

SCENARIO 1: Grief


It is normal to feel grief and pain when people lose someone dear to them, like what happened to the 14-year old Sam, who suddenly lost his mother to cancer at age 12. Sam is undergoing grief, which is a natural reaction to loss, and it can be both a personal and universal experience (Prigerson et al., 2021). Losing a loving mother like in the scenario can be very distressing and, unfortunately, an experience most people go through. For some individuals, like the 14-year old Sam, the feelings of loss are debilitating and has not improved with time. According to Prigerson et al. (2021), in this complicated grief, painful emotions are severe and long-lasting. People face challenges recovering and getting back to normal life unless they undergo necessary treatment interventions. *You are beginning to introduce the long term impact here which is great, but be explicit with this.*

Sam experiences different difficulties and unexpected emotions from anger or shock to disbelief, profound sadness, and guilt. The pain caused by grief can disrupt Sam's physical health, making it hard to eat, sleep, or concentrate, as a normal reaction to the substantial loss due to his loving mother's death (Aoun et al., 2020). For instance, Sam is not able to concentrate well in class, the main reason behind his grades deterioration. Although there may be no wrong or right way to grieve, various healthy strategies are recommended to cope with the grieving pain and to reduce sadness. Grief is not only caused by losing the people we love but also things; it is more of losing what a person values or loves (Eisma & Tamminga, 2020). The more substantial the loss is, the more intense the grief is. According to Trembl et al. (2020), there are many other causes of grief, including loss of health, relationship breakup or divorce, a miscarriage, loss of employment, retirement, death of a pet, loss of friendship, an ill relative, or even loss of cherished dreams. Zara (2019) reveals different factors for grief, including traumatic childhood

This is starting to stray away from the topic.

experiences like neglect or abuse, life stressors like major financial difficulties, and past history of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and separation anxiety.

Sam sought no grief treatment, and, untreated, his grief has developed to become more *Hmmm, I am not sure that many 12 year olds would actively seek treatment for grief.* complex and interferes with his ability to function normally in daily activities, for instance, in class (Kenny et al., 2021). The untreated grief becomes complicated grief and affects people mentally, physically, and socially. According to Morowatisharifabad et al. (2020), untreated grief develops more complications, including depression, anxiety, PTSD, suicidal behaviour and thoughts, substantial sleep disturbances, substance abuse, and increased risk of physical activity conditions like cancer, heart disease, and high blood pressure.

Among teenagers like Sam, symptoms of complicated grief may include intense sadness that does not improve over time, relationship fears which involve avoiding getting close to other people, avoiding any reminders about the loss, and unwillingness to speak about the loss *person* (Prigerson et al., 2021). The patients can have phobia and anxiety, preoccupation and obsession, and yearning for their lost relative or friend. According to Nakajima (2018), complicated grief  people lose interest in their hobbies and engage in self-destructive habits like alcohol abuse and criminal behaviour. Untreated grief among children can lead to irritability, hostility, or agitation to those connected to the death, just as is seen in Sam's scenario where he is increasingly argumentative towards his teachers and peers (Morowatisharifabad et al. 2020). The children can feel detachment from friends and family.

Think about long term impacts as well, you have focused a lot on the mental health side of things, but what can this impact? Consider his story- troubles with relationships, education, etc., etc.

Treatment Options

Various treatment options are available for Sam; however, it is good to know that just as people face grief differently, there are different treatment interventions whose application

This is an awkward sentence. Break it down into two sentences- it will read much better.

depends on various factors, including the type of grief an individual is dealing with (van Denderen et al., 2018). In some instances, a combination of treatments may lead to better health outcomes. The following are some of the available grief treatment interventions for Sam.

A point worth considering here, this subject is about community health and primary health care, this should be central to your discussion regarding treatment.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)

Sam can undergo cognitive-behavioural treatment. It is a kind of treatment that involves learning to establish negative thought patterns of a person so the person can work to change the patterns. *Reference this.* The therapy is grounded on the crucial premise that one can relieve symptoms and live healthy and more productive daily lives (Nakajima, 2018). For a patient like Sam, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) works by assisting them in understanding their negative patterns of thought. Such patterns result in habits that make it hard to process grief (Rosner et al., 2018). During the treatment session, a therapist can ask Sam to discuss his feelings or thoughts regarding his grief experience to be aware of the negative patterns that are impacting his behaviour.

Some CBT grief treatment tools utilized to promote Sam's healing can include restructuring or cognitive reframing. The cognitive restructuring technique involves a therapist asking Sam about his thought process in particular situations to establish negative patterns (Nakajima, 2018). Once Sam is helped to know these patterns, he can learn to reframe the thoughts so they become more productive and positive both in class and in his social life. The targeting behaviour technique addresses harmful or unhelpful behaviours in Sam and replaces them with helpful habits. The technique of developing a new narrative would help Sam develop a new story or perception about the loss.

Good info here, but don't forget to link this back to the setting and to programs available.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

therapy

Acceptance and commitment treatment would assist Sam in accepting negative situations and emotions and developing new healthy patterns. ACT would focus on Sam's ability to improve psychological flexibility to easily accept his feelings rather than attempting to run away from the negative feelings or avoid the negative feelings altogether (Mason et al. (2020). Psychological flexibility involves accepting, being present, and being in a moment in a patient's life. The treatment approach uses mindfulness to assist the patient to process grief and in accepting what happened. ACT would help Sam reprocess losses emotionally, letting him start processing even those emotions he has been avoiding dealing with. The treatment utilizes various grief techniques to achieve healing and acceptance (Prigerson et al., 2021). Some of the techniques used in the ACT include concentrating on the present, identifying individual values, accepting negative emotions and feelings, and observing how one has experienced different circumstances and situations (Bai et al., 2020).

Again, link back to primary health care. Are there any programs for young people which incorporate ACT?

Complicated Grief Therapy (CGT)

Complicated grief treatment can help Sam in learning to address complicated grief symptoms. Complicated grief is associated with intense, prolonged sadness and feelings of hopelessness. Sam has a strong obsession with his most loved mother and maybe has fixated on the situations surrounding the nature of the death. According to Djelantik et al. (2021), complicated grief treatment facilitates acceptance, which would be helpful for Sam.

Traumatic Grief Therapy

The traumatic grief treatment can help Sam to process a sudden trauma related to grief due to his mother's death. This treatment focuses on trauma response and grief that are linked with traumatic death (Djelantik et al., 2021).

Group Therapy

Group treatment for grief patients involves putting Sam in small groups of people to share feelings and thoughts with others who are experiencing grief. Mostly, the groups comprise of people recovering from the same experiences. Djelantik et al. (2021) reveal that support groups provide a safe and brave space for those undergoing grieving to share and heal in a supportive, confidential, and loving environment.

Play Therapy

Play treatment includes treating Sam using imaginative and other forms of play to assist him process grief. The treatment can provide him with a safe environment to express his feelings while providing him with tools that can assist to self-regulating his thoughts and emotions. The treatment is optimal for teenagers and children as they are, in most cases, unable to articulate emotions, problems, and feelings they are undergoing, particularly after a great loss (Mason et al., 2020). Giving Sam an outlet to express himself can greatly benefit his grief recovery process.

Art Therapy

Art treatment utilizes creativity to promote healing and help Sam process his grief. It improves, supports, and restores functioning and a well-being sense. The therapy is built on the belief that creative and artistic self-expression can have a healing impact (Mason et al., 2020). Drawing, painting, colouring, making collages, and sculpting are common activities of art treatment sessions that Sam can engage in during the therapy.

Early Intervention

For Sam, early intervention would empower him to handle guilt, and anxiety better; and fear linked with the loss, and prevent more grief symptoms like lack of concentration in class (Aoun et al., 2020). Early intervention would have helped Sam handle the loss better and return to his normal class performance. It prevents complicated grief, which leads to irritability, sadness, hostility, agitation, detachment from friends, and loneliness (Morris et al., 2019). The 14-year old Sam has few friends, has become oppositional, and feels lonely and sad, which could have been prevented through early intervention. Finally, early grief intervention using the *What treatment programs? You haven't mentioned any?* various treatment programs helps prevent depression associated with loss of interest in previous hobbies, just like it is in the case of Sam.