

Dealing with Loss

Month: May

Week #: 35

Day: a. Mon. Time: 30 minutes

Loss Is a Natural Part of Life

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

Objectives/Aims

The students will: understand the concept of loss, the feelings associated with it, and how the intensity of those feelings depends on the perceived depth of the loss.

Materials

none
See, "**Note:**" below

Illustration

Loss is a natural part of life. All of these students are experiencing loss. What did each of them lose?

Background

Loss is a natural part of life. In forming attachments to other people, things or places, we experience pain and loss when those attachments are broken or dramatically altered. We could avoid that pain by not forming such relationships, but life would be much less full and satisfying. In fact, it would probably be even more sad and lonely.



To deal with loss, we must learn to grieve appropriately. Some cultures believe one should 'keep a stiff upper

lip,' and deny and ignore the pain and go on living as if nothing happened. Most grief counselors believe (see below) that if we bury these feelings, they will might resurface in some other emotional form, such as anger. Buried feelings could also make it difficult to form new relationships, or they could even make us psychologically or physically ill. To grieve appropriately heals us both psychologically and spiritually so that we might enjoy life once again.

Some people also believe that we should protect children from loss and the resulting pain, but this is unrealistic as children experience many forms of loss. If a favorite toy gets broken, they will be sad. If a close friend moves away, they will experience emptiness. And unfortunately, they may even experience the death of a loved one. Loss is a natural part of life and children need to know how to proactively deal with it.

The following direct quote is from: *Counseling for Loss and Life Change*, "Beware the 5 Stages of Grief" <http://www.counselingforloss.com/article8.htm>.

"So what is grief and what produces it? A helpful equation, which proves itself daily in all instances is: Change = Loss = Grief.

This means that:

1. A change of circumstance of any kind (a change from one state to another) produces a loss of some kind (the stage changed from) which will produce a grief reaction.
2. The intensity of the grief reaction is a function of how the change-produced loss is perceived. If the loss is not perceived as significant, the grief reaction will be minimal or barely felt.

Background (continued)

3. Significant grief responses which go unresolved can lead to mental, physical, and sociological problems and contribute to family dysfunction across generations.”

Note: Given the potential seriousness of this topic, a packet or .pdf of these lessons should be sent home to the parents either prior to, or concurrent with, the presentation of these lessons.

Group Activity

1. Say, “I bought a puppy and I loved and cared for it for years and years, but then one day it died. How do you think I might feel?” *A: Sad, angry, empty, etc.* “How do you think I would feel if one day my favorite toy, which my granddad had given to me, was broken?” *A: Sad, angry, empty, etc.* “My friend, who has been my friend since I was six years old, is moving away because his dad has a new job. How would I feel?” *A: Sad, angry, empty, etc.* “What do all of these situations have in common?” *A: They all deal with loss.* “In living your life, you will periodically experience loss. That’s just how life is. I mean, I could choose not to get a puppy, but then I would have missed out on all those years of sloppy licks and grand adventures. I could choose not to accept toys or gifts, but I really do like playing with them. I could choose not to make any friends, but I would be lonely. So instead of avoiding loss, we learn how to deal with it, how to grieve, so that we can enjoy life once again.”

2. “Number off the students (one - two, one - two...) or place older students with younger ones. Say, “Each pair needs to think of as many ways as possible that we experience loss. I’ll give you about four minutes.” After the allotted time is up say, “Now we’re going to list all these different ways we can experience loss on the board.” The list should include: moving, death of a pet or loved one; divorce of parents; physical, mental or emotional handicaps; etc.

Group Discussion Questions

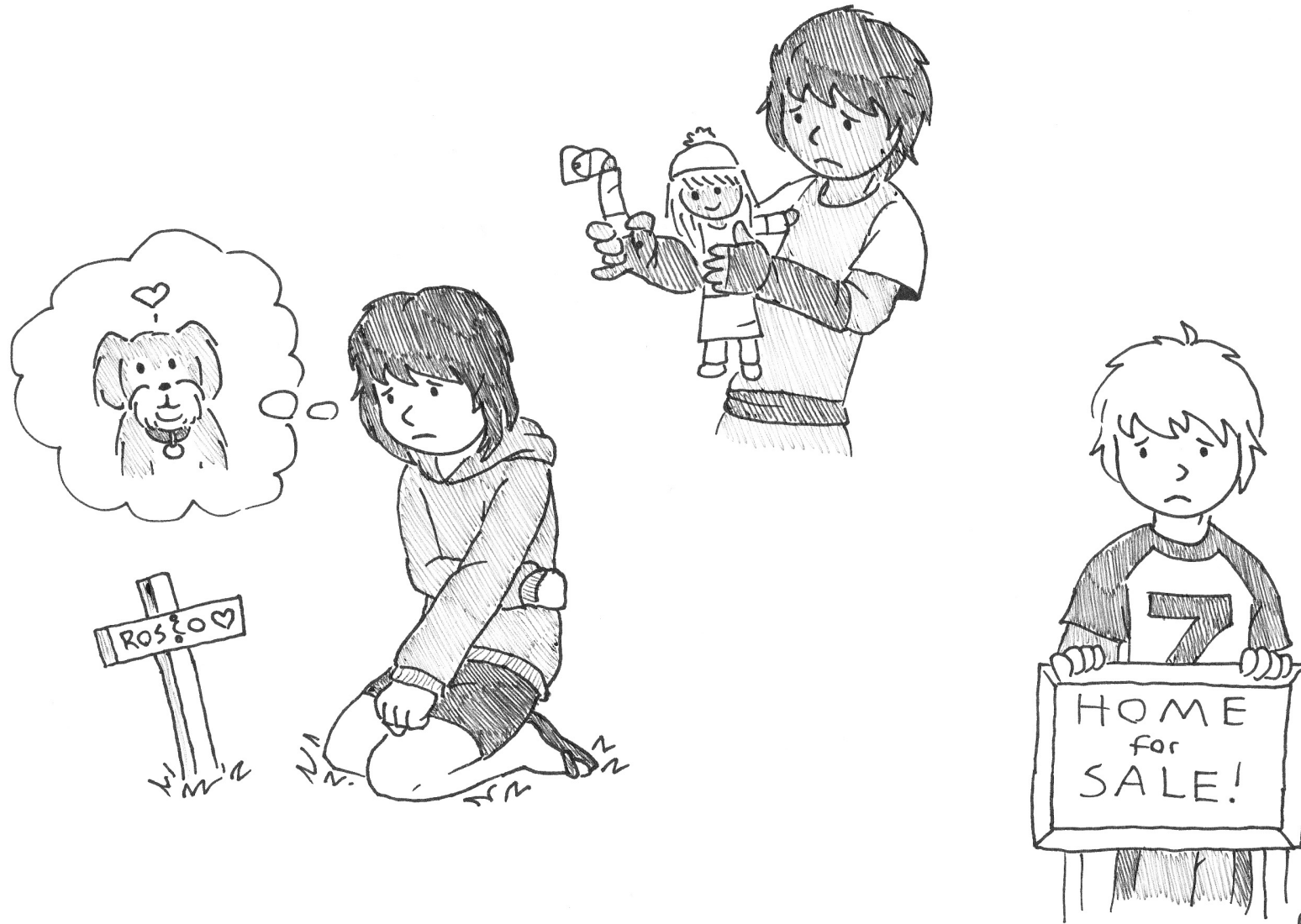
1. Are some of these events more traumatic than others?
A: Yes, the loss of a toy is a lot less traumatic than the loss of a parent. The extent of the feelings depends on how closely connected a person is to what is lost.
2. What is similar in all these situations?
A: There is a loss and similar feelings. Say, “In Elizabeth Kubler-Ross' book, "On Death and Dying" she also noticed something similar about people when they first learned that they had a terminal illness, a heart-rending loss, to say the least. We will study these stages tomorrow.

Variations/Extensions

Conclusion

Say, “Given our topic, you might feel a little sad at this point. This is normal. However, when a person grieves successfully, they can often have pleasant memories about that which they lost. In addition, they can go on and live a joyful life. You too, will learn to deal with loss successfully.”

Dealing with Loss: Loss Is a Natural Part of Life



Lucas
Bauer
10/12/09

**Loss is a natural part of life. All of these students are experiencing loss.
What did each of them lose?**

Dealing with Loss

Objectives/Aims

By the end of this unit, your child will understand that loss is a natural part of life; understand the 5 stages in accepting loss as purported by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and understand the grief work associated with the acronym 'TEAR'.

Background Information for Parents

See the "Background" information for Monday and Tuesday included in the packet or .pdf of lessons that was sent home by your child's teacher.

Day 1

1. Loss is a natural part of life. All of these students are experiencing loss. What did each of them lose?



- The kneeling girl?

- The girl in the middle?

- Number 7?

2. Tell your parents about a time when you experienced a loss in your life. Make sure you tell them how it made you feel. P.I. _____

Day 2

1. Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross observed that people went through five stages upon learning of a loss. Unscramble the letters to find the five stages (the 1st & last letters are in the correct places):

- bgarginian = _____

- dsperieson = _____

- aecpctnce = _____

- dinael = _____

- agenr = _____

2. Now put a number after each word showing the order in which these stages usually occur.

