

2012 COUNCIL MEETING

B6: “Good Grief” – It Does Exist

Saturday, November 10, 2012

9:30 - 10:45 a.m.

Presented by

Cecilia M. Ryan

Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, the attendee will be able to:

1. Define disenfranchised grief as a useful construct as it applies to donor grief.
2. Identify skills and tools to effectively and compassionately support your work with donors.
3. Evaluate and discuss some factors that might impact donors with unresolved grief.
4. Evaluate your own expertise and personal skills to competently and compassionately support donors.

Conflict of Interest/Financial Disclosure

The Speaker(s) voluntarily disclosed the following pertinent financial relationships and/or conflicts of interest:

- *None – The speaker(s) in this session have disclosed NO conflicts*

Attendee Signature

Date



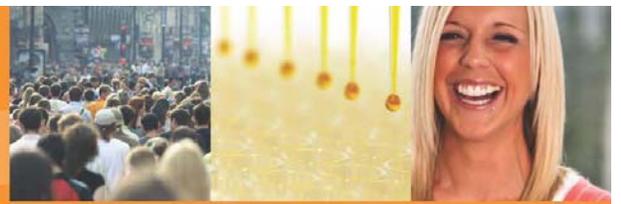
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Tips for sharing news of a recipient's death with donor(s):

- Before you call, think through your delivery of the message. If you are unsure how best to proceed, call someone who can work through it with you (e.g. a co-worker, your supervisor, Donor Advocacy). Put your own perceptions on the news aside before calling.
- Don't beat around the bush, but do give a warning: "I'm afraid I have bad news." This gives the donor a few moments of psychological preparation time.
- Be direct, yet be gentle, and share as many facts as you can.
- Once the news is delivered: **Listen, listen, and listen!** Silence allows the donor time to explore their reaction and reflect. And do not rush to end the call.
- Remain silent longer than you normally find comfortable and respond to what the donor say with an 'accepting response', by affirming the donor's feelings without judgment.
 - Reflect back or validate their experience by empathizing. Use the donors own words: "Yes, it hurts to hear this news.", or "Yes, it's a real blow."
- Don't try to 'reason' the donor out of their feelings. Let them know their feelings are OK.
 - If a donor is angry, do not take it personally or get defensive.
- Use 'I' phrases, such as "I can hear the pain in your voice" or "I understand your disappointment". Do not say "I know how you feel", because you don't necessarily.
 - Don't be afraid to say "I'm sorry". This doesn't always imply that something is your responsibility; it can simply be an expression of sorrow about the situation.
 - Avoid 'You' phrases, such as "You must be overwhelmed", or "You must be so disappointed". This also implies that you know how the donor feels, and you don't.
- Affirm the importance of the donors' contribution. (See suggested language below)
- Ask the donor if he/she has a support system. If not, ask if you can call back in a week/two to talk again. Schedule a time on the calendar, if the donor agrees.
 - Refer to "Ways to Honor Others" for various ways donors can process the loss.
 - Encourage the donor to call Donor Advocacy if they want to talk to someone else.

Suggested language to help donors recognize their gift to the recipient:

- "You offered the patient hope when nobody else could."
- "You gave the patient more time with his/her family."
- "The outcome does not determine the value of the gift."
- "Sometimes success is defined in terms of months, weeks, or even days rather than years."
- For donors who are unable to donate stem cells after being asked, because they're medically unsuitable:
 - "It's disappointing when you want to give of yourself and you're unable to donate, but we would never put you or any other donor at risk."
- For donors who are unable to donate stem cells after being asked, because the patient became medically unsuitable:
 - "It's disappointing when you want to give of yourself and you're unable to donate, because the patient became too sick for the transplant. The good news is that he/she knew that you, a complete stranger, were willing to donate your stem cells to offer hope and a second chance at life."



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Ways to Honor Others

Record a story	Make a family memory book	Celebrate!	Take action
Copy old photos for all	Write down new dreams	Take time for YOU!	Share your experience
Light a candle	Send off balloons/ Blow bubbles	Plant a garden	Give yourself permission to cry
Frame a picture	Write your story	Tell stories	Give yourself permission to laugh!
Start a family video record	Volunteer	Sew/paint a memory	Pray
Plant a tree	Name a star	Live your life well	Other.....
Forgive	Fund a scholarship	Get informed	

Special List

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