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**Assistant Chaplain’s Online Orientation**

**Module 4:**

**Change, Grief & Loss.**

**Introduction to Module 4: Change, Grief & Loss.**

In this module, you will complete 2 Tasks:

Task 1 – Explore the website [www.grief.com](http://www.grief.com)

Task 2 – Write about an experience of grief or loss from your own life.

Coping with change is hard. Coping with grief and loss is even harder.

When we meet people in hospital or in aged care, at some point, a significant change has happened in their lives to lead them there. Perhaps it was the direct injury, illness or condition that led them into hospital. Or the gradual decline that meant Aged Care was the best place for them.

Whatever the case, change will have been a big part of a person’s life when we meet them.

The death of someone close – including pets, changes in health or relationships, moving away and loss of independence can all lead to experiencing grief. While society might want us to move on and be ‘over it’ quickly, we can still ache for that loss years later. And that is OK.

It doesn’t matter how good your listening and pastoral skills are, sometimes the other person’s story will affect you because of similarities to your own story – especially if grief or loss is involved.

So, when you are pastorally caring for someone who is telling you about their grief or loss:

* monitor your own feelings and reactions.
* be thoughtful in your verbal responses.
* determine whether sharing your own experience will benefit the encounter.

**Task 1: David Kessler is an eminent figure in helping people understand their grief. You may know of his work in ‘The Five Stages of Grief’ along with Elisabeth Kubler-Ross.**

* Explore the content on his website - <https://grief.com/>
* In particular to pastoral care is what we say to the other person. Have a look at this section of the website - <https://grief.com/10-best-worst-things-to-say-to-someone-in-grief/>. Choose 3 from each side.
  + - Why would it be good to say/not say these lines to another person?
    - How might they respond?

**Task 2: With the understanding that grief is an experience that is unique to each person, select an experience of grief, loss or change from your life:**

* + Write about your experience in that circumstance, taking care to focus more on the stages of the grief process and how you moved through them, rather than the actual incident itself.
  + 500-750 words approx.
  + ***A Word of Caution: Revisiting an episode of grief or loss can be difficult. Be mindful which you choose. Monitor your reactions and if you need to stop for a while or contact someone for support, please do so.***
* **Upon completion of the tasks, email to** [**onlinetraining@ballaratchaplaincy.com.au**](mailto:onlinetraining@ballaratchaplaincy.com.au)