

Grief & Trauma Psychoeducational Class

Curriculum + Handouts + Outreach/Resource Plan

Student: Brooke Holloway

Site: Compassion House (Field Placement)

Competency 8.2: Integrate macro-level evidence-based strategies with organizations and/or communities

Confidentiality: Educational portfolio artifact. No identifying participant information included.

Program Overview

Program Title: Understanding & Processing Grief and Trauma Class

Format: Psychoeducational class (group education)

Audience: Community members / clients seeking coping skills for grief and trauma (mixed ages; content delivered in developmentally appropriate language as needed)

Length: 8 weeks (weekly sessions)

Session Duration: 60–75 minutes

Primary Goals:

1. Increase coping skills and emotional regulation capacity
2. Reduce avoidance and improve healthy processing of grief/trauma reminders
3. Increase connection to community resources and improve follow-through on referrals

Evidence-Informed Approaches Used:

- Trauma-informed care principles (safety, choice, collaboration, empowerment)
 - CBT-informed coping strategies (thought reframing, coping planning, behavioral coping skills)
 - Grief education (oscillation/dual-process concepts: allowing both “loss-oriented” and “restoration-oriented” coping)
 - Skills practice (grounding, breathing, emotional labeling, problem-solving)
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Curriculum Map (8-week outline)

Week 1: Orientation + Safety + Coping Basics

- Group guidelines (confidentiality, respect, opt-out)
- Psychoeducation: trauma/stress response
- Skill: diaphragmatic breathing + grounding
- Handout: “Grounding Skills Menu”

Week 2: Understanding Grief (Normalizing + Myths)

- Psychoeducation: grief responses and triggers
- Skill: emotion identification (“name it to tame it”)
- Activity: grief triggers map
- Handout: “Grief Myths vs Facts”

Week 3: The Brain and Body in Trauma

- Window of tolerance concept (simple explanation)
- Skill: body-based regulation (5–4–3–2–1, muscle relaxation)
- Handout: “Window of Tolerance”

Week 4: Thoughts, Feelings, Behaviors (CBT Triangle)

- Identify automatic thoughts during grief/trauma reminders
- Skill: balanced thought replacement
- Activity: thought-challenging practice
- Handout: “CBT Triangle + Thought Swap”

Week 5: Coping Plans for Triggers

- Personalized coping plan: warning signs → skills → supports
- Activity: coping plan worksheet
- Handout: “My Coping Plan”

Week 6: Relationships, Boundaries, and Support

- Communication during grief/trauma
- Skill: boundary script practice
- Handout: “Boundary Scripts”

Week 7: Meaning-Making and Values-Based Coping

- Identify values and strengths
- Activity: strengths reflection
- Handout: “Values and Strengths Worksheet”

Week 8: Maintenance + Relapse Prevention + Resource Connection

- Review skills learned and what helped most
 - Create “after class” plan
 - Resource navigation steps
 - Handout: “Support Plan + Resources”
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Sample Handouts (inserted as text you can format in Word)

Handout 1: Grounding Skills Menu (Quick Options)

- 5–4–3–2–1 senses check
- Cold water on hands or face
- Name 5 safe objects you can see
- Press feet into the floor and notice pressure
- Slow breathing: inhale 4, exhale 6 (repeat 5 times)
- “I am safe right now” statement

Handout 2: CBT Triangle + Thought Swap

Situation → Thought → Feeling → Behavior

Example: “I saw something that reminded me of the event.”

Automatic thought: “I can’t handle this.”

Balanced thought: “This is hard, but I have tools and support.”

New behavior: use grounding + reach out to support person.

Handout 3: My Coping Plan (Fill-in)

My warning signs:

My top 3 coping skills:

Who I can contact:

Places I can go that feel safe:

Steps I will take in the first 10 minutes of a trigger:

Outreach Plan (How participants were engaged)

Recruitment/Outreach Methods:

- Posted flyer/announcement through Compassion House communication channels
- Direct invitation during individual/family sessions when appropriate
- Collaboration with staff to identify participants who would benefit from psychoeducation and skills practice

Engagement Strategies:

- Trauma-informed group norms and predictable structure
 - Interactive skills practice rather than lecture-only format
 - Options to “pass” and participate at comfort level
 - Strengths-based language and normalization
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Resource Strategy and Barrier-Reduction Plan

Referral Pathways Provided (examples):

- Primary care / behavioral health referral steps (how to schedule, what to ask for)
- Crisis supports (local crisis line / 988 information shared appropriately)
- Community mental health resources
- Grief support options (community or faith-based, as appropriate to participant preference)
- Substance use support resources if needed

Barrier-Reduction Steps Used:

- “Next step” planning: who to call, what to say, what paperwork may be needed
- Identified transportation/childcare/time barriers and brainstormed realistic workarounds

- Encouraged participants to choose 1–2 manageable action steps rather than overwhelming goals