Grief and Loss
A Solution Focused Approach

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South Canterbury OCEANS Grief and Loss Coordinator
Who is Matt Cameron?
(Not what does he do...)

- Born in Morrinsville and from a farming family (Waikato, NZ)
- Enjoy working with people
- I am a handyman and love building or fixing things
- My dad died from cancer when I was 6
- I am married to Rachel (20 years) with two boys (17 and 19)
- I have grown to enjoy listening to people’s stories
- I am a Christian and am motivated by that to serve
SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK

Knowing that today is about a Solution Focused approach:

• What are your best hopes from today’s meeting?

• If you were talking to someone tomorrow about how helpful this meeting was, what might you be saying about it?
  • What would you notice was different and good?
  • What would someone close to you notice?
  • What else? What else? What else?
Questions... and more questions
Please add your comments or questions as we move through the slides.
“Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim.”

- Vicki Harrison
What causes Grief?
- Death
- Separation
- Divorce
- Imprisonment
- Moving
- Loss
- Job Loss
- Illness
- Change

Unexpected? Big vs small?
Who is Missing?
Oceans - Session Overview

Naming who is missing
Feelings - Normalising grief feelings
Feeling - Anger & Sadness
Asking the question "Why?"
Telling my story
Listening to your story
Memories - both 'good' and 'bad'

Changes - both 'good' and 'bad'
My strengths
Looking beyond - positives about how life is now and life after Oceans with a Celebration of our time together

Past
Future
Being able to talk about it is helpful
2) Continuing Bonds Model

The loss will always be with us and we continue to live with it.

“Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim.”

- Vicki Harrison
My World

- Faith
- Sport
- Family
- Study
- Work/Job
- Friendships
- Culture
My Grief
(At the time of loss)
Grief

My World
My World

Grief
My World

Grief
My World

- Faith
- Sport
- Family
- Grief
- Study
- Work/Job
- Friendships
- Culture
My World

- Faith
- Sport
- Grief
- Family
- Study
- Work/Job
- Friendships
- Culture
STAGES OF GRIEF

Loss-Hurt
Shock
Numbness
Denial
Emotional Outbursts
Anger
Fear
Searchings
Disorganization
Panic
Loneliness
Guilt
Isolation

Loss Adjustment
Helping Others
Affirmation
Hope
New Patterns
New Strengths
New Relationships
"Re-Entry" Troubles

My experience

Loss Adjustment
Helping Others
Affirmation
Hope
New Patterns
New Strengths
New Relationships
"Re-Entry" Troubles
Loneliness
Guilt
Isolation
2) Continuing Bonds Model
The loss will always be with us and we continue to live with it

“Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim.”

- Vicki Harrison
Grief Emotions

Two main ones are:
1. Sadness
2. Anger

Other incidental emotions...
1. Detached or Fantasizing
2. Tired or Unmotivated
3. Depressed
4. Overly exuberant
5. Irrational

What do you want instead?
Look for signs of...

- Connection
- Compassion
- Contribution
When Grief shows up...

- What were you pleased about how you handled it?
- How did you stop it getting worse?
- What would you rather have?
- What did you notice about yourself that was different and good?
Helpful ways to live with grief...

- Talking
- Sleeping
- Music
- Walking
- Exercise
- Building
- Creating
- Working
- Being alone
- Being with others
- Ripping paper
- Skipping
- Reading
- Gaming
- Shouting into a pillow
- Chores
Supporting someone through their grief

Just being there...
Allowing them to talk about it...
Listening...
Being truly present...
Asking open SF questions...
Caring and believing in them
Looking for gems - “magic moments”
Think about this…
LISTEN & SILENT
are spelled with the same letters

How do you \textit{E}\textit{st}on? Being SILENT
CAMERON
ROMANCE
A meaningful SILENCE is always better than a meaningless WORD.
Problem focus vs Solution Focus
Problem focus vs Solution Focus

Questioning:

• Problem Focused
  - How long have you been depressed?

• Solution focused:
  - What would your life be like if you weren’t depressed?
Are we in the group to...

Solve Problems

or

Find Solutions
Using the Solution Focused Approach with a peer support programme

Learning to live with the loss means living in a way that wants something better...

What difference would that make?
If that “better” shows up what would you notice?
What would others notice? What else?
Solution Focused Approach

• Clients are there for change - even a tiny bit better
• What would you like to be different?
• What do you want to change?
• What difference would it make?
• Make the client work - don’t save them
The Two Main Components of SF

Establishing the **Best Hopes** or their Preferred Future

Describing the **future reality** of those Best Hopes

- What difference would that make?
- What would you notice?
- What would others notice?

In Oceans we are helping group members have hope that better is possible
SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK

With a partner, role-play being with a client with a difficult issue or a mandated client (someone who has to be there and it is not their choice to be there).

Ask, “What are your best hopes from being here today?” and stick with it for six minutes.

Use questions to stay Solution-Focused like:

‘Since you are here what would be helpful?’
‘What might someone else think would be helpful?’
‘If you weren’t here what would you be doing instead?’
‘What difference would that make?’
‘What might you notice changing if our conversation were helpful?’
Basic rules and assumptions about goals

• “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”:
  - the client determines the goals of the discussion not the facilitator

• “Once you know what works, do more of it”:
  - this helps the client see positive behaviours and reinforces proactive behaviours

• “If it’s broken, do something to fix it. If it doesn’t work, don’t do it again”:
  - if it is not working there is no need to try it again
The principles of Solution-Focused Groupwork are:

- Focusing on change and possibilities
- Creating goals and preferred futures
- Building on strengths, skills and resources
- Looking for what’s right and what’s working
- Being respectfully curious about change
- Creating cooperation and collaboration
- Using humour and creativity
- Fostering the facilitator and member connection
The most important thing...

People don’t remember what you said but they remember how you made them feel.
In-session Miracle Question

So, suppose that while we’re talking during this session that something odd happens outside of our room. But because we are in this room, we don’t know that something has happened. Then, we finish our session, you open the door and walk out... what is the first thing you will notice as you go through the rest of your day that will let you know a miracle occurred while we were in session?
Follow-up Questions

- What would be the first thing you notice?
- What difference would you/others notice?
- Has any of this ever happened before?
- Would this be good? What else would be good?
- What would need to happen to do this?
- Who else would notice?
Follow-up Sessions

What is better since we met last week?

“What is better?” does not have a wrong answer. There are three possible replies:

- “Something…”
- “It stayed the same…”
- “It’s got worse…”
Follow-up Sessions

Your response could be:

- What have you done to contribute to things getting better?
- How have you stopped it getting worse, or how have you kept things the same?
- What has given you enough hope to come back and still want things to get better?
Follow-up Sessions

• So what do you want to see different, between today and next week, so you know that coming here has been useful?
• What do you want to see continue for you this week?
• What are your best hopes from meeting today?
Responding to Best Hopes...

• Wow! How did you do that?
• What strengths did you show or use to get you through that?
• Was that different?
• What would be the first thing you would notice if your best hopes became a reality?
• Could you do more of that?
Session 1

‘Shell’ I name it? - Naming the loss
Whakaingoatia te mea
Imagine that coming along to Oceans (talking about your grief) is helpful. What would you like to get from being here that enables you to leave thinking that it was worthwhile?

Imagine that in a few weeks your friends/relatives/work-colleagues say, “I’m really glad you came to Oceans?”, what do you think they would be noticing in you that would encourage that statement?
Validation of feelings
+ Not alone with my grief
+ More peace
+ Freedom to share
+ Hearing other people's stories
+ Confidence
+ Supported.
+ Able to make decisions

[Best Hopes]
Session 2

Waves Of Emotion

Naming different emotions and acknowledging how and where they are felt. Talk about specific *grief* feelings of sadness and anger.

e mārire ana te puahiri
### Recap

**What do you remember from last week?**

-  
-  
-  
-  

**What has been better since last week?**

-  
-  
-  
-  

**What are your best hopes from being here this week?**

-  
-  
-  
-  

2 + Learning more tools to cope
+ Opening up more
+ Freedom to talk.
+ More under feeling less along
  + Not sweating the small stuff.
    - Seeing the bigger picture
    - Things will resolve
2) Increasing confidence and happiness
- Initiating conversation

+ Wanting to go to school
- Getting up
- Positivity and doing good work.
Session 3

Navigating The Storm
Asking the “why?” question and learning about the good in the bad.

e mārire ana te puahiri
Recap

What do you remember from last week?

What have you noticed has been better since last week?

What have you shared with somebody outside our group?

Imagine that this session is really helpful... what might you get out of it that helps you tomorrow?
3) Learn tools to manage grief.
   - lighter & brighter
   - looking to the day and doing new thing
   - relaxed
   + Less reactive & more control
   - more talk.
   + Feeling ready for change
   + Allow myself to grieve and keep moving forward.
   - setting an example for kids.
Session 4

Your Journey... Your Story
Telling your story of loss and listening to the stories of others. Sharing how we can remember our loved one/s - memories live on.

Mā ruka te hau i riua mai koe - ki hea ai
Recap

What do you remember from last week?

What have you shared with somebody outside our group?

What have you been doing during the week to keep yourself safe?

What have you noticed that has been better this past week?

Today we are going to tell our story of loss. Oceans philosophy says, “Talking about it is helpful”.

Imagine that coming along to Oceans this week is once again helpful… How would you know that being here was helpful?
4) Feeling supported
   - wouldn't feel I need as much support
   - more positive conversation
     "had a great day"
   More positive and happy
   - do stuff (gardening)
     ...and want to
Session 5

Oceans Treasures, Changing Tides & Rocks To Stand On

Sharing our memories of our loved one to learn more about them then talking about how things have changed and/or stayed the same and the strengths we demonstrated to live with the changes.

Kā Huia kaimanawa
### Recap

What do you remember from last week?

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What positive changes have you noticed about yourself while coming to Oceans?

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What have others noticed?

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Can you encourage someone else in the group with something positive you have noticed while getting to know them at Oceans?

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Imagine that coming along to Oceans this week is once again helpful… How would you know that being here was helpful?

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4) + Happy because we can share the secrets that make me sad
+ Feeling less sad and accepting it.
+ Less lonely
- smile on my face
5) That the grief emotion will be easier to cope with:
- Self-talk to manage those thoughts
- Feeling validated and loved
- Hope for the future

+ Laughter
- Less distracted \( \Rightarrow \) engaged with then
- Self confidence - tick & smiley

+ Friendship and connectedness
- Brighter & happier
Session 6

Light for the future
Looking beyond the Oceans, listing goals for the future and naming support people in our lives, and celebrating our time together.

Ko te pae tawhiti whāia kia tata, ko te pae tata whakamaua kia tina
Recap

What was the best thing you remember from last week?

What helpful treasure have you shared with someone outside the group?

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is managing your grief really well and 1 is you are not managing, where would you place yourself

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<th>okay</th>
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Why did you say that score and not lower?

Tonight we are looking at life beyond Oceans and the supports that you could have to help you when you find things getting difficult…

What are your best hopes from being here today?
Scaling

• What would you notice if you were one more up the scale?

• **Notice:** *It is not how do I get one more up the scale? Or, what do you need to do to move up?*

• What would you notice if you were there already?
5/10
- Not hiding the loss
- Feeling better and happier
- A bit bigger and more real smile

5.5/10
- More comfortable about talking about my loss
- More accepting the loss
- More outgoing and happier

9.5/10
- Getting it all out
- The grief
  - Big
  - "Smile on my face
    - a "good black smile, not bad black"
6) + Coping & confidence
+ Helping others
+ Resilience

- Smiling
- More ability to view things unbiasedly
- Excitement about the future
SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK
Making the “What else” question conversational!
Get with a partner and ask a type of miracle question, “Suppose you woke up tomorrow and you were the best version of yourself what would be the first thing you would notice?”
Now, rather than literally asking, “What else?” try and keep it real and non-repetitive, like a normal conversation. Try things like:
- What might you notice now?
- How might that be different?
- What other things would you be pleased with?
- What’s the next thing you would notice?
Notice details and continue to ask about them.

SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK
Think of a routine or something mundane that you do most days - for example, making coffee or getting breakfast ready.
With a partner, ask them, “Imagine a day when you are at your best…” and ask ten questions about that mundane thing based on the previous answer.
- On this day, when you are at your best, what are you doing that is different?
- What surprises you about that?
- What are you most pleased with about that?
- Get a description of them using their qualities in a “pleasing” way.

SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK
Something you are good at…
With a partner ask, “If your best traits and/or abilities showed up what are ten things you would notice?”
- How would others know you are at your best?
- What would you be doing differently?
- How might you be feeling that would be good?
- What might you say that would be different?
- What would others notice when you were at your best?
- What else? What else? What else?

SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK
Quote: “Do something today that the future-you will be pleased with”
With a partner ask, “What are you doing today that a future version of yourself would be pleased with?”
- Ask “what else?” ten times

SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK
Quote: “Do something today that the future-you will be pleased with”
With a partner ask, “In five years time you are looking back at yourself today, what would you be doing now that you would be pleased with in the future?”
- Ask “what else?” ten times
- Try using other words that mean “what else”?

SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK
With a partner ask, “What is a goal you have for the short-term future?”
Then ask, “On a scale from 1 to 10 - where 10 is having reached that goal and 1 is just started - where are you now?”
Now, for five minutes ask questions around how they got to that number on the scale. (Not how you can go up the scale but going deeper into what has got them there)
- Focus on strengths not just tasks

SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK
Ask a partner about a significant goal or dream that they haven’t yet started.
Ask ten questions about that goal or dream
- What would be the first step towards that goal/dream?
- What difference would taking that first step make?
- What would you notice about yourself after the first step?
- What differences? What differences?
- What else? What else?

SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK
Reality TV…
Ask a partner to “Imagine one of the happiest points in your life was filmed for a reality TV show, from the moment you knew it was about to happen to you until the morning after, and we watched the show today…”
- List 10 things we would see occurring that would tell us that this was the happiest time for you
- List 10 things that we would see in others that pleased you
- List 5 things that were different as a result of that happy time

SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK
Using “how come?”
Ask a partner about something that was good this week…
Ask 10 questions like:
- What went well? How come?
- What did you do before/after? How come?
- What was the reaction of others? How come?
- What was the best thing about this experience? How come?
- In what way would this have been useful? How come?
SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK

**Best Hopes**

Ask a partner, "Suppose we talked for a little bit and what we talked about was really helpful. What would you like to talk about?"

Depending on the answer ask questions using:

- What different would that make?
- What would you notice if it was helpful?
- What would be the evidence that it was helpful when you meet the first person after this time?

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

Get into a group of 3's where two of the people are connected in some way (they could be business partners, colleagues, friends, family members, or connected romantically). One person interviews those two people. Establish a common outcome and ask them, "Imagine you woke up on a day when your best hopes have become a reality, what's the very first thing you would notice?"

Take turns attending to the contributions, NOT the content. Focus on the description and the details and keep it focused.

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

On the day after...

Ask a partner to, "Think about a big decision you have to make or an important goal you would like to accomplish... How imagine the day after you make that decision or achieved that goal?"

Depending on the answer ask questions using:

- What different would that make?
- What would you notice?
- What would you be feeling pleased about?
- What would the first person who saw you notice?

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

Lists

Ask a partner to “Think back over your past year and list 10 things that pleased you – ‘wonderful things’. Then list 10 traits that help those 10 things happen.”

It could be broken into areas of your life. For example, 10 things that please you about your relationship with your children or your spouse or 10 things about your work or friendships, or ten things about your recreational life, etc.

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

With a partner, role-play being with a client with a difficult issue or a mandated client (someone who has to be there and it is not their choice to be there).

Ask, "What are your best hopes from being here today?" and stick with it for six minutes.

Use questions to stay Solution-Focused like: "Since you are here what would be helpful?" "What might someone else think would be helpful?"

"If you weren’t here what would you be doing instead?"

"What difference would that make?"

"What might you notice changing if our conversation were helpful?"

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

10-20 Exercise

Interview a partner and ask them to, “List 10 things you want a person close to you (or a client you are working with) to do differently.”

"Now list 20 things you would do differently if that person started doing those 10 things.”

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

Get with a partner and ask them to tell you about the time in their life where they had to use the most strength - a time in their life where they had to use the most resolve and resilience within them to overcome a particular hurdle. Practice listening as if you are in complete awe with this person and listening in a particular way that really believes in them.

Listen for evidence that they are one of the strongest people you’ve ever talked to. Get every question come from a place of amusement. Talk to the version of the person who got through their difficulty.

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

With a partner, have a conversation asking about a desired outcome or preferred future for 5 mins by only asking questions - No statements

Using questions and tone to convey your compassion and empathy rather than using the statements.

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

With a partner ask them about what they have achieved today. Make a list of twenty achievements, even the mundane.

Use questions that elaborate on things like:

- How did you do that?
- What skills did you use?
- What were you pleased about with that?
- What difference did that make?
- What good things did you notice about that?
- What did someone else notice that was good?
**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

**Ask you partner**, “If you wake up tomorrow and nothing was impossible – you could literally make any dream or goal happen – what would you do differently in pursuit of the goal/s that mean so much to you if nothing was impossible and anything could happen? What would you notice about yourself and what would you find yourself doing differently that would fit with knowing you couldn’t fail?”

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

This is an exercise about when things are difficult, but we handle them in a way that pleases us. One person shares about a difficult time in their past and talk about how the ‘best of them turned up’ during that time. The other asks solution-focused questions to help them see their strengths and resources within him/herself.

Questions like:
- What is the first thing you would notice when the best of you shows up?
- What would others notice when you are showing your best through a difficult situation?
- What difference does that make?
- What is in your past that helped you show the best of you now?

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

Sometimes clients come with irreducible problems for example, someone dying of cancer. A therapist cannot fix that and nor can the client. Each week they come they feel less hope and it is your job to help them focus on something good or pleasing that has happened (a ‘Magical Moment’). There are always good things happening while the bad things are going on around us – even small things for a short time.

Discuss how to amplify the small things and how to focus on good things in the midst of the pain or hurt. Next, practice with a partner for five minutes talking about the magical moments or small wonders in your week.

Questions like:
- How did you notice that?
- What made it special, good or pleasing?
- What difference did it make to notice that?
- What did you notice about you that was pleasing?

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

**A Better Tomorrow**

What could you do today that tomorrow you would be pleased with?

Ask questions about the next day like:

- What difference would that make?
- What would be the first good thing you would notice?
- Who else would notice the improvement?
- How would you know that it was good?
- What would be better?

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

**Legacy Questions**

What is a family trait that you hold dear? Where did you get that trait and in your past would be most pleased that you possess it?

Ask questions about the day like:

- What do you notice about yourself when that trait shows up?
- What do others notice?
- What difference does it make to have this trait?
- How are you pleased to show this trait?

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

**Finding Brilliance**

Find someone that you don’t know and discover what they are best at. It could be the supermarket operator, the fuel station attendant, or while you are waiting in a queue. Ask questions like:

- Why did you think of that thing?
- How did you get good at that?
- Who may have influenced you to get better at that?
- What difference does it make to be good at that?
- What things do you notice when you are doing that thing that pleases you?

**SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK**

**What do you like most?**

Asking general questions like “what do you like?” can lead to vague or overly open answers but adding the word “most” narrows it down.

Ask a partner what ten things they like “most”.

- What do you like ‘most’ about school/work/home?
- What do you like ‘most’ about your family?
- What do you like ‘most’ about church or a group you belong to?
SOLUTION FOCUSED PRACTICE TASK

**Using Solution-Focused questions...**
Get with a partner and ask them, "If you found yourself using the Solution-Focused approach really well..."
- What would be the first thing you would notice?
- What clues would you observe that would let you know that that you are on track to mastering this approach?
- What would you be most pleased about?
- Who else would notice and what would that notice?

**How are you?**
This question has potential to be problem focused so come up with some alternatives to this question that can only be answered in a positive way. Try these:
- What was the best thing about today?
- What was something funny that happened to you today?
- What are you looking forward to tomorrow?
- What has been your favourite thing about today?
- What are you most grateful for today?
- What are you looking forward to?
- What are you most pleased with today?
- Name something good in your life....

**What inspires you?**
Ask a partner about what inspires them?
Now follow up with a preferred future question like: "Suppose you went about your day being guided by what inspires you what would you notice? What else? What else? What else?"
Find out more about what really drives them, Ask about what motivates and touches their heart. Who else would notice and what would they notice? What else? What else? What else? What else?

**A day of your best...**
Imagine a day that holds a challenge for you. It could be an interview, a special presentation, or an important meeting. It is also a day when the best version of yourself shows up....
- Name 10 things you might notice about yourself as you prepare for the day.
- Name 3 things the first people to meet would notice.
- Name 3 things you might notice in the time leading up to the challenge.
- Name 3 things close to you would notice during the challenge:
Remember, this is not the perfect day but YOU being at your best. It could be raining, or you could drop your notes, however you remain at your best.

**Talk to a partner about something that excites you, something that you are looking forward to and be aware of the feelings that the conversation creates... that is what we are looking for in the people we are working with - excitement about their best hopes**
- Try asking about the strengths that created those hopes.
- Adding "What else?" will broaden their awareness about their hopes.
- Adding "What difference does that make?" deepens their awareness of the things they hope for and get excited about.

**Encouragement**
Ask a partner to think of a time in their life when someone encouraged them for a strength or character trait they displayed.
Ask questions about how that encouragement has made a difference to their life now and how it will continue into the future.
- "What difference will it make?"
- "What will you notice as it continues to impact you?"
- "Who else notices that strength and what do they see?"
- "What else? What else? What else?"
What difference does it make?

What would you do differently as a result of this workshop?

OR

What is going to be better as a result of this workshop?

What else? What else? What else?