

Loss, Grieving, and Death

LOSS الفقدان

- Everyone experiences loss, grieving, and death at some time during his or her life.
- People may suffer the loss of valued relationships through life changes, such as moving from one city to another, separation, divorce, or the death of a parent, spouse, or friend
- The loss of valued material objects through theft or natural disaster can evoke feelings of grief and loss.

- In the clinical setting, health care professionals encounters clients who may be experiencing grief related to declining health, loss of a body part, terminal illness, or the impending death of self or a significant other.
 - The nurse may also work with clients in community settings who are grieving losses related to personal crisis (e.g., divorce, separation) or disaster (war, earthquakes, terrorism, or hurricanes).
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- Nurses and health care professionals must recognize the various influences on the dying process—legal, ethical, religious and spiritual, biologic, personal—and be prepared to provide sensitive, skilled, and supportive care to all those affected.

What is the loss

- ❖ Is an actual or potential situation in which something that is valued is changed or no longer available.
- ❖ People can experience the loss of body image, a significant other, a sense of well-being, a job, personal possessions, or beliefs. Illness and hospitalization often produce losses.

- ❖ Death is a fundamental loss, both for the dying person and for those who survive.
- ❖ Although death is inevitable, it can stimulate people to grow in their understanding of themselves and others.
- ❖ Death can be viewed as the dying person's final opportunity to experience life in ways that bring significance and fulfillment.
- ❖ People experiencing loss often search for the meaning of the event, and it is generally accepted that finding meaning is needed in order for healing to occur.
- ❖ However, persons can be well adjusted without searching for meaning, and even those who find meaning may not see it as an end point but rather an ongoing process.

Real World Practice

- ✓ Don't be afraid to cry with the family.
- ✓ We all have to figure out how much space we need emotionally to do our job and function appropriately, especially in emergency situations
- ✓ to ignore our own emotions sometimes makes us appear as if we don't care, that the sadness of the situation has no effect on us.
- ✓ Whether we like it or not, those family members will remember us for a very long time.

Types and Sources of Loss

- An **actual loss** can be recognized by others.
- A **perceived loss** is experienced by one person but cannot be verified by others.
- Psychologic losses are often perceived losses

- An **anticipatory loss** is experienced before the loss actually occurs.
 - For example, a woman whose husband is dying may experience actual loss in anticipation of his death.
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- Loss can be viewed as situational or developmental
 - The loss of one's job, the death of a child, or the loss of functional ability because of acute illness or injury are *situational losses*.
 - Losses that occur in the process of normal development—such as the departure of grown children from the home, retirement from a career, and the death of aged parents—are *developmental losses*

sources of loss

- a) Loss of an aspect of oneself—a body part, a physiologic function, or a psychologic attribute
- b) Loss of an object external to oneself
- c) Separation from an accustomed environment
- d) Loss of a loved or valued person.

Examples of losses

- A face scarred from a burn
- loss of part of the stomach or loss of ability to feel emotion
- Old age is the stage in life when people may experience many losses: of employment, of usual activities, of independence, of health, of friends, and of family.

- loss of money or the burning down of a family's house; and (b) loss of animate (live) objects such as pets that provide love and companionship.

- The 6-year-old is likely to feel loss when first leaving the home environment to attend school.
- The university student who moves away from home for the first time also experiences a sense of loss.

- The loss of a loved one or valued person through illness, divorce, separation, or death can be very disturbing