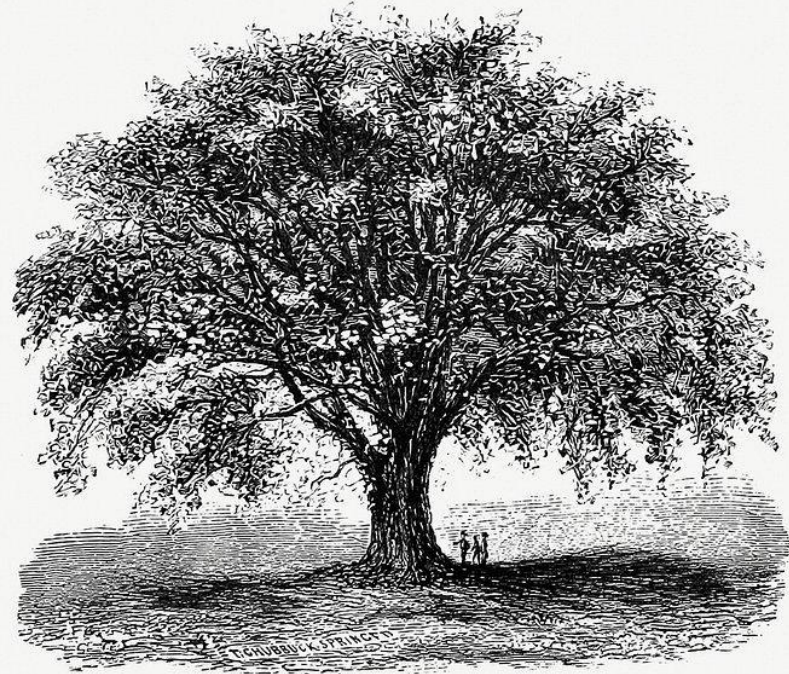


Facilitating Adaptation to Loss:

Incorporating PGT Principles in Clinical Work

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Wolfson Therapy
2/28/2025



What will we explore today?

Setting the Stage

- 1 Framework of Acute and Integrated Grief
- 2 Three Pillars of Adaptation to Loss
- 3 Case Example: Eddie

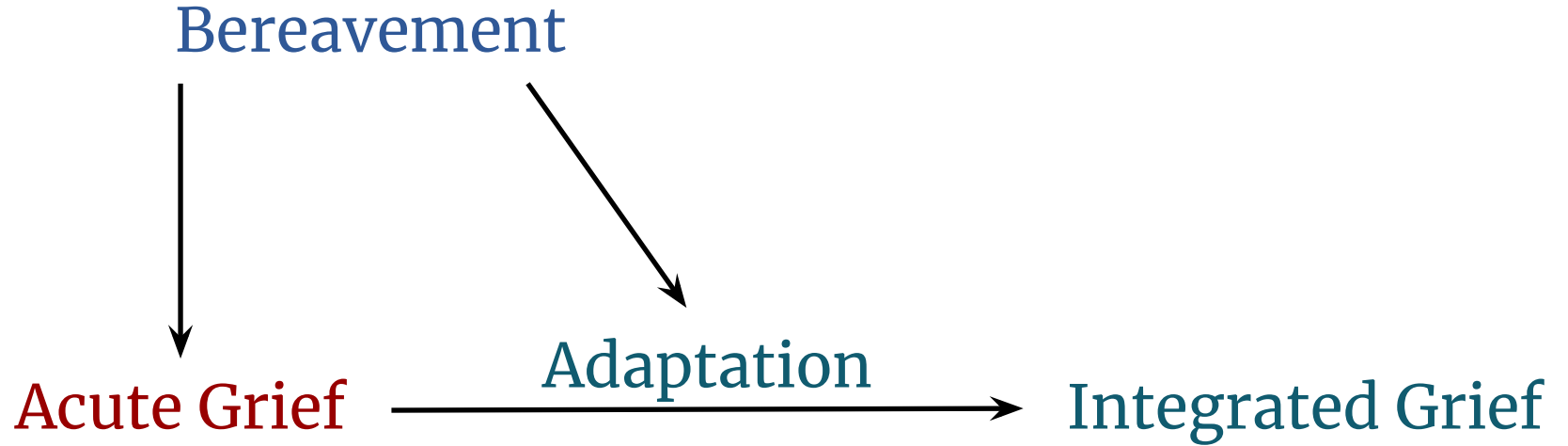
Use of PGT Techniques

- 45 Psychoeducation
- 6 Imaginal Revisiting- Telling the Story
- 7 Grief Monitoring Diary
- 8 Situational Revisiting
- Goals Work

What brings you here?



Grief Evolves Over Time



What does acute grief look like?

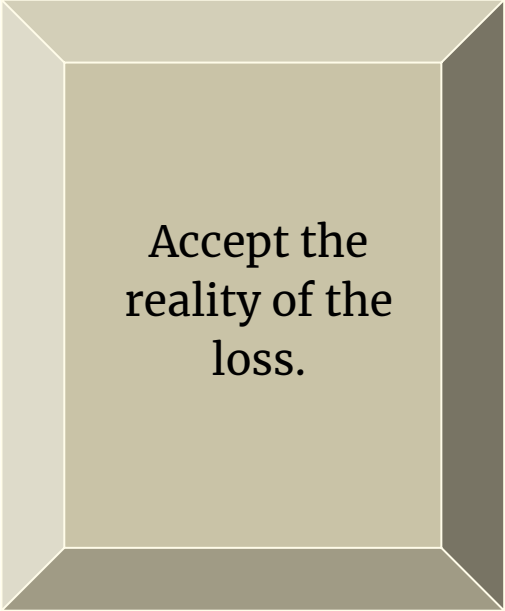
- Intense emotional pain
- Insistent thoughts of the deceased
- Trouble focusing
- Disbelief, difficulty comprehending the reality of the death
- Disconnection from other people, ongoing life, and sense of self



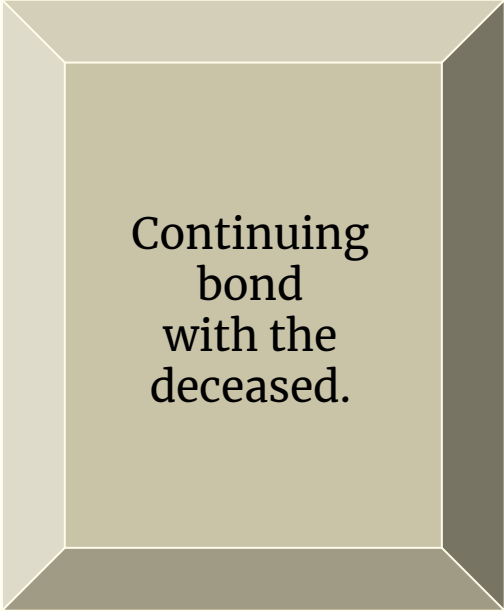
What does integrated grief look like?

- The reality of the death is assimilated
- Yearning, sorrow, and thoughts of the deceased are reduced in frequency and intensity and no longer dominate the mind
- We are able to engage once again with the world and other people

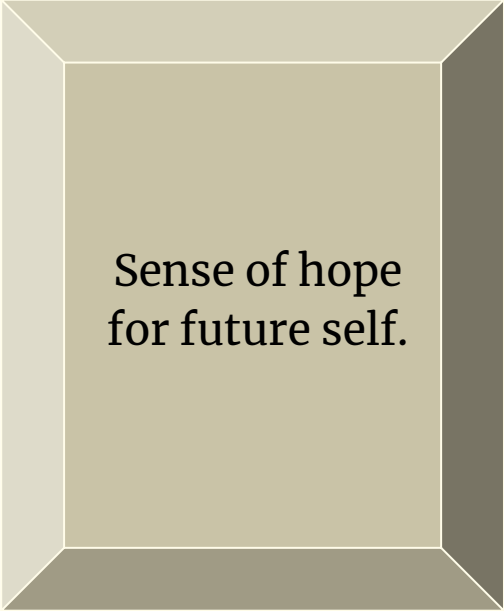
The 3 Pillars of Adapting to Loss



Accept the
reality of the
loss.



Continuing
bond
with the
deceased.



Sense of hope
for future self.

Meet “Eddie”

- 27 y.o. Caucasian cisgender male
- No significant psychiatric history
- College graduate, media professional
- Moved to NYC post-college
- Only child, from Pennsylvania

Eddie’s Loss

- 28 y.o. girlfriend “Madison”
- Sudden tragic vehicle-related death
- Had been best friends from college prior to dating
- Envisioned getting married



Eddie's acute grief

- Sadness, Anger
- Decreased motivation- socially and professionally
- Emotional withdrawal/ disconnection
- Hopelessness

Initial clinical work

~First 3 months

- Focus on accepting the reality and emotional regulation/ processing
- Establishing strong alliance
- Psychoeducation
- Structuring sessions around loss-oriented and restoration-oriented tasks

PGT strategies during acute grief

- Emotional regulation
- Imaginal Revisiting (Telling the story)
- Grief Monitoring Diary

Watching for complications

- Avoidance of reminders
- Emotional withdrawal
- Rigidity/ hopelessness around future vision

Ongoing work towards integration

- Situational revisiting
- Continuing bonds/ Memory work
- Aspirational goals
- Managing difficult dates

Eddie in 2025

~2.5 Years after loss

- Visits Madison's family every summer
- Continues advocating for vehicle safety
- Promoted at work
- In a committed relationship and discussing moving in together



THANK YOU

- Email Dr. Dan Wolfson:
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- www.wolfsontherapy.com

Additional Resources

- The Center for Prolonged Grief
- Experience Camps
- Modern Loss

