Men and Loss

Presented by:

GRIEFLINE

TrackSAFE Foundation

Acknowledgement of Country

Griefline recognises the continuous and deep connection to Country of Aboriginal people as the first peoples of this nation.

In this way we respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of our Country throughout Australia.

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Acknowledgement of Loss and Grief

We acknowledge:

- the lived experience of loss
- the lived experience of grief

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Your facilitator

Bryan Petheram

Counsellor, social worker and group facilitator

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About Griefline

National not for profit supporting the community for 35+ years.

Support people experiencing loss, grief and loneliness.

We want to change the way people think and talk about grief.

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Your self-care

During this workshop you might:

- Be challenged.
- Have strong thoughts.
- Have heavy emotions.

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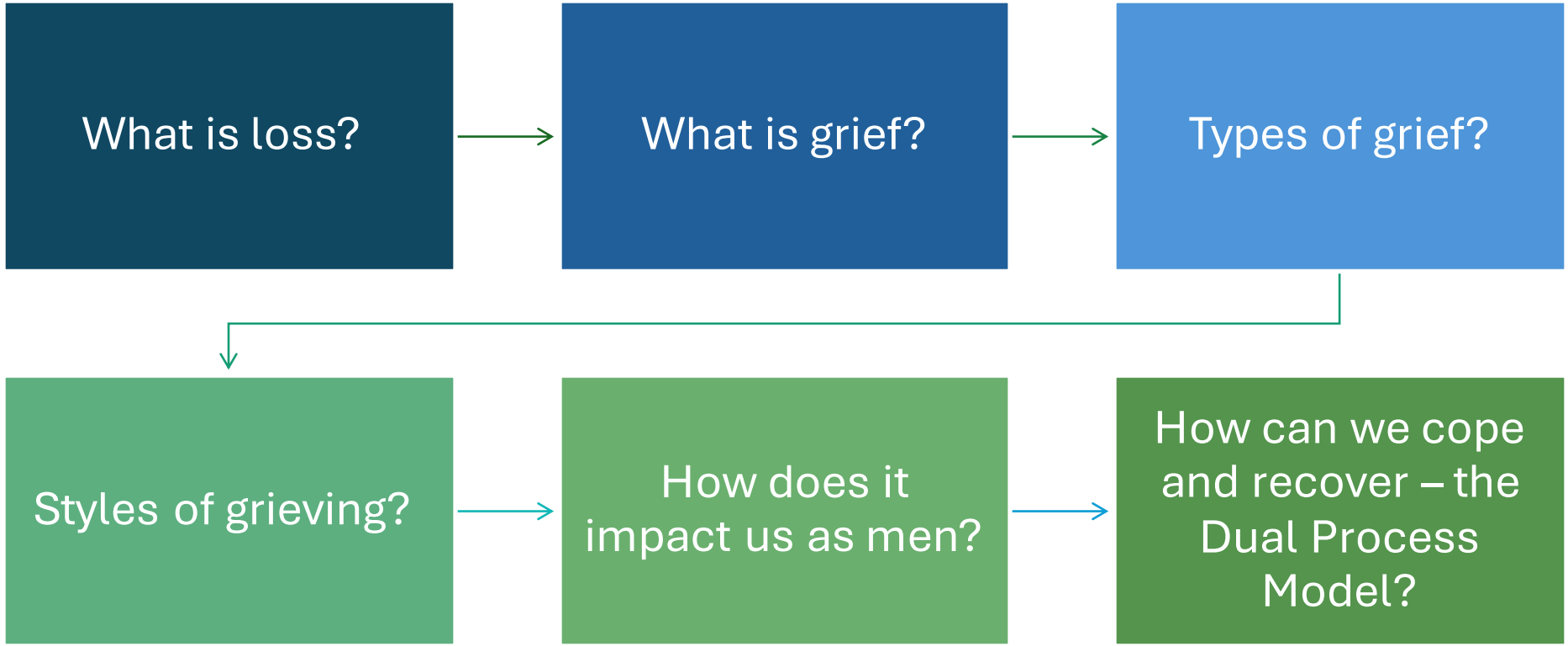
What will we cover?



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What is loss?

- Bereavement
- Relationship loss
- Job loss
- Loss of identity

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Reflection

What is your loss: who or what is lost?

- When did the loss occur?
- What do they mean to you?
- Describe your relationship with them.

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Grief

- Grief is the natural response to loss.

- Grief is experienced emotionally, cognitively, psychologically and physiologically.

- Grief is the brain's stress response as it learns to adapt to the change and tries to protect you.

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> Grief is a normal protective process. This process is an evolutionary adaptation to promote survival in the face of emotional trauma.

-Lisa M. Shulman, MD

AMERICAN BRAIN FOUNDATION

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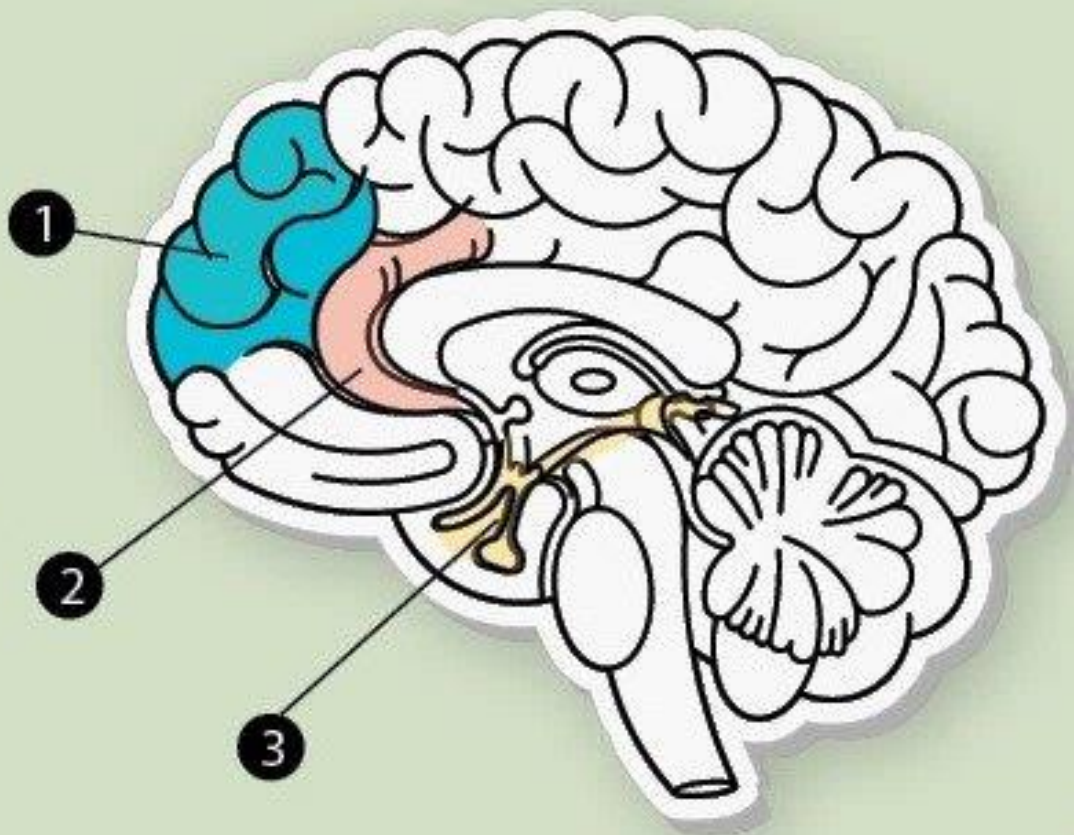
BRAIN REGIONS AFFECTED BY GRIEF

1 **The prefrontal cortex,** the "thinking center" of the brain, is underactive.

2 **The anterior cingulate cortex**, the emotional regulation center of the brain, is underactive.

3 **The amygdala,** the fear center of the brain, is overactive.



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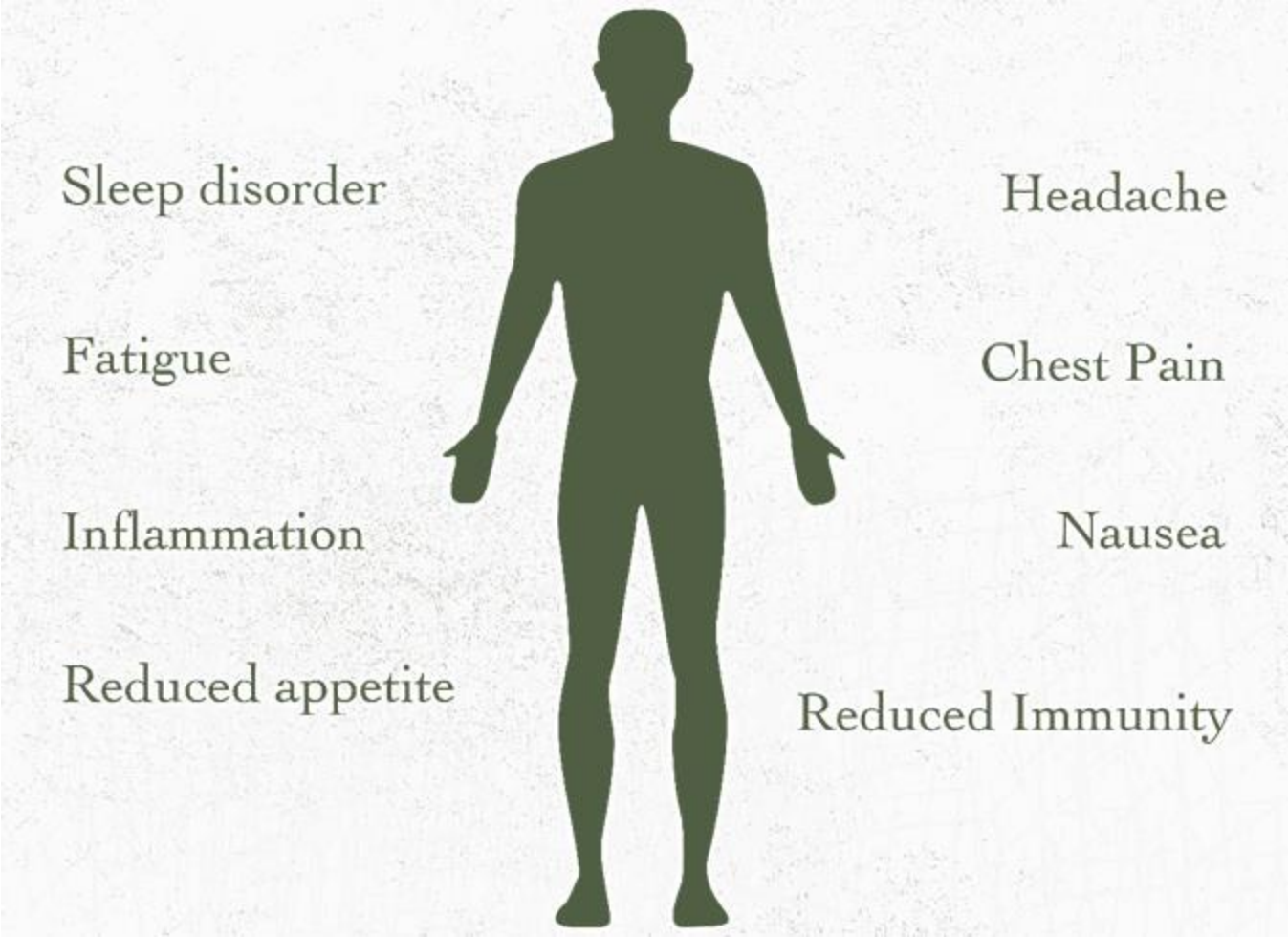
How can grief affect your body?



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Reflection

How has your grief response impacted your:

- Emotions
- Thoughts
- Physiology (body response)

Tip: what has changed in you?

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How do men grieve?

Thinking

Problem solving

Action

Coping behaviours – adaptive and maladaptive

Any other ideas?

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Supporting men

- Do men go to counselling?
- Do men lean on friends or family?
- Do men become isolated in grief?

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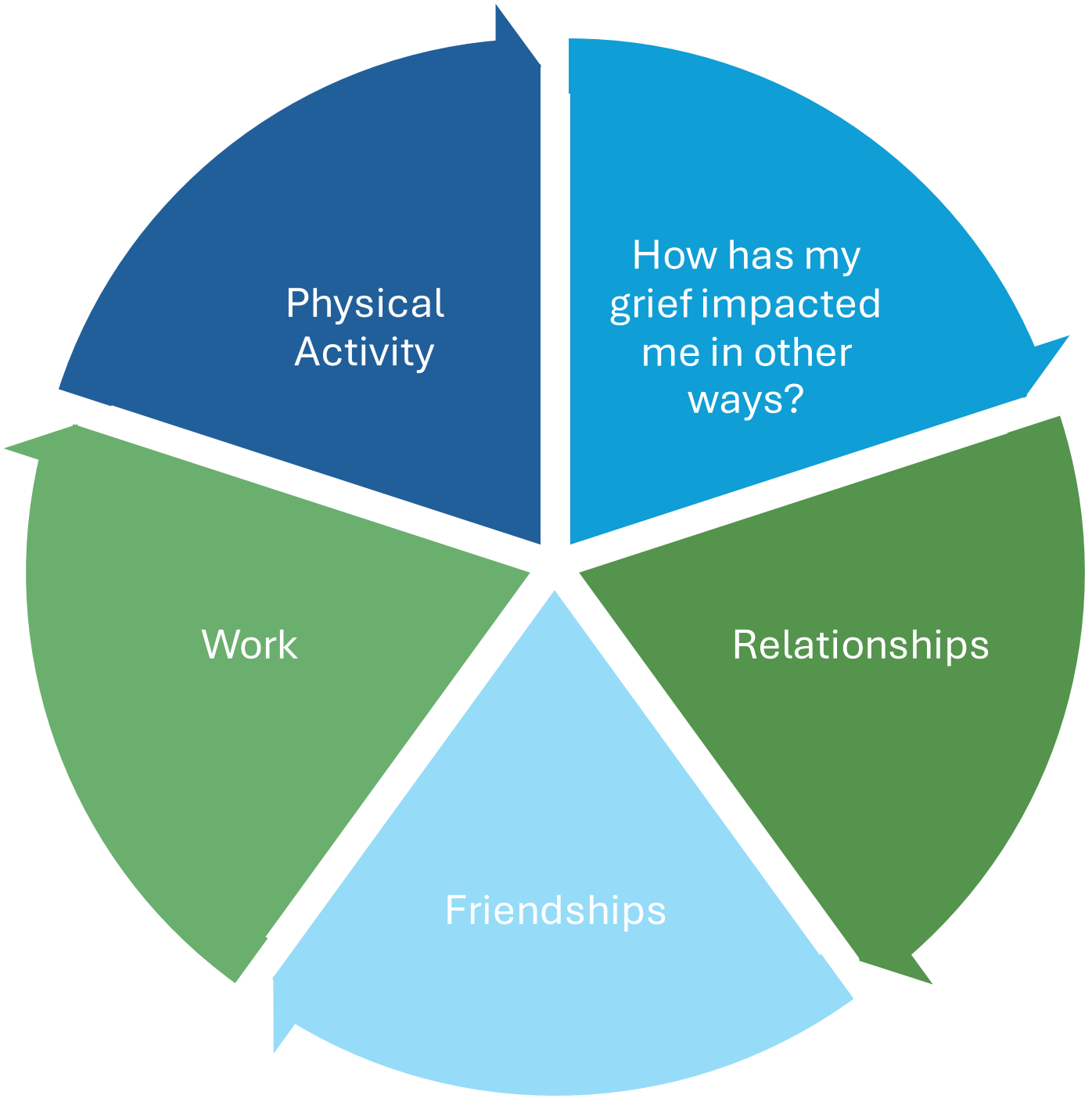
Reflection

Impact of Grief



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Types of grief

- Ambiguous Grief
- Disenfranchised grief
- Anticipatory grief
- Cumulative grief
- Traumatic grief
- Prolonged grief

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How do you cope?

Timing of Grief

- Is timing important?
- Does it ever end?
- What does the research say?
- What does experience say?

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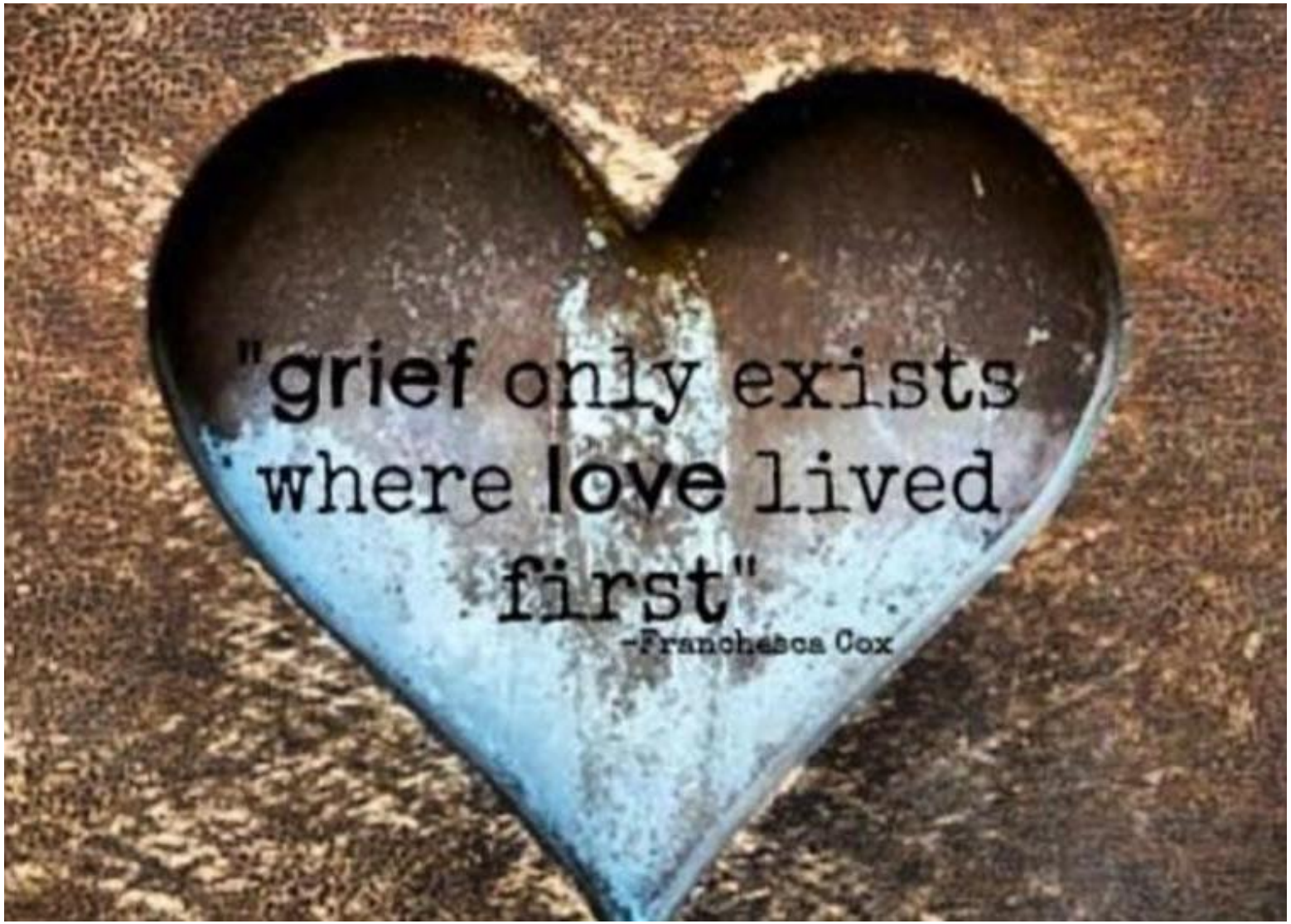

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The "F" Word: Feelings

For many men, this is where the challenge exists.

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Dealing with difficult emotions

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6 STEPS TO MINDFULLY DEAL WITH DIFFICULT EMOTIONS

1 **Turn toward your emotions with acceptance**
Become aware of the emotion and identify where you sense it in your body.

Identify and label the emotion
To stay mindful, say to yourself, "This is anger" or "This is anxiety."

2

3 **Accept your emotions**
Don't deny the emotion. Acknowledge and accept that it is there.

Realize the impermanence of your emotions
Even if the emotion feels overwhelming, remember that it will pass.

4

5 **Inquire and investigate**
Ask yourself, "What triggered me? Why do I feel this way?"

Let go of the need to control your emotions
Be open to the outcome of your emotions and what unfolds.

6

The Gottman Institute

Feelings

1. Primary

2. Secondary

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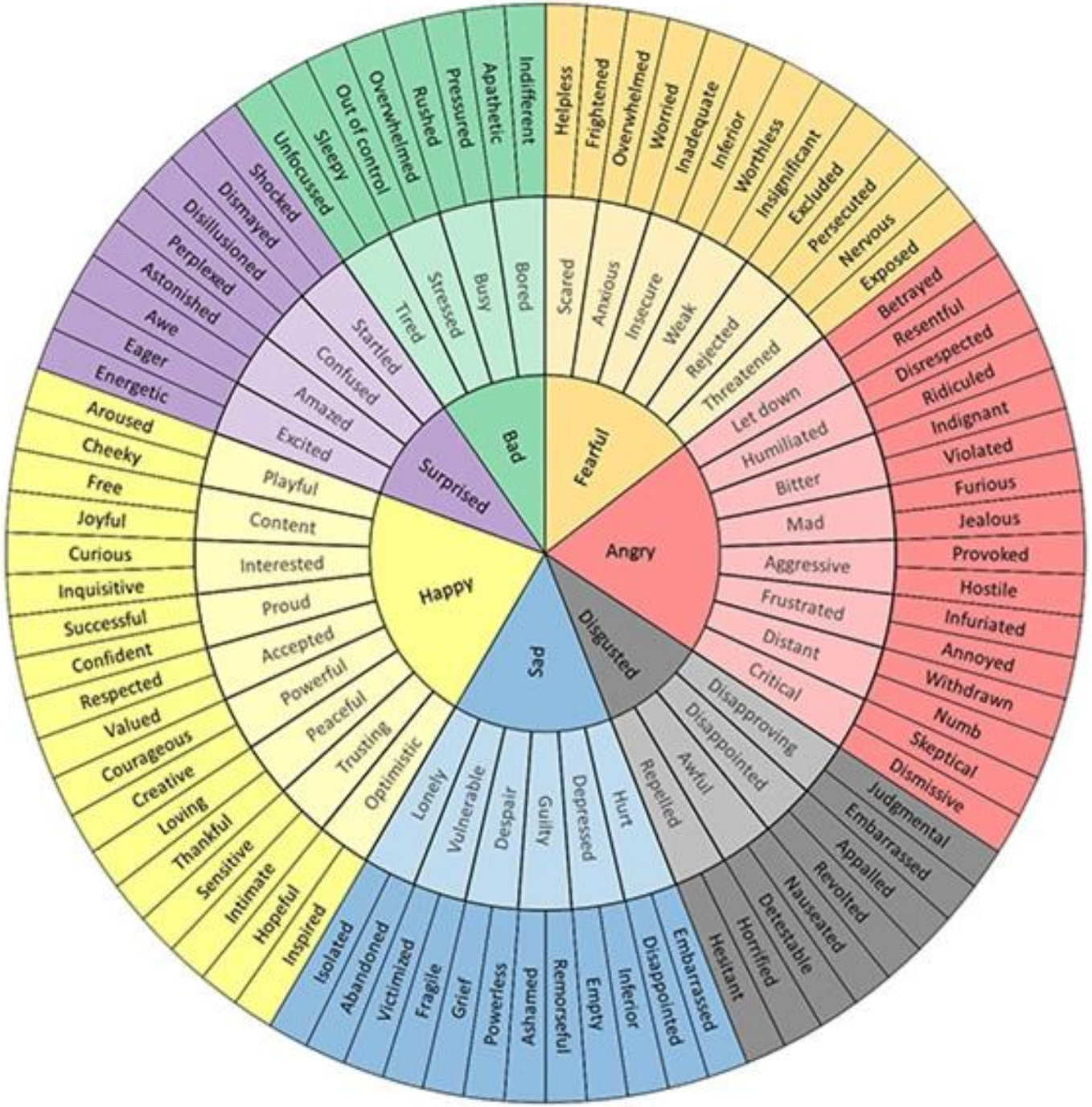
The Feelings Wheel:



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What are you feeling?

Does it change?

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Take a break

Change	Move	Drink
Change your position	Move your body	Have some water

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What does grief look like?

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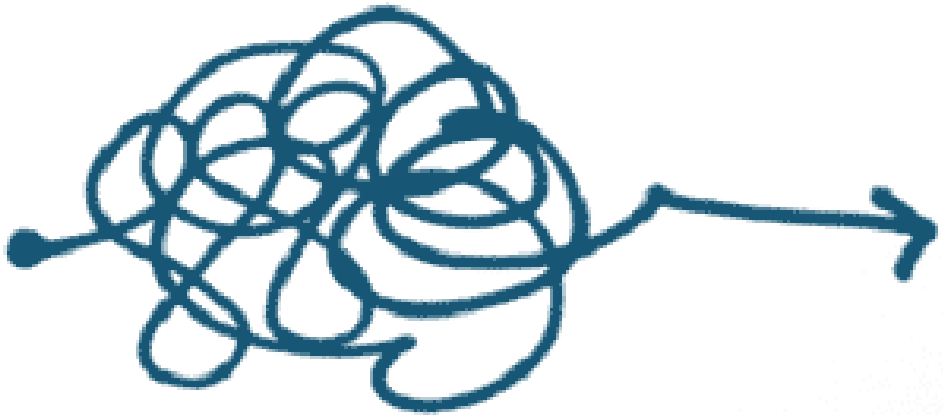
HOW WE WANT GRIEF TO WORK

HOW GRIEF ACTUALLY WORKS



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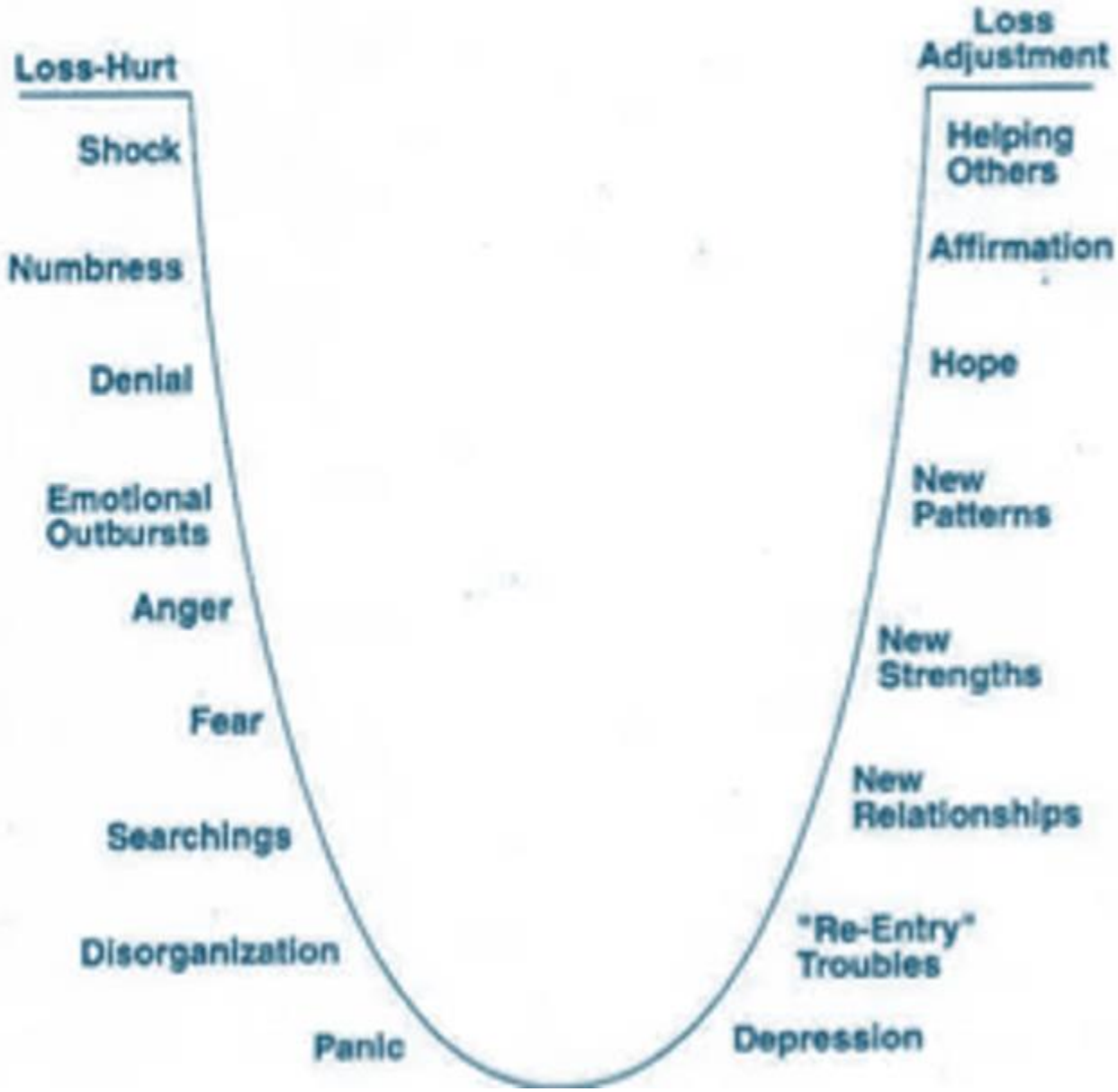
STAGES OF GRIEF



My experience

What's your style?

INTUITIVE – EMOTIONAL; FEELINGS

INSTRUMENTAL – THINKING; DOING

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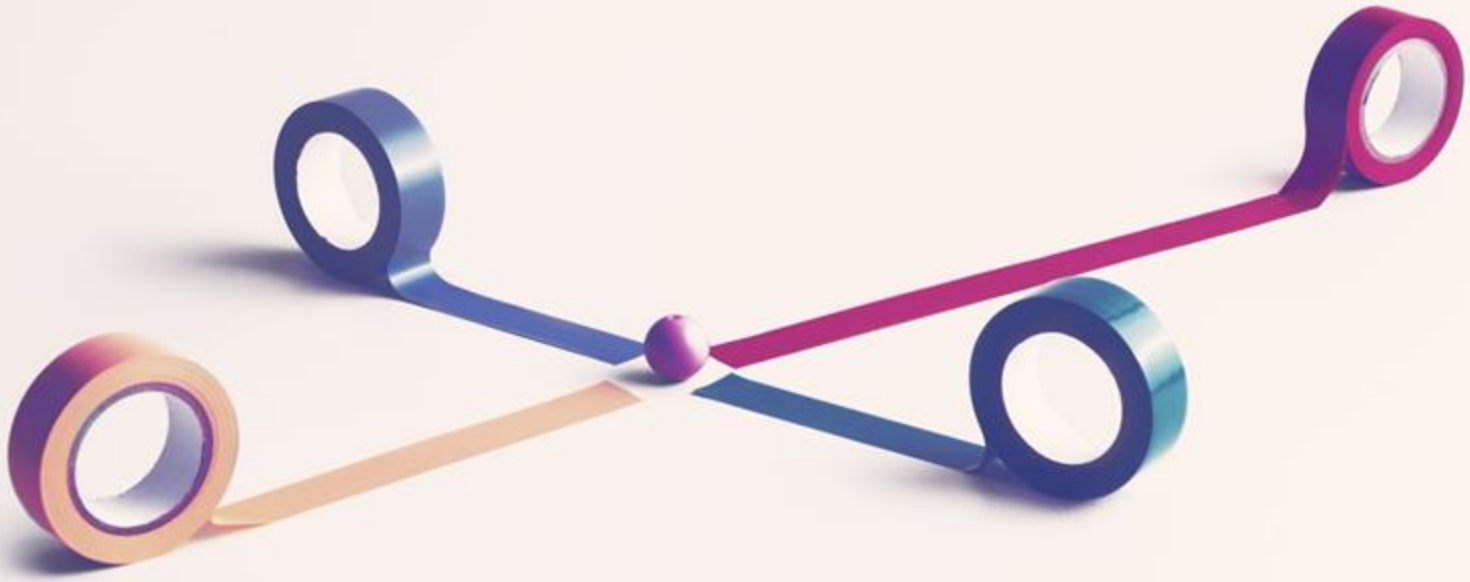
A continuum of style – does gender matter?



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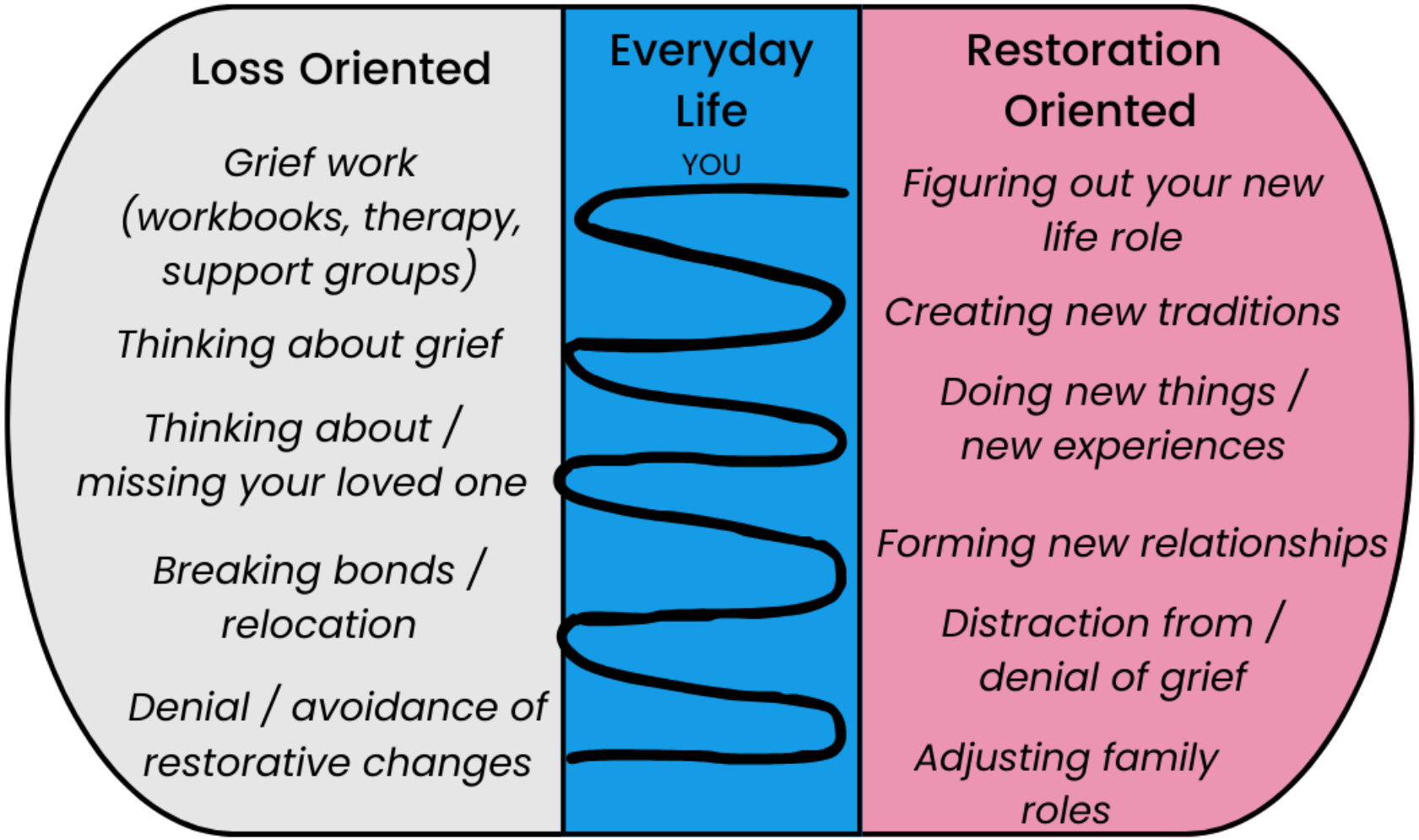
Coping and healing – a model



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Return to the loss

How can you be in the loss?

What are you thinking?

What are you feeling?

How does your grief style work here?

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The relationship

- What is your relationship with the person or thing lost?
- Who are they to you?

Individual Loss Activity

You are invited to write a letter to your lost person or thing.

What will you say to them?

What might you ask them?

Will you tell them how you feel?

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New relationship with the lost

What does this look like?

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Continuing Bonds

- Grief doesn't end.
- The relationship can continue.
- Legacy and influence.

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New relationship with self

What are you restoring?

New relationship with others

- Is this important to you?
- What might this look like?

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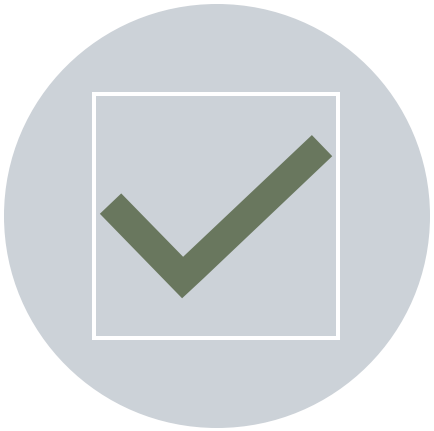
What is your restoration?



THE DOING

THE THINKING

THE FEELING

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Reminder:

Oscillation – be in the middle

We return to loss

We return to the restoration

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Looking behind...

...Looking forward

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Resources for support

griefline.org.au
Talk, share and explore

MensLine Australia
Call 1300 78 99 78

Lifeline
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Crisis Support. Suicide Prevention.

OPEN ARMS
Veterans & Families Counselling
FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL COUNSELLING
1800 011 046
OpenArms.gov.au

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