



Grief and Loss: Brain Injury, COVID-19 and Beyond

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Objectives

- ▶ **Learn about the common reactions to loss**
- ▶ **Explore ways to care for yourself, with specific focus on self-care during the pandemic**
- ▶ **Learn skills to support others who are grieving**

What is loss?



What is grief?



Grief

What do I want when I'm grieving?

I want a hug

I want to be told that everything happens for a reason

I want concrete things done for me (laundry, shopping, cooking)

I want someone to cheer me up

I want to be told how strong I am

I want to be left alone

I want to be kept busy

I want to be encouraged

I want someone to share similar stories of loss

I want to receive cards/flowers

I want people to ask me how I am feeling

I want people to give me information about grief

I want advice

I want someone to remind me to be grateful for the memories

I want someone who will listen to me share my experience

How can I help others who are grieving?



- ▶ What do they need?
- ▶ Do they need the same thing I need?
- ▶ How will I know what they need?
- ▶ What is important for me to remember when I am supporting others?



A note
about shame

Mourning



- ▶ Mourning is the expression of grief, typically occurring in community

How to support another griever

- ▶ Allow the person to “feel felt”
- ▶ Let the person have all of their feelings
- ▶ See behavior as information
- ▶ Follow their lead
- ▶ Avoid problem solving, advice and cliches
- ▶ Ask yourself, “Why Am I Talking?” (WAIT)
- ▶ Get support for yourself
- ▶ Remember, there are no rewards for speed
- ▶ Don't be attached to a certain outcome

Let's practice!

- ▶ If you are comfortable:
 - ▶ Share a personal loss (something related to brain injury, COVID-19, or something else)
 - ▶ Observe different ways to listen

What was it like to listen to someone, or to be listened to?

Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey



- ▶ Founded in 1981 by family members and friends of persons with brain injury, the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and advocating for individuals affected by brain injury and raising public awareness through education and prevention.



Direct Services

- ▶ Case Management
 - ▶ Family Support
 - ▶ CARES
- ▶ Information and Resources Helpline
 - ▶ 1-732-783-6172
 - ▶ Live Chat www.bianj.org
- ▶ Support Groups
- ▶ Camp TREK (Together in Recreation, Education, and Knowledge)
- ▶ Council for the Head Injured Community (CHIC)



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▶ youtube.com/brainhealthnetwork

▶ instagram.com/braininjuryallianceofnj

▶ www.bianj.org



Thank you!

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