Hey Lions!

When thinking about the current state of affairs in our world, nation, state, and university, I wondered if there was a way that a connection could be maintained with our Life After Loss group. As we all seek ways to cope with our new normal brought about by the pandemic, I thought that providing a weekly newsletter might be a great way to share down-to-earth musings on grief (see what I did there?) and to provide resources for our group members as well as those who have recently experienced grief and loss. It is my hope that this newsletter provides some sense of camaraderie and normalcy as we all attempt to navigate this uncertain time. Thank you for reading!

Be Well & Roar Lions!

Meghan
In attempting to swim through the current of emotions that comes with grief and loss, labeling our emotions and stage of grief can help us avoid getting pulled into the undertow. Some find it helpful to utilize Elizabeth Kubler-Ross's Stages of Grief as a context for what feelings we tend to cycle through, visiting one stage at certain times and going back and revisiting other stages at other times.

As described earlier, we likely have experienced the stage of Denial with feelings of disbelief. The stage of Anger may involve waves of outrage and blaming others. These feelings are normal and natural and tendencies to label feelings as "good" or "bad" are discouraged. Instead, listen to your feelings and ask what information it is trying to present to you.

Another stage of grief is Bargaining, or making trade-offs, such as thinking 'If we engage in physical distancing and shelter in place now, maybe we can flatten the curve and benefit moving forward. I'm willing to compromise.'
GRIEF BRIEF

Continued

In the Depression stage, many may experience feelings of hopelessness and disempowerment, “What’s the use, we’re all going to get the virus eventually. Why should I even worry about my responsibilities right now? How will I pay my bills?” The reality of this situation hits hard for so many, however there are supportive resources that may help to get through this difficult time (see Resources on next page).

Finally, there is the Acceptance stage where some may feel an ability to move forward and create a new normal. We can explore options and feel a sense of empowerment and resolve to act upon things that are in our control. “I know that this might take a while. I’m settling in to my new routine.”

Building upon the work of Kubler-Ross, grief expert David Kessler has since added a sixth stage of grief—Meaning. Kessler often explains that meaning is something we cannot force or seek out intentionally, but with time and awareness meaning often finds us. As Kessler says, “If you don’t feel it, you can’t heal it,” and with healing we often experience meaning on the other side.

Moving forward, keep in mind that none of us have a handbook on how to deal right now and that’s OKAY! Try asking yourself, “What do I know for sure right now in this moment?” When living in the present, we can begin to create moments of connection and find gratitude with each given experience—and that’s something!
WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

Today’s tip:
Movement and expressive arts are a powerful healing modality for grief, so...

Put on your favorite song &
dance like nobody’s watching!

RESOURCES & SUPPORT

Grief Support:
David Kessler:
Book: “Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief”
Website: www.grief.com
David Kessler Facebook page: Daily live videos
Facebook group:
"Grief: Releasing Pain, Remembering Love, & Finding Meaning"

Campus Resources:
(this list is not exhaustive)
Student Counseling Services: https://www.una.edu/counseling
University Case Management: https://una.edu/case/
Feeding the Pride: Assistance with food insecurity
https://www.una.edu/students/Food-Pantry/index.html
Success Center: Online tutoring & advising- https://una.edu/successcenter/
Disability Support Services: https://www.una.edu/disability-support/
Mitchell-West Center for Social Inclusion: https://www.una.edu/socialinclusion/

Moment of Zen

“You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.”

Jon-Kabat Zinn