

# Processing Grief and Practicing Self Care

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# Disclaimer

- \* The views and opinions expressed in this presentation are those of the presenter alone and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of Cushing's Support & Research Foundation.

# Goals

- \* Explore self care, ambiguous loss & self compassion strategies.
- \* Identify new tools to support the journey.



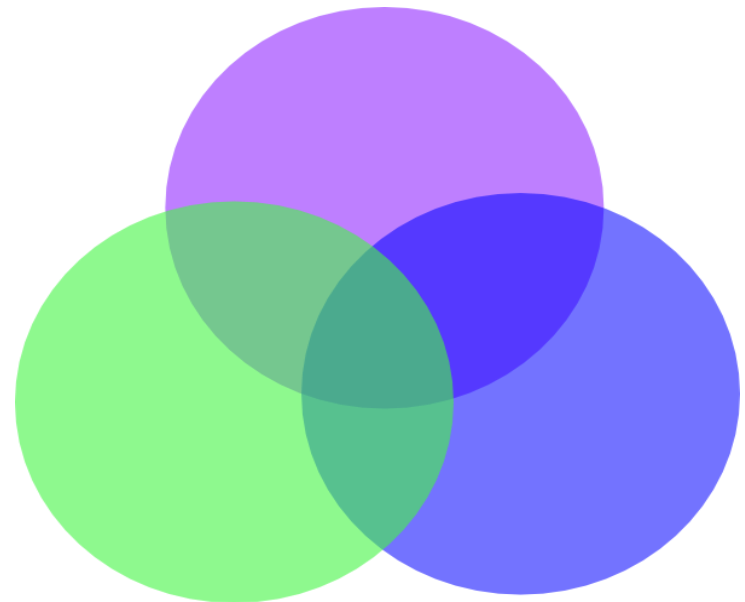
# Definitions

- \* **Self-Care:** Actions or thoughts done to maintain quality of life and well-being.
- \* **Self-Compassion:** Offering ourselves kindness and self-awareness *without* judgment.



# Self-Care Strategies Overview

- \* Cognitive
- \* Behavioral
- \* Interpersonal
- \* Spiritual



# Cognitive Strategies

\* *“The mind is everything. What you think you become.”*

Buddha



# Cognitive Strategies

\* *“Don’t let anyone rent space in your head unless they are a good tenant.”*

Unknown



# Cognitive Strategies

- \* **Question:**

Would we talk to our friends the way we talk to ourselves?

- \* **Positive Self-talk** vs negative automatic thinking from Feeling Good by David Burns





# Cognitive Strategies

- \* **Self-compassion:** “Comforting and caring for ourselves”. Kristen Neff, PhD self-compassion.org



# Cognitive Strategies

## \* Key Components

- \* Self-kindness vs self-judgment
- \* Common humanity vs Isolation
- \* Mindfulness vs. Over-identification



# Cognitive Strategies

- \* Identify Nurturing, Protective and Wise figures
- \* Tapping In book by Laurel Parnell



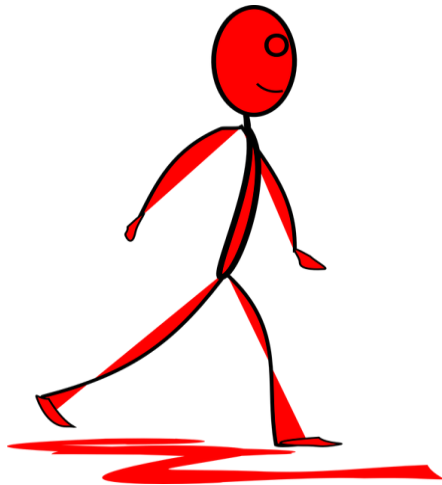
# Cognitive Strategies

- \* **Mindfulness:** Awareness without judgment.
- \* Goal: Stop the circular thinking
- \* **Positive affirmation** example: *“I am capable, doing my best, worthy of\_\_\_\_\_”*.



# Behavioral Strategies

- \* **Physical Activity:** gentle, focused on breath and calming.
- \* bilateral stimulation to calm the body



# Behavioral Strategies

- \* *“Our minds change our bodies and our bodies change our minds.”* Amy Cuddy
- \* Hormone test and power poses



# Interpersonal Strategies

\* *“Rarely does a response make something better. What makes something better is connection.”*

\* Brene Brown “On Empathy”  
TED Talk

# Interpersonal Strategies

## \*TESHD

- \* Touch
- \* Eye Contact
- \* Seen Accurately
- \* Heard Accurately
- \* Delighted in





# Interpersonal Strategies

## \* ARP

- \* **A**vailable
- \* **R**eliable
- \* **P**riority



# Interpersonal Strategies

\* *“Share with others who have earned the right to hear your story.”*

Brene Brown



# Ambiguous Loss

Pauline Boss

- \* “Ambiguous loss....prevents resolution... and freezes the grief process.”
- \* Ambiguous loss differs from typical loss in that there is no clarity regarding a return to prior diagnoses functioning.

# Ambiguous Loss

## Guidelines Pauline Boss

- \* Finding Meaning.
- \* Adjusting Mastery.
- \* Reconstructing Identity
- \* Normalizing ambivalence
- \* Revising Attachment
- \* Discovering New Hope

# Spiritual Strategies

- \* Three-fold:
  - \* **Belief** in something larger than oneself
  - \* A consistent **ritual** or **practice**
  - \* **Sharing** the belief and practice with a community of others



# Spiritual Strategies

*“God, grant me the serenity to accept the  
things I cannot change,  
The courage to change the things I can,  
And the wisdom to know the difference...”*

-Reinhold Niebuhr

# In Summary

- \* Continue to care for yourself, daily, in little ways with ***kindness*** and ***compassion***.
- \* Find your ***TESHD*** and ***ARP***.
- \* Remember you have the right to ask for a second or third opinion, doctor, support in appointments, and more time with your provider.



# *Resources*

- The Feeling Good book by David Burns PhD
- Tapping In book by Laurel Parnell PhD
- Guided Imagery For Stress Reduction by Belleruth Napartsek on YouTube(10 minutes)
- Breathe2Relax free app
- Mindfulness Coach free app
- Self-compassion.org website by Dr. Kristin Neff, PhD
- “Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are” TED talk by Amy Cuddy, PhD
- “On Empathy” YouTube animated video by Brene Brown, PhD
- Ambiguousloss.com website by Pauline Boss



# *Thank you!*

*\* “To keep a lamp burning, we have to keep putting oil in it.”*

Mother Theresa

