


TAPS
Institute for Hope and Healing


Coping with Grief, Reaching Out for Support
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Presented by Boeing 

Five Things to Look for When Reaching Out for Support

1. Do I really need help?
2. Does a grief counselor need to have had a loss?
3. Goodness of fit
4. Strengths-based
5. Culturally competent




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#1: Do I Really Need Help?

If you have any of the following:

- Few resources or support
- A history of mental illness, drug abuse, or alcohol abuse
- Feeling hopeless and suicidal
 - A plan
 - Access to a plan

• **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 or Text HOME to the Crisis Text Line at 741741**



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#2: Does a Grief Counselor Need to Have Had a Loss?

- Many excellent grief counselors have not had a significant loss
- Local hospices or counseling centers can be a good resource



#3: Is it a Good Fit?

- Ask for referrals or look online for a counselor
- Goodness of fit is key
- What are you looking for in a grief counselor?
- First session should be used to interview counselor
 - Come prepared with questions



#4: Strengths-based

- A type of positive counseling that focuses on strengths and resourcefulness
- Non-pathology based
- Focus is on what has helped clients deal with past losses
- Looks at posttraumatic growth

(Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2010)



#5: Culturally Competent

- The ability to understand, interact, and be respectful and responsive to the beliefs and practices of diverse populations
- The ability to learn and gain knowledge of different cultural practices and world views



Ten Tips for Coping with Grief

1. Breathe
2. Gratitude
3. Service
4. Mindfulness
5. Self-compassion
6. Connect with others
7. Get physical
8. Music
9. Laughter and smiling
10. Hugs



Tip #1: Breathe

- Our breath is shallow when we are grieving
- Sitting up straight improves mood
(Kraft & Pressman, 2012)
- Breathing exercise:
 - Place your feet on the floor and breathe in & out slowly for three breaths
 - Practice taking three deep breaths several times throughout the day (i.e., at red light)
(Ben-Shahar, 2014)




"If I had to limit my advice on healthier living to just one tip, it would be simply to learn how to breath correctly"
—Dr. Andrew Weil

Tip #2: Gratitude

- Express gratitude
 - Gratitude leads to biggest happiness increases
(Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2007)
- Keep a gratitude journal
 - Write down five things you are grateful for everyday
 - This has positive physical and psychological effects
(Emmons & McCullough, 2002)


Gratitude
"it is not joy that makes us grateful, it is gratitude that makes us joyful." - David Steindl-Rast



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Gratitude Exercise


Think of something you're grateful for
(Holden, 2012)



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Tip #3: Be of Service

- Perform random acts of kindness
(Tkach & Lyubomirsky, 2006)
- Allow others to serve you
 - This is a random act of kindness




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Tip #4: Mindfulness

- Become fully present in whatever you are doing
(Ben-Shahar, 2007; Kashdan, 2009; Lambert, 2007)
- Run your hands under cold water, or hold ice cubes. Think about the cold sensation, it will bring you back to the current moment.
- Meditating 15 minutes daily
 - Decreases anxiety
 - Changes mood
 - Strengthens immune system

(Ben-Shahar, 2014)



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Tip #5: Self-Compassion

- Treat yourself the way you'd want others to treat you
- Stop beating yourself up and judging yourself
(Psychology Monitor, 2011)



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Tip #6: Connect with Others

- Have social connections with others
(Happiness, by Ed Diener & Robert Biswas-Diener)
- 75-year longitudinal study of men found that warmth of relationships throughout life had the greatest positive impact on life satisfaction
(Harvard Study; Dr. George Vaillant)

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Connect with Others: Exercise


Shake your hand, or someone else's for 6 seconds; this boosts social resilience
(McGonigal, 2012)



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Tip #7: Get Physical


- Exercise is medicine
(Ben-Sharhar, 2012)
- 60% of Americans get no exercise
- Walking 30 minutes, three times/week will change your life
(Center for Disease Control, 2016; Ilardi, 2010)
- Walking was found more impactful than Zoloft in two research studies
(Ilardi, 2010)
- Walking just ten minutes daily felt good two hours later
(Holden, 2012)



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Tip #7 – Get Physical

- Boost physical resilience:
 - Raise hands over head for 5 seconds
 - Snap fingers 50 times (also boosts mental resilience)
(McGonigal, 2012)



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Tip #8: Listen to Uplifting Music

- Therapeutic sound medicine
- Sing, hum, or whistle
 - Helps release endorphins
(York University research: Psych. Monitor, 2012)



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Tip #9 – Laughter and Smiling

- Relieves stress for up to 45 minutes
- Boosts immune system
- Triggers release of endorphins
(Smith, Kemp, Segal, 2012)
- 10-15 minutes of laughter a day can burn up to 40 calories
(Vanderbilt University study, 2013)
- A sense of humor can protect against heart disease
(University of Maryland study, 2009)



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Tip #9: Laughter and Smiling

- Smile
 - Bite down on a pencil and smile for 60 seconds
 - Facial feedback theory of emotion
(Kraft & Pressman, 2012)



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Tip #9: Laughter and Smiling

- Looking at animal pictures improves mood and increases productivity

(Hiroshima University, 2013)



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Tip #10: Hugs

- Hugging for only twenty seconds a day decreases stress
- Link between hugs and lower risk of heart disease

(Grewen & Light, 2005)



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Tip #10: Hug Exercise

Hug yourself!



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The Compassionate Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Please join *The Compassionate Friends* Worldwide Candle Lighting on **December 9, 2018** to unite family and friends around the globe in lighting candles to honor the memories of all the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren gone too soon.


As candles are lit at 7:00 PM local time, hundreds of thousands of individuals commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.



The Compassionate Friends provides support to parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters that have lost a child at any age from any cause. TCF is honored to partner with TAPS and HFA to bring support to those in need.

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Questions



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The TAPS Institute for Hope and Healing, launched in March 2018 through an alliance with HFA, serves as a worldwide bereavement resource and training center for grief professionals and military and civilian individuals and families.

www.taps.org/institute

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Upcoming TAPS Institute Programs

September 14 **Understanding and Applying Modern Grief Theory***
10:00 am-4:00 pm ET – at the TAPS Institute

- **Litsa Williams**, MA, LCSW-C and **Eleanor Haley**, MS, co-founders of *What's Your Grief?*

September 19 **Suicide, Grief, and Trauma: Supporting Veterans and Families of the Fallen***
Noon-1:30 pm ET – Live webinar

- **Shauna Springer**, PhD, Senior Director of TAPS Suicide Prevention and Postvention
- Moderated by **Kim Ruocco**, MSW, Vice President of TAPS Suicide Prevention and Postvention

September 26 **Counseling Bereaved Teens: Bridging the Communication Gap***
1:00 pm-3:30 pm ET – at the TAPS Institute – *for grief, social service, & education professionals*

- **Pamela Gabbay**, EdD, FT, The Satori Group, LLC; **Andy McNiel**, MA, The Satori Group, LLC; and **Tina Barrett**, EdD, LCPC, Executive Director and Co-Founder, Tamarack Grief Resource Center

September 26 **Talking with Teens About Death and Dying: Bridging the Communication Gap***
4:30 pm-6:00 pm ET – at the TAPS Institute – *for parents, grandparents, guardians & caregivers*

- **Pamela Gabbay**, EdD, FT, The Satori Group, LLC; **Andy McNiel**, MA, The Satori Group, LLC; and **Tina Barrett**, EdD, LCPC, Executive Director and Co-Founder, Tamarack Grief Resource Center

* Continuing Education Available Visit www.taps.org/institute for more information

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