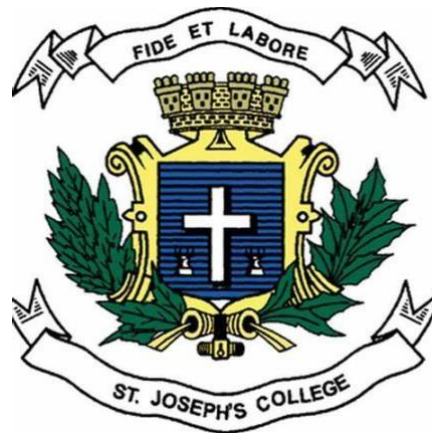


ST. JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY



Research on loss and grief

By

SARANYA RAJESH**21CBT02***Under the guidance of**Prof. Teena Mathew**(Department of English) St. Joseph's University**Bengaluru – 560027**IInd BSc. Biotechnology, Botany.*

ABSTRACT

Grief and loss are two intertwined, complicated emotions that are inescapably a part of being human. Loss is the sensation of having been denied of something precious or significant, such as a loved one passing away, losing a job, or getting divorced. The mental, psychological, and physical reaction to loss is known as grief, which can encompass a variety of emotions like sadness, anger, remorse, and despair. Grief and loss are common experiences, but how each person handles them varies and is influenced by things including society, personality type, and coping mechanisms. Emotional resilience and overall health depend on being able to navigate and regulate these events. In the following article, the mourning or grieving experience is explained from being able to identifying the mental, physical and emotional changes. Followed by analysing two surveys and the 5 major stages of grief. It is essential not only to know about how it initiates but also to be aware about its psychological effects and coping mechanisms.

INTRODUCTION:

"The risk of love is loss, and the price of loss is grief. But the pain of grief is only a shadow when compared with the pain of never risking love." - Hilary Stanton Zunin Nothing is permanent in life. Change is inevitable and we cannot hold on to people and things forever. We all would have experienced loss in some form or the other in our lives. Be it the death of our loved ones, pets, or even a relationship, basically anything that we attach affection and value to. A response to this loss is grief, which is a natural emotion. It can leave us sad, depressed and empty, and it can vary from person to person. Also, the time taken to overcome this grief can also vary from

weeks to months to years, again depending upon the person's ability to cope with it. Loss is irrevocable and one cannot get the person or relationship back. What one needs to understand is that the life must go on, and we need to move on with our life. There are many ways to handle grief, and one can seek help, in finding ways to come out of it. In most of the cases, there are friends and family who can try to bring us back to normal life. In spite of all the efforts, if the depression is still not getting controlled, then one should seek professional help, as there are many therapies and psychologists, who can help with this. We should not let this emotion get the better of us, otherwise, we might suffer in various other ways. Once this is handled appropriately, it will ultimately make the person stronger and wiser.

Loss brings along a huge wave of shock, numbness and instils fear. This waves takes with it all the hope and happiness. It washes off the need of acceptance and puts you to your initial trigger point, which is denial. Denial is well known to curtail that numbness and fear. It keeps those overwhelming gushes of emotions at bay. Initially most people, soon after losing a loved one or parting ways from them, move into a confused state of mind where they cannot process their emotions. To have control or to even realise what one is feeling, they need to become aware of their surrounding and feel a certain way in order to get better or heal. Grief appears to be located very relative to the centre of the body, the core around which identity revolves. When we encounter a transition involving something which matters to us, the spot in which we keep a remembering of what matters and grief can emerge. Grief can leave us feeling as though our very identity is tearing apart. It welcomes us to travel with it on a voyage. This voyage positively impacts the soul, even though we may choose not to take it. We are tasked with exercising progressive self-compassion, emphasising self-care, asking for help frequently, and facing the wilds of nothingness.

IDENTIFICATION:

Grief has an impact on not only our emotional reactions, but also our physical reactions. It causes physiological dysregulation that shows up in different parts of the body. It can affect daily functioning, including sleep and appetite.

Young adults might not comprehend the indications of grief if they fail to acknowledge the loss that they have encountered. So, while young adults are experiencing grief, it can come across as rage, discomfort, judgmental behaviour, or depression. Although sorrow is the most typical sign of grief, grieving can be characterized by a wide range of other emotions, including:

- Disbelief and a sense that this isn't really happening
- Lack of confidence, hopelessness
- A notion that nothing is essential.
- Impatience and anxiety
- A sensation of feeling powerless and helplessness in controlling things
- Worry and fear
- Lacking belief in themselves
- Self-destructive or self-harm thoughts
- Being diagnosed with trouble concentrating and coming up with choices
- Angry; blaming other people
- Perils
- Self-blame, remorse and shame
- Contesting religious convictions
- Lack of clarity and uncertainty
- Feeling alone and isolated and wondering why and how to move forward.

PHYSICAL INDICATIONS OF GRIEF:

Because the mind and body are intertwined, negative emotions like grief cause problems on both a mental and physical level. Every other system in the body, such as the immune system, respiratory system, and circulatory system, is affected when the nervous system is under stress. Consequently, the physical effects of grief include:

Breathing difficulty

Headaches

Stomach pain

Having more colds or other infections frequently

Reduced appetite and changes in weight

Exhaustion and issues sleeping

Weakness

Tense muscles

Heart palpitations and chest pain.

Even a condition called "broken heart syndrome," formally known as takotsubo cardiomyopathy, has been recognised by medical professionals. Extreme emotional distress causes one of the heart's chambers to enlarge, leading to symptoms that resemble a heart attack. Although this condition rarely results in death, one study found that the risk of experiencing a heart attack increased by 21 times a day.

SURVEY BASED ANALYSIS:

A survey from 2019 showed:

Although we may only link grief with death, a profound feeling of loss is frequently felt in response to a broad spectrum of incidents, according to respondents:

A family member's or their own serious illness impacted nearly one-third (31%) of individuals.

Another third (32%) had experienced the death of a relative or close friend, and nearly as many (29%) had complained the loss of a friendship or relationship.

Twenty percent were going through a pet death.

Smaller proportions complained divorce or additional losses like lost jobs, homes, or possessions.

Depending on what individuals had lost, participants of the survey reported different levels of intense sorrow. Most people (48%) reported that their most powerful emotions diminished within the first six months, and two-thirds (67%) said that they had recovered within a year. The probability of pet owners recuperating quickly was the greatest. Compared to 48% of those who lost a close friend or relative to death and 45% of those who complained the loss of a friendship or relationship, 66% of those who lost a pet reported that their profound sorrow lasted shorter than six months.

Losing a friend or ending a relationship seems to present unique difficulties. The internet makes it simple to see how someone you know continues to survive without you when connections tear up for a variety of complicated causes.

The majority of individuals, about 20%, who grieved relationship breakdowns were more likely to have experienced protracted sorrow.

In terms of feelings this category was more probable than any other to experience rage and despair. In addition, they were more likely to report alterations in hunger and discomfort. Additionally, individuals were more likely to suffer societal repercussions such as lack of trust or solitude, resentment, and self-blame, following the defeat.

Sixty percent of responders stated they felt pressure to move beyond their sadness from outsiders. The bulk of them believed they had three months to move on.

RESEARCH SURVEY FROM 2001:

Prevalence of Loss and Complicated Grief

William E. Piper, Ph.D., John S. Ogrodniczuk, Ph.D., Hassan F. Azim, M.D., Rene Weideman, Ph.D.

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A research survey from 2001 gave a detailed explanation of our reactions to sorrow.

This study was set out to determine how frequently, over the course of a year, patients at two psychiatric outpatient clinics experienced profound sorrow spurred by the loss of a friend or family member along with difficult mourning. About, 729 surveys were conducted with people who had experienced significant losses due to death over their lives. Using standard questionnaires, 235 individuals who had gone through these losses were split into three groups: very little disruption, moderately challenging grief, and extremely complicated grief. The three groups were contrasted to see if there were any variations in both traits that were specific to loss and those that were not. By means of standard questionnaires, 235 individuals who had gone through these losses were split into three groups: very little disruption, moderately challenging grief, and extremely complicated grief. The three groups were contrasted to see if there were any variations in both traits that were specific to loss and those that were not.

After losing a loved one to death, a sizeable fraction of the general population experiences unresolved grief and clinical complications. "Unresolved grief" refers to extremes in the severity or duration of grieving symptoms, such as protracted agony, protracted preoccupation with the deceased, or a total lack of response. Anxiety, sadness, social, occupational, and familial dysfunction, health-harming habits, and physical morbidity are examples of clinical consequences. Jacobs came to the conclusion that clinical issues occur in roughly 20% of those who are recently widowed after reviewing epidemiologic studies. Clinical issues and unresolved grief frequently occur, hence the two are sometimes referred to as complicated grieving.

Additionally, a significant number of patients at standard psychiatric outpatient facilities are thought to have complicated grieving. Although patients usually disregard loss as a motivation for seeking treatment—losses and related concerns only emerge after mistreatment—it is challenging to collect accurate projections. The frequency of loss and difficult grieving among the diverse individuals who visit regular psychiatric outpatient facilities has not been the subject of many studies. The majority of researchers have focused on certain samples, including ageing bereaved spouses. Even while these studies are crucial, they might inadvertently decreased estimates of the incidence of loss and difficult mourning in younger patients.

This exploratory study looked at how often patients in two inpatient psychiatric departments—one in an area suburban hospital and the other located in a downtown university institution—experienced loss and difficult grieving. The population studied was not elderly, in contrast to many studies on loss caused by the death of a different individual; the patients' median age was 42. Instead of partners or kids, parents, the grandparents, and friends were the most frequently lost. Over 55% of the sample had suffered a minimum of two losses due to death; the average loss was close to three. Based on death-specific symptoms, social breakdown, and the amount of time that has passed since the loss, two degrees of complicated grief moderate and severe were established.

RESEARCH BASED ON STATISTICS:

Later on, it was discovered that patients with extreme complicated grieving had considerably higher levels of sadness, anxiety, and overall symptomatic discomfort when compared to individuals who hadn't experienced the passing of another person. A greater prevalence of these illnesses were not automatically associated with merely suffering a loss due to death. Only patients with a severe form of complicated bereavement experienced symptoms that were noticeably worse. This research confirms the necessity to differentiate between the various complex levels of mourning. According to the statistics, a large part of the overall outpatient sample either complied with or exceeded the standards for moderate difficult mourning. The length of period that had passed after the losses

was also noteworthy; this shows that these individuals had experienced complicated long-term grieving. Clinicians and researchers struggle to distinguish between healthy and pathological responses to loss since there is no accepted definition or diagnostic criterion for complicated mourning. They run the potential of overemphasizing psychopathology if their standards are excessively lenient, and they face the danger of limiting individuals of effective treatment if they have rigorous criteria. It may be more beneficial to distinguish between various degrees of distress than to apply a precise cut off for complex grieving. Various forms of complicated sorrow can be taken into account by clinicians when developing treatment programmes and by researchers when examining its origins and remedies.

THE 5 STAGES OF GRIEF:

Elisabeth Kübler- Ross, a psychiatrist, originally described the five phases of mourning in her 1969 book "On Death and Dying." When a person experiences a severe loss or shift, there are a number of different emotional and cerebral stages that they go through. These are the five phases of grief

Denial

Denial is constantly a point of the original stage of anguish. Unbelief, shock, and a resistance to accept the verity of the loss characterise this stage. People may witness impassiveness and a dissociation from their passions throughout this phase. They can find it delicate to accept that the loss had passed or they might try to convert oneself allowing it isn't as severe as it seems.

Anger

The next phase of the grieving process is anger, frustration or as one says, fury. This is a typical and natural reaction to grief, since individuals frequently believe that what has transpired was unfair or unjust. People may become aggressive or focus their rage on themselves at this phase. They may experience anger, resentment, or even fury as they try to cope with the loss.

Bargaining

Thirdly, there is a juncture called bargaining. The urge to comprehend what has happened and a drive to gain back control characterize this stage. People may attempt to negotiate with an invisible hand or strive to reach a different result at this point. As they consider the possibility that they could have handled something differently, they could also feel guilty or regret.

Depression

The second last stage of this period-depression. People frequently experience melancholy, emptiness, or hopelessness after experiencing a loss, thus this is a natural reaction. People could become more reclusive at this time and battle with discovering fulfilment or happiness in their life. They could feel numb or detached from the surroundings around them, as well as bodily symptoms like exhaustion or insomnia.

Acceptance

Acceptance is the fifth and conclusive stage of pain. In this stage, people start to accept the loss and feel a feeling of calm and resolution. People can discover a new sense of purpose or significance in this stage, and they might start striving forward with renewed enthusiasm and hope. Even while individuals may still occasionally feel sad or grieve, these emotions are no longer overwhelming, and they are once more able to experience happiness and fulfilment in their life.

It is crucial to remember that the grieving process is not always linear, and individuals may switch from one stage to another among different stages. Not everyone will go through each step, nor will they necessarily go through them in the same order or combination. Because grieving is a highly individualised process, it's crucial to give folks the time and space they require.

TYPES OF GRIEF:

Normal Grief

Grief is normal in and of itself. It is completely normal to experience grief after losing someone or anything. You could feel a wide variety of emotions as you go through the grieving process. While some of these might be psychological, behavioral, or social, others may be physical.

Chronic Grief

When extraordinarily emotional reactions to loss don't pass, chronic grieving ensues. You will experience enormous distress that only gets worse as a result of these emotions, which will linger for an extended amount of time. You won't be able to make a great deal, if any, advancement toward healing from your grief.

Anticipatory Grief

If you anticipate losing a close family member or friend soon, anticipatory grieving or mourning may be typical. You might start attempting to picture life without them in order to prepare yourself mentally for the coming loss. It may occur frequently when a loved one is suffering from an incurable illness.

Distorted Grief

A particularly strong or disproportionate response to a loss is known as distorted grief. In general, there will usually be a discernible change in conduct, and detrimental behaviour is also normal. Among the many typical emotional signs of misdirected mourning is wrath and strike out, both at oneself and at others.

Grief of Disenfranchisement (Ambiguous)

When you believe that others have not acknowledged your loss, grief can become disenfranchised. This may occur if a society or community fails to acknowledge your loss. For instance, there may be a tremendous shame associated with overdosing or committing self-harm, and your feelings of loss may be disregarded. Alternately, perhaps the deceased was somebody for whom others believe you ought not to or would not grieve, such as a same-sex lover, a former husband, a member of a gang. Disenfranchised grief may arise if the passing isn't acknowledged or you aren't feeling understood or included in how you're experiencing and mourning.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF LOSS

The cerebral goods of loss can be profound and varied, and can depend on a range of factors similar as the nature of the loss, the existent's personality and managing style, and their support system. Then are some common cerebral goods of loss Grief and mourning the most immediate and profound cerebral effect of loss is grief, which can be characterized by passions of sadness, despair, wrathfulness, guilt, and forlornness. Mourning is the process of working through these feelings and coming to terms with the loss. Depression it's common for individualities who have endured a significant loss to witness depression, which can be marked by symptoms similar as patient sadness, loss of interest or pleasure in conditioning, fatigue, wakefulness, and changes in appetite or weight. Anxiety Loss can also lead to passions of anxiety and solicitude, including anxiety about the future, fear of abandonment or loss of control, and hypervigilance. Perversity Loss can also spark passions of wrathfulness, which may be directed at oneself, others, or indeed at the world in general. This can manifest as perversity, frustration, and passions of injustice or unfairness. Guilt-blame its common for individualities who have endured a loss to feel shamefaced or to condemn themselves for what has happed, indeed if they aren't responsible. Difficulty with attention and decision- making grief and loss can also impact cognitive function, making it delicate for individualities to concentrate, make opinions, and flash back important details. Changes in voice- conception Loss can also lead to a reassessment of one's sense of tone, values, and pretensions. Individualities may witness changes in their identity and voice- conception as a result of the loss. Relationship difficulties Loss can also impact connections, both in terms of being connections and in terms of forming new bones. Individualities may struggle to connect with others or may find that their connections are strained as a result of their grief. It's important to note that the cerebral goods of loss can be complex and multifaceted, and that everyone goes through grief and loss. It's important to seek support and to allow oneself time and space to work through these feelings in a healthy and formative way. Dealing with loss is a complicated and intensely individual one that can be difficult. It's crucial to give yourself permission to mourn and to ask for help when you need it. The majority of individuals have the capacity to find methods to cope with the tragedy and go on with their life with time and assistance.

COPING MACHANISMS FOR THE BETTERMENT:

Although dealing with sorrow and loss can be a difficult and painful process, there are methods that can support people in processing their emotions and achieving acceptance and peace. So, what are some effective management techniques?

Seek assistance: Seeking help from close ones, relatives, or a professional counsellor is crucial because they can offer emotional support and affirmation. Support groups are also beneficial because they foster a sense of belonging and participation.

Self-care is crucial, but it can be challenging to prioritise self-care activities like exercise, sleep, and a healthy diet when going through a tough time.

Developing an everyday routine might provide you a sense of stability and order during a chaotic moment.

Express oneself creatively: Using the arts to express one's emotions can be beneficial. Examples include writing, painting, and music.

Take a break: To give yourself time to grieve the loss, it might be essential to take a break from work or other obligations.

Find a sense of purpose and goal: After a loss, it can be useful to find a sense of direction and significance. This could entail doing volunteer work, indulging in a pastime, or doing tasks that are enjoyable.

If necessary, get professional assistance from a mental health professional or counsellor. This is especially important if sorrow is impairing everyday activities or causing protracted distress.

Use mindfulness practices to minimize anxiousness and tension and to foster emotions of relaxation and inner peace. These approaches include meditation, mindful breathing, and the practice of yoga.

Exercise: Exercising can be a beneficial approach to relax, lower stress levels, and elevate mood. Exercises like yoga, running, and walking can also help one feel connected to their body.

Maintain a journal: Expressing one's emotions and ideas through journaling can be a beneficial approach to cope with feelings of loss and sadness.

Seek spiritual guidance: Taking part in spiritual activities or looking for the guidance of a religious group can bring comfort and hope.

Being outdoors in nature, whether trekking, landscaping, or just relaxing outside, might help you feel more connected to it.

COUNCELLING STRATEGIES:

Different counselling techniques can be useful in assisting people in coping with sorrow and loss. Some of these tactics consist of:

Fostering a secure and encouraging atmosphere: A counsellor may provide a secure and encouraging environment where a person can communicate their feelings around loss and grief.

Encouragement of emotional expression: The counsellor can assist the client in recognising and expressing their feelings in relation to the grief, this can aid in healing and avoid emotional repression.

Assisting in the identification and refutation of unfavourable thoughts: Guilt or self-blame are only a few examples of the unfavourable beliefs that can frequently accompany grief. By using cognitive-behavioural therapy strategies, the counsellor can assist the client in recognising these harmful thoughts and challenging them.

Educating the client on the grieving process: By explaining the common stages and feelings of sorrow, the counsellor can help the client feel validated and normalised.

Finding and remembering the long-lost individual or item: The counsellor can assist the client in finding and remembering the deceased individual or object, which can aid in healing and offer a feeling of closure.

GIST OF EVENTS THAT ONE GOES THROUGH:

Grief is the emotional reaction to losing someone or something that is significant to us, whereas loss is the experience of having something taken away from us. It is a typical and natural response to loss and can take many different forms, such as sadness, rage, guilt, confusion, and numbness. Everyone experiences grief differently, and it can take some time. Allowing oneself to grieve is crucial. If necessary, one should also seek support from family, friends, and mental health professionals. Loss and grief go in tandem. When we experience loss, we may experience a range of emotions, which include despair, frustration, bafflement, and isolation. A loved one, a colleague, a connection, a sense of belonging, or even one's identity can all be lost. During the grieving process, every one of these sentiments would be present. Grieving is an emotional reaction to loss that takes multiple forms depending on the person and how the loss has affected them. Others may retract and become more introspective, while some people may cry and publicly convey what they're feeling. There is no proper or incorrect manner to grieve as long as the individual is enabling themselves to encounter and process one's emotions. There is no right or wrong way to grieve as long as the individual is allowing themselves to experience and process their emotions. Asking for assistance from friends, family, or a counsellor is advised for people who are having a hard time trying to deal with their loss. The grieving procedure may appear exhausting. It is also important for people to practise self-compassion and perseverance during this difficult period because getting over a loss can be a long process that may necessitate a great deal of selfcare. Grief is comparable to a boat's wake. It begins as a massive wave that surges after you closely and is large enough to engulf and destroy you if you abruptly stop moving ahead. However, if you continue to move, the large wake will ultimately fade.

CONCLUSION:

Grief and loss are difficult events that can significantly affect a person's mental, emotional, and physical health. There is no one "correct" way to grieve, but studies indicate that certain coping processes and tactics can help people handle their sorrow and encourage recovery. These can include of asking friends and family for assistance, going to counselling or support groups, practicing self-care techniques like fitness and concentration, and coming up with ways to honour and commemorate the lost person or object. It's crucial to remember that there are various kinds of grieving, such as anticipatory sorrow (occurs when person knows loss is coming) and marginalized grief. These kinds of sorrow can be especially difficult to handle, therefore it can be especially beneficial to seek assistance from a professional counsellor or support group. Overall, it's crucial for people to understand that experiencing loss and grieving is a normal aspect of being a person, and that getting support and learning healthy coping mechanisms can help people heal and feel better emotionally. People can learn to traverse the intricacies of grieving and come out with greater resilience and strength with patience, persistence, and compassion for oneself.

"Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve." - Earl Grollman

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