The Smell of Rain: When Grief Arrives Like an Unexpected Storm

The way that grief is talked about in popular culture often creates the misconception that grief is a simple linear process that unfolds in a predictable way. What we have seen over the many years of listening to and supporting those who are grieving is that the process of grief can be compared more accurately to a spiral. Rather than “graduating” from one stage to the next, actual grief is much messier, as we move in and out of the most intense feelings. Sometimes these feelings just seem to fall on us from nowhere; at other times, we can see the specific events that trigger our “griefbursts.”

In this webinar, we will consider the many experiences and events we encounter that may serve as triggers of fresh waves of intense grief. In some cases, these triggers can be anticipated. At other times, they arise unexpectedly and their impact can catch us by surprise. We will explore how to create a grief-informed environment by minimizing these triggers when possible, as well as how to support grieving individuals by providing resources they can access during periods of intense grief.

Objectives

During this webinar, participants will:
1. Explain the value in understanding grief as a spiral phenomenon.
2. Identify the predictable and unpredictable triggers of grief.
3. Discuss strategies for managing triggers in the environment.
4. Describe ways of supporting grievers as they encounter triggers, both expected and unexpected.

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