GRIEF RECOVERY AND ADDICTION

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New Life Journey
Grief Recovery and Addiction

• Grieve losses not just death
• Addiction creates multiple losses
• Addiction often preceded by multiple losses
Focusing on Grief in Treatment often lowers resistance and defensiveness

- Helps clients see that their initial abuse of substances often was a response to emotional pain.
- Helps them to understand concept of “switching” their addictions.
- Emphasizes importance of finding adaptive way of managing feelings in recovery
MYTH OF STAGES OF GRIEF
Getting stuck in Grief: Myths

• Time heals all wounds
• Replace the loss
• Keep busy
• Grieve alone
• Be strong for others
Feelings Associated with Grief
Feelings Associated with Grief

- Hopelessness
- Despair
- Anger
- Loneliness
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Lost
- Confused
- Guilty
- Relieved
- Sadness
- Helpless
Getting stuck in Grief: STERBS

- **S**hort
- **T**erm
- **E**nergy
- **R**elief
- **B**ehavior
- **S**
Different Types of STERBS
DIFFERENT TYPES OF STERBS

*Anything done in excess to avoid the emotional pain of grief

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Sex
- Food
- Work

- TV
- Reading
- Videos
- Exercise
- Relationships
Getting Stuck in Grief

- Incompleteness: Unfinished Business
- Wanting More, Different, or Better
Loss History Graph
Relationship Graph

- Examine Relationship pros and cons
Letter of Completion

- AMENDS
- FORGIVENESS
- Other emotionally laden statements
REFERENCES

• Grief Recovery Institute
• Grief Recovery Handbook – Russell Friedman
• When Children Grieve- Russell Friedman