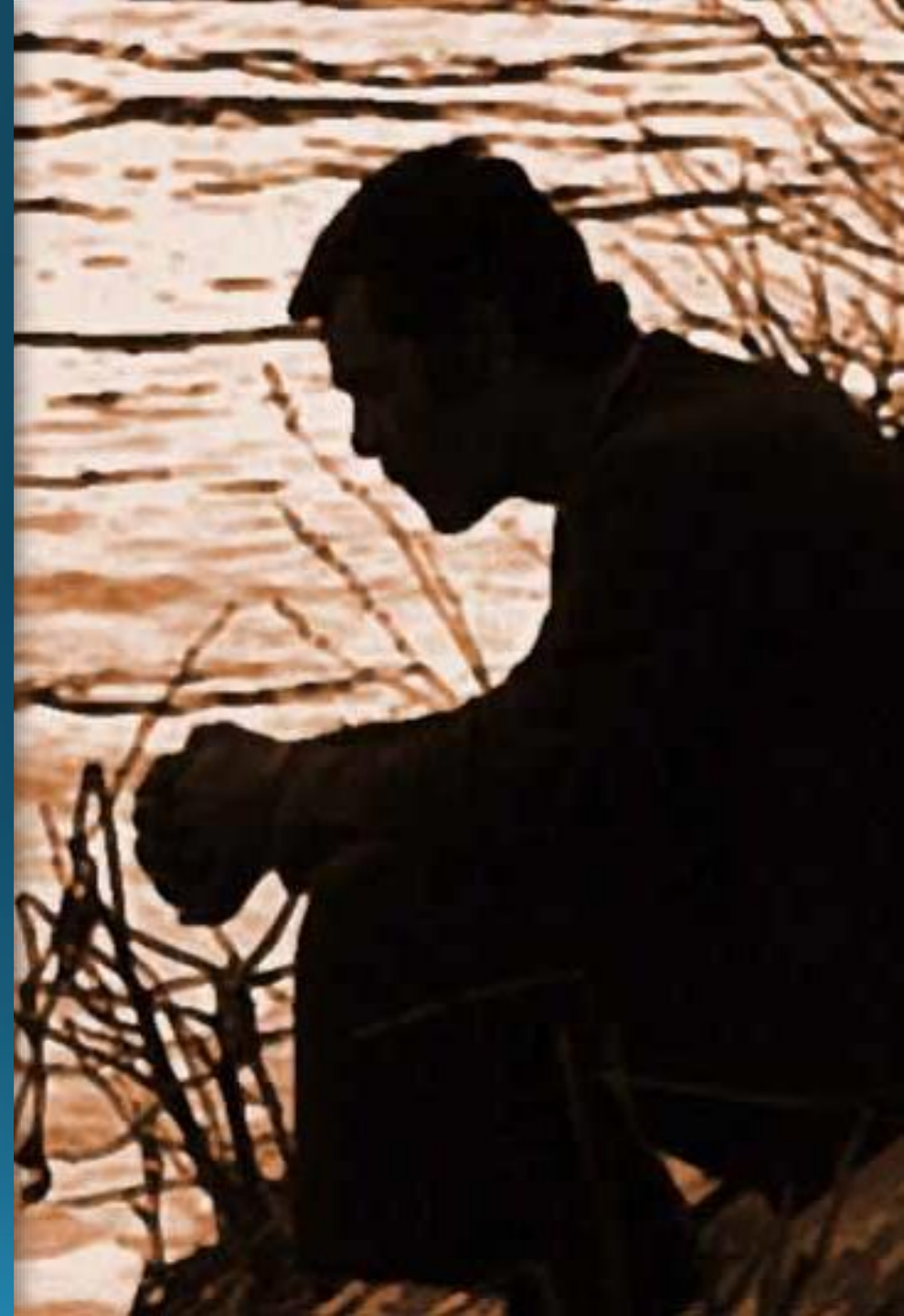
- Who am I now?
- Change of roles & lifestyle
- Loss of meaning and purpose
- Changes sense of self and personality

Loss of security

- Loss of future as planned
- Loss of dreams
- Loss of support
 - Who can I depend on now?
 - Financial stress
- Loss of self-confidence
- Loss of faith or will to live

Common Grief Experiences

- Very confusing stage ALREADY with lots of change
 - Saying goodbye to childhood but not yet an adult
 - Unfamiliar emotions
 - Pressures of school and adulting
- 68% say “Worst thing that has happened to me”
- Overprotectiveness by a parent?
- May see parent crying a lot and feel thrust into role of comforter.
 - Parent may start dating?
- Increases in responsibility?
 - May feel pressure to fill missing shoes.
 - May to have move or get a job.
- May not be receptive to parent due to drive for independence.
 - Or may get clingy b/c of fear of losing them, too.
- Some avoid talking about “it,” so others won’t feel uncomfortable.
 - Others need to retell the stories over and over again.
- Some assume mannerisms/traits and may glorify their loved one.



Common Feelings

- Sadness, Loneliness, Emptiness, and Longing
- But may have no outward response.
- Some appear to be coping well when they are not.
- Shock, Numbness, Disbelief, Denial
- Feel guilt or regrets
- Anger, irritability, impatience
- Insecurity/Anxiety
 - Fear this will happen again
- Shame due to nature of death
- Overly-Sensitive
- Acting out is common way to cope with emotions when we don't have the coping skills we need.





Common Cognitive Challenges

- Forgetfulness
- Difficulty concentrating
 - “Peanut Butter Brain”
- Feeling trance-like
- May experience a drop in school grades
 - Others overachieve
- May want to sleep all the time and disconnect
- May lack initiative or interest
 - Others get hyperactive
- Difficulty making decisions
 - Or get rather impulsive

Common Social Shifts

- May withdraw or avoid others
 - Or get clingy
- Friendships often change
- Some people avoid them.
- May feel left out or different
- “No longer things in common”
- “they just don’t get it”
- Watch friends complain about STILL ALIVE loved ones
- Other relationship difficulties



Common Spiritual Struggles

- Sometimes wonder if they did something
- May worry that others (or they) will die, too.
- May worry about who will take care of them.
- Dreams of the deceased
- May sense their loved one's presence
- Changes or crisis of faith
- May feel angry with God
- Sense of unreality or emptiness
- Dwelling on death
- "Death wish"

Common Physical Effects



- Crying, Sighing
- Restless or Hyperactive
- Aches and Pains
 - Tightness in throat, neck, shoulders, back
 - Headaches, Stomachaches, Nausea, Diarrhea
 - Pain around the heart (heartache)
- Loss of Appetite or Increased Appetite
- Weight loss or gain
- Trouble Sleeping
- Lack of energy, fatigue, exhaustion
- Heart Palpitations
- Shortness of breath

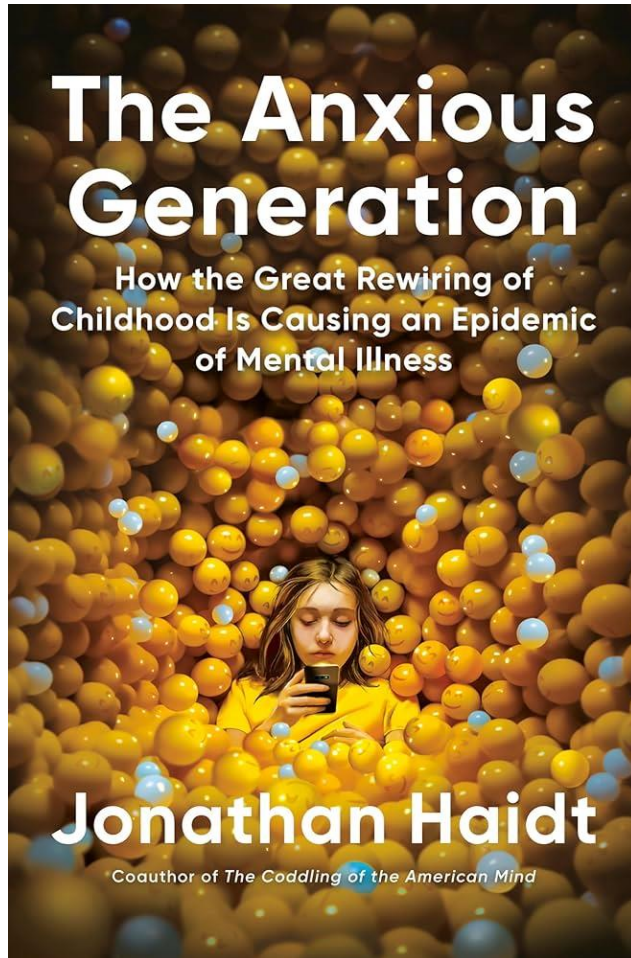
Developmental Factors

Ages 12-14

- Deeper understanding of the universality of death
- More concerned about practical matters
 - “Who will care for me?”
- Ambivalent emotions often difficult to manage
- Can be egocentric and callous
 - interpreted as a lack of feeling
- May be reluctant to discuss death with friends for fear of rejection.

Ages 15-17

- More mature understanding of death
 - Non-functioning, non-reversible, universal
- More likely to ask philosophical questions
 - Question fairness of life and search for meaning
- More prolonged periods of mourning
 - affects concentration and functioning at school.
- Able to show empathy and see things from others' perspectives.



Four norms to escape collective action problems

1. No Smartphone Before High School (Age 14)
2. No Social Media Before 16
3. Phone Free Schools
4. Far more free play and independence

The Amazing Generation is coming soon. [Preorder today!](#)

THE ANXIOUS GENERATION

About ▾

The Books ▾

News

Take Action ▾

Join the Movement

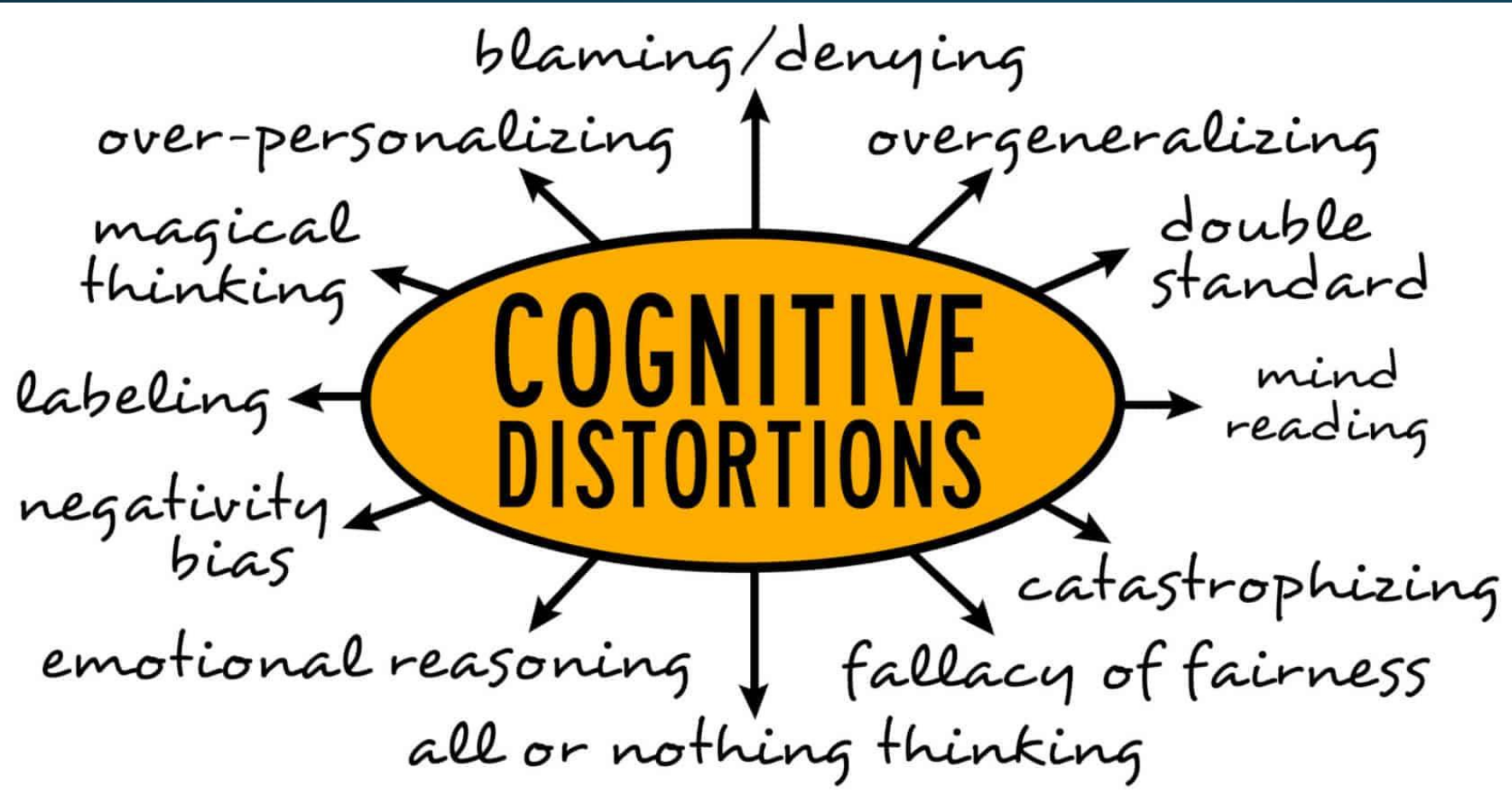
Phone-Free Schools Action Kit for Parents

Print

When phones are allowed in schools, they interfere with attention, learning, relationships, and belonging. Phones should be required to be kept away during the *entirety* of the school day — from bell to bell — including during lunch and recess. This gives students more opportunities for in-person socialization and free play.

As a parent, there are three important things you can do to help:

- Support and encourage school efforts to ban smartphones from bell to bell



THE CODDLING OF THE AMERICAN MIND

HOW GOOD INTENTIONS
AND BAD IDEAS ARE
SETTING UP A GENERATION
FOR FAILURE

GREG LUKIANOFF
JONATHAN HAIDT

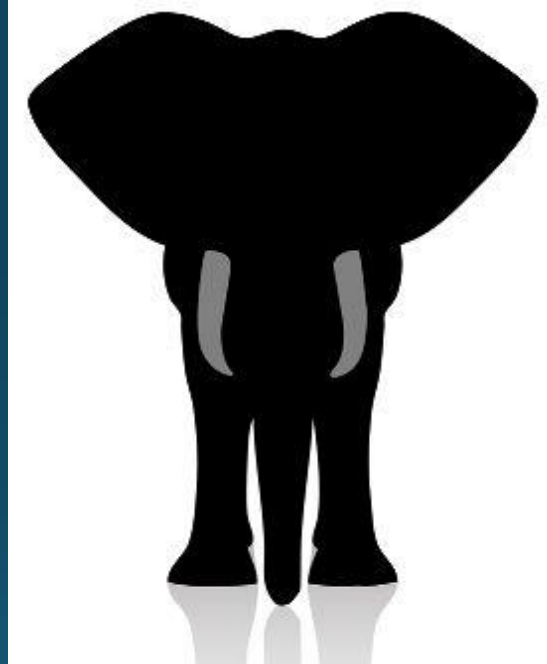




BE
THE
CHANGE
YOU WANT TO SEE

Practical Tips

- Give them permission
- ASK THEM what they need
- Be a companion – not a fixer
- Don't treat them like children
- Take THEIR lead
- Be real and honest
- Say the "D" word
- INCLUDE THEM in your grief
- Include them in illness, death, funeral



- Model healthy grieving and self-care
- Keep normalcy, routine and structure
- Get physical (sports, teams, workouts)
- Let them spend time with friends
- Support Groups and Professionals
- Grief vs Depression
- More likely to go to therapy
- Only 50% of losses are known

Bill of Rights

Created by teens at Dougy Center for teens who are grieving

As grieving teens, we have the right to...

- Know the truth about the death, the person who died, and the circumstances surrounding the death
- Ask questions and have them answered honestly
- Be heard and listened to without receiving unsolicited advice
- Be silent and not share our thoughts and emotions out loud
- Disagree with your perceptions and conclusions
- See the person who died and the place where they died, if we choose to
- Grieve in our own ways — without hurting ourselves or others
- Feel all the feelings and to think all the thoughts of our own unique grief
- Not have to follow the "Stages of Grief" as outlined in a high school health book
- Be angry at death, the person who died, God, ourselves, and others
- Disagree with people who are insensitive especially those who spout clichés
- Have our own beliefs about life and death
- Be involved in the decisions about the rituals related to the death
- Have irrational guilt about what we could have done to prevent the death

#UnderstandGrief 



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988
SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE


GRIEF
OUT LOUD

A PODCAST BY DOUGY
CENTER

IF YOU WANT TO TALK, WE'RE HERE TO LISTEN

SPEAK ANONYMOUSLY WITH A TEEN WHO UNDERSTANDS

- ANXIETY / STRESS
- BULLYING
- SADNESS
- SUICIDE
- SEXUALITY
- GENDER IDENTITY
- RELATIONSHIPS
- SCHOOL
- OR ANYTHING ELSE YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH



Call 800-852-8336
from 6pm to 10pm PST
or text "TEEN" to 839863
from 6pm to 9pm PST

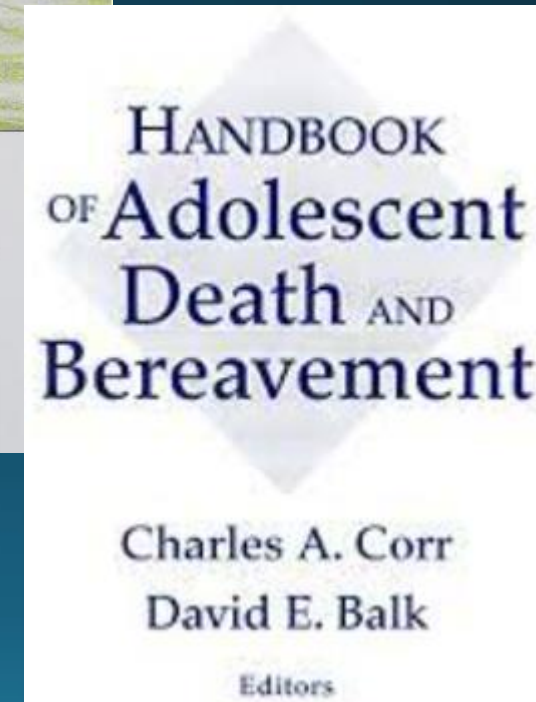
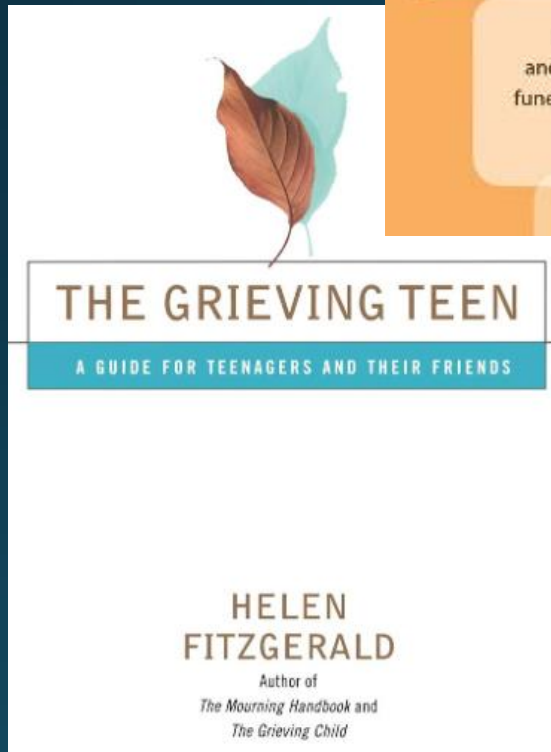
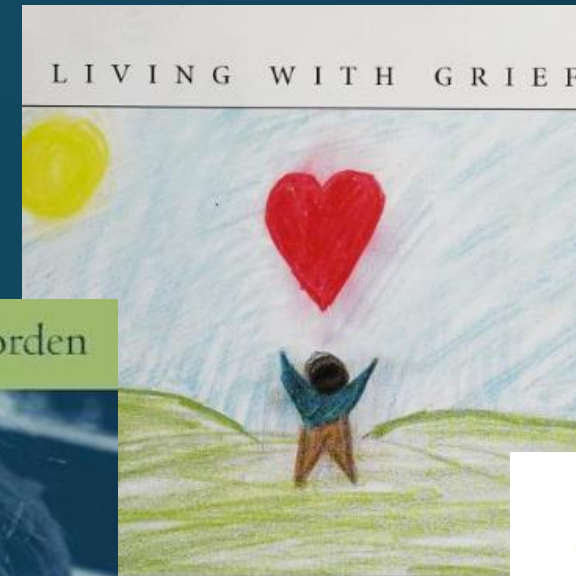
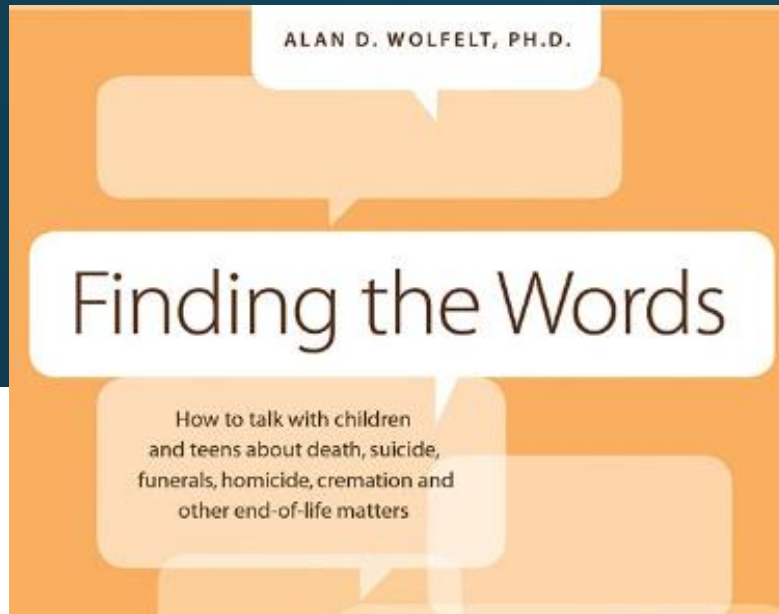


www.teenline.org

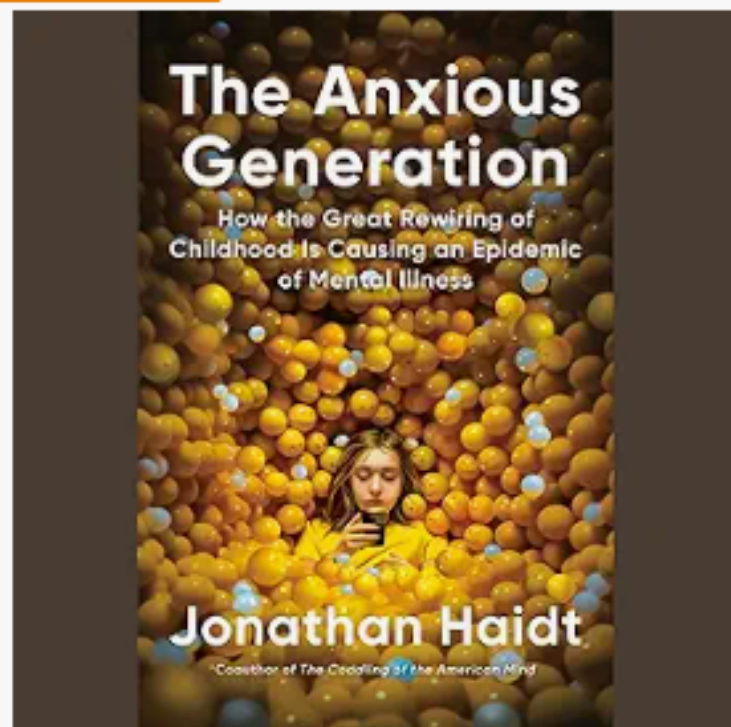


with appreciation,
 Cedars Sinai
 Didi Hirsch
Accredited by the American Association of Suicidology

Recommended Reading



Best Seller



The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness

by Jonathan Haidt, Sean Pratt, et al.

Audible Audiobook

\$**14**⁹⁵ ~~\$31.50~~

With Audible Premium Plus

This item will be released on March 26, 2024.

Kindle

\$**15**⁹⁹ ~~Print List Price: \$30.00~~

This title will be released on March 26, 2024.



Getting Past Our Own Barriers



- ⦿ Wanting to get it “right”
- ⦿ Counter-Transference
- ⦿ Compassion Fatigue
- ⦿ Crucial Importance of Self-Care
- ⦿ Increasing our self-awareness
- ⦿ Facing Our Own Social or Death Anxieties

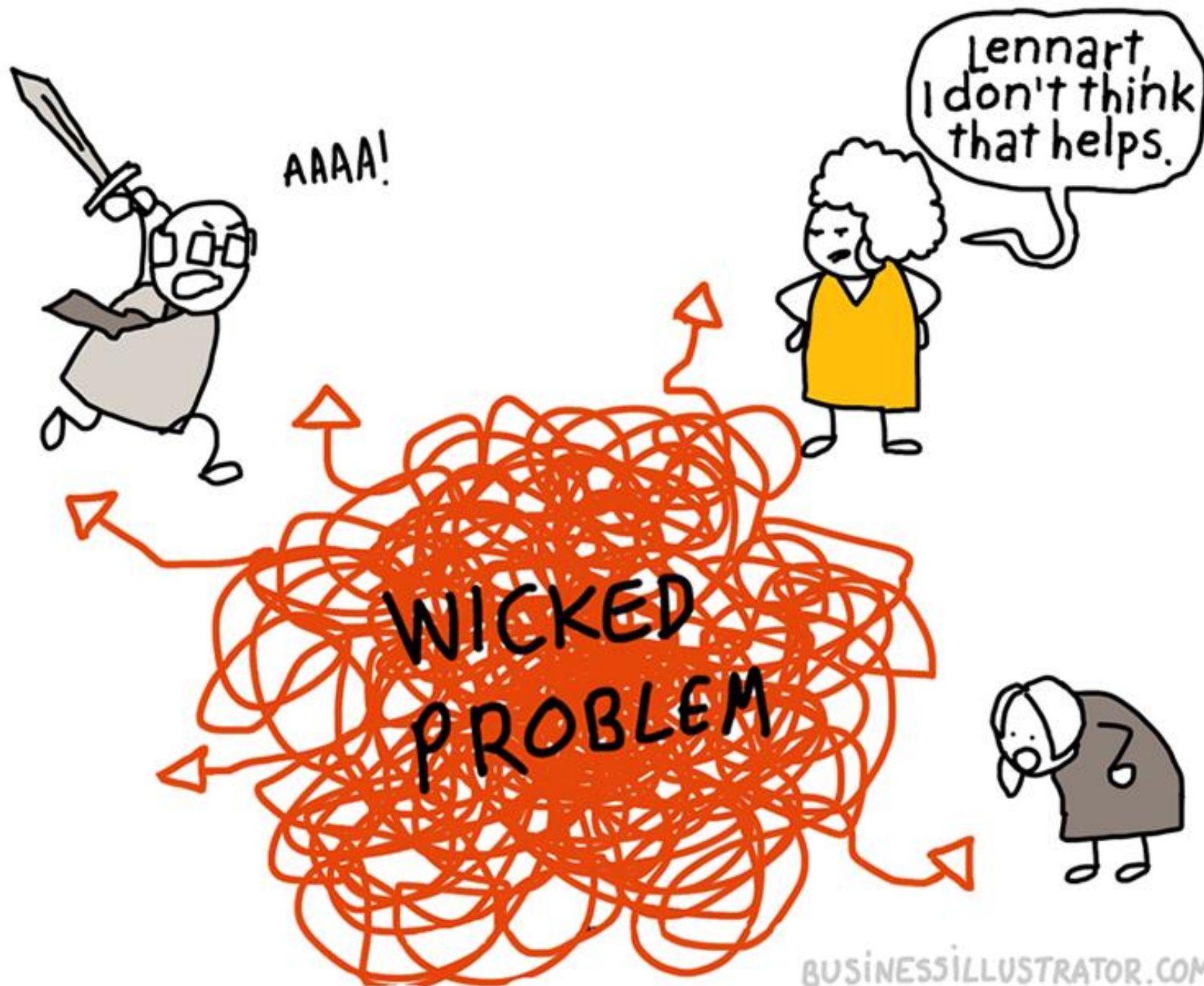
**I'm not afraid of death;
I just don't want to be there
when it happens.**

-Woody Allen



Learn more at
SpiritualCleansing.Org





Vicarious Trauma

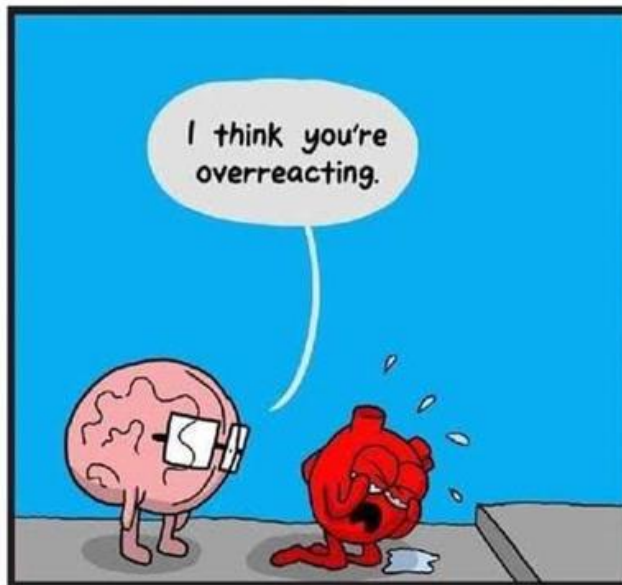
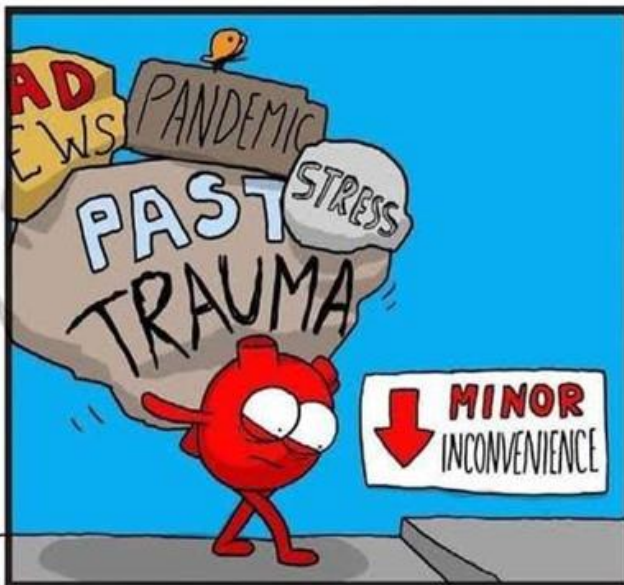
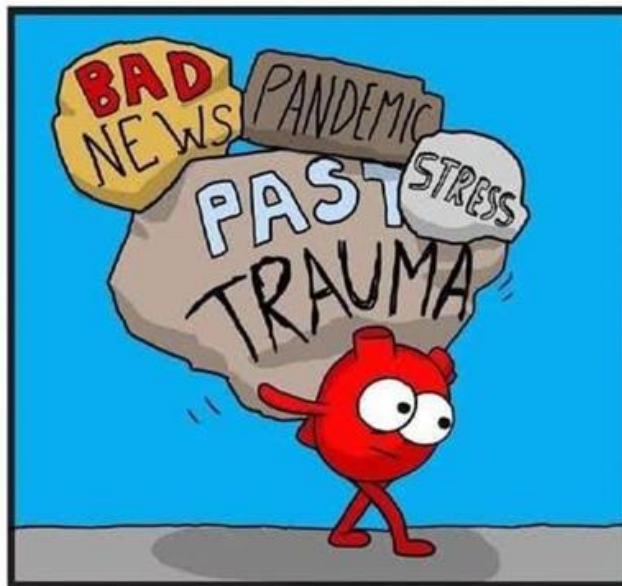
A person with dark hair, wearing a light blue short-sleeved shirt, is sitting and covering their face with both hands. Their head is bowed, and their fingers are spread across their forehead and eyes, conveying a sense of despair, stress, or emotional exhaustion. The background is a solid dark blue.

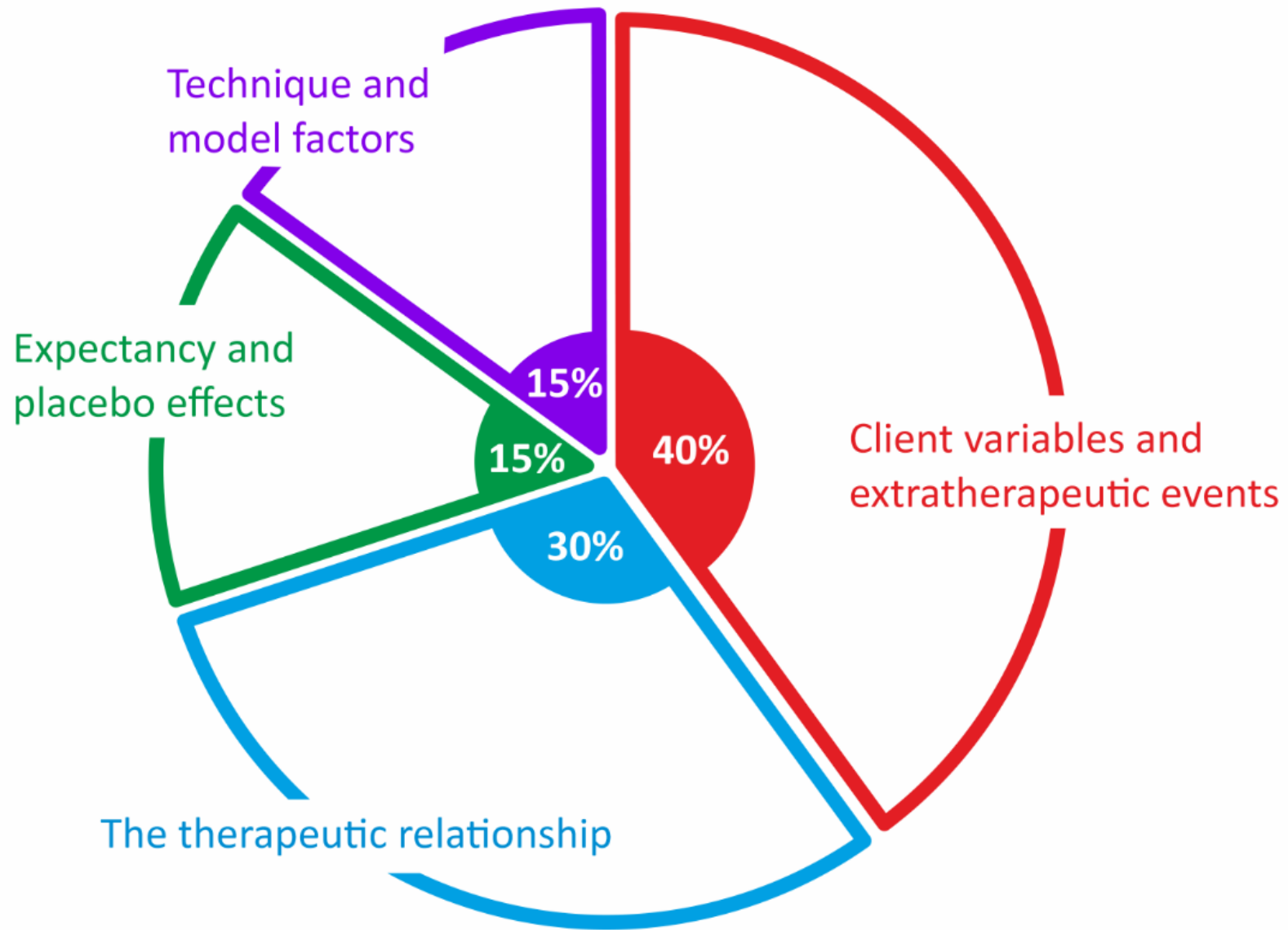
2/3rd
over careers

15-39%
of front-line
workers

70%
1 symptom/wk

8%
moderate-high
symptoms
affecting
functioning





From work by Michael Lambert 1986

Earning the right to be present

Attending Skills



P-ositioning: Facing? Open? Leaning? Eyes? Relaxed?

O-bserving: Facial Expressions? Focus? Movement?

L-istening: Content & Feeling? Attentive? Vocal Cues?

R-esponding: Reflectively Paraphrasing

* Gerard Egan's The Skilled Helper: A Problem Management Approach to Helping

Positioining

SOLER

Squarely facing

Open position

Leaning towards

Eye Contact

Relaxed





Observing Non-Verbals

- Facial expressions
- Posture
- Focus
- Movements
- Reactions
- Delivery of Vocal Cues

The SKILL of Reflective Listening

- Paraphrasing
 - Feeling AND Content
 - Not adding content
 - Not making hunches
 - Not sharing opinions
 - Not fixing

Ratio of 2:1

- ◉ Probing
 - > Little prompts
 - > Accents
 - > Repetition of 1-3 important words or phrases
 - > Statements
 - > Open-Ended Questions
 - > Silence and Non-judgments

How to Help Someone Who's Grieving



HOW TO HELP A GRIEVING FRIEND

Megan Devine

*I have learned
that people will
forget what you
said, people will
forget what you
did, but people
will never forget
how you made
them feel.*

Maya Angelou
1928-2014



Photo by Michael Collopy

Questions and Discussion



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HOSPICE

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