GRIEF AND LOSS

Everyone grieves differently. There is a difference between distress and impairment. Most people have the natural resources that will help them be resilient from distress. This toolkit will discuss ways to give help and receive help when going through grief and loss.

Things to consider if you are receiving support during a difficult time:

- Support is a gift and denying the support is like denying someone the feeling of gratification they get when they give a gift. It is important to push past the guilt and be open to support.
- At the same time, it is important to have boundaries. Sending a group email or text clearly stating your boundaries could be extremely helpful and minimize negative feelings.

Things to consider if you are giving support during a difficult time:

- Asking permission is key. It shows a level of respect for the person's grieving process. If you want to do something special for them, ask their preferences.
- Try: "Would it be okay if we…" or "We would like to do ___ for you, is that okay?"
- Avoid talking about times you went through similar situations, instead, provide affirming statements like "Thank you for sharing this with me, I know it is hard."

THINGS YOU CAN DO YOURSELF

- Recognize everyone will react differently – there is no right way. Make healthy choices that work for you
- Structure your time; keep busy.
- Talk to people, talking is healing.
- Give yourself permission to feel rotten and share your thoughts with others
- Be aware of the different physical, emotional, mental, relational, spiritual, and cognitive symptoms of grief
- Keep a journal/log; write your way through sleepless hours
- Remember that you are most likely having normal reactions. Talk to a professional if they become severe and interfere with overall functioning.
- Seek out professional help immediately if you experience suicidal thoughts, thoughts of self-harm or harming others, or if you have serious medical issues such as chest pains, panic attacks, etc.

I NEED…

Would it be okay..?

[Visit the Grief and Loss Toolkit Deck here for more information.](#)

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESOURCES