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Grief induced Substance abuse, Sickness, Death, and Dying

Each person responds to grief differently

- ☞ The nature of the loss to the person.
- ☞ The grieving person's personality.
- ☞ The norms within the grieving person's culture and family.
- ☞ The other stressors in the grieving person's life.
- ☞ The grieving person's history of coping with other losses.

Medical Complications of Grief

- ☞ Sudden Cardiac Death
- ☞ Cardiac Disease
- ☞ Cancer
- ☞ Viral Disease
- ☞ Suicide
- ☞ Drug Use and Abuse

Kubler-Ross Stages of Grief

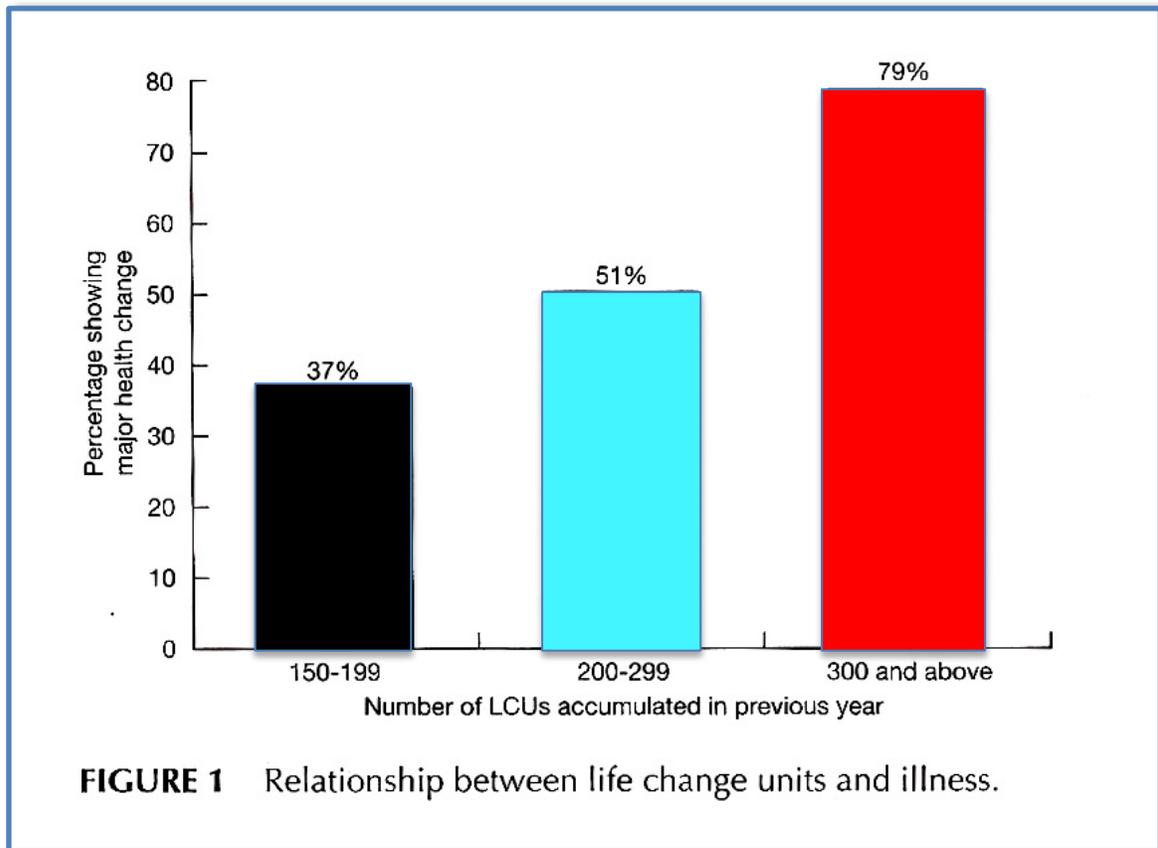
- ☞ Denial
- ☞ Anger
- ☞ Bargaining
- ☞ Depression
- ☞ Acceptance

Holmes & Rahe Stress Scale (Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS))

- ☞ 43 life events based on a relative score
- ☞ Positive correlation was found between their life events and illnesses
- ☞ Higher the Score, Higher the Chance of Illness

TABLE 1 The Social Readjustment Rating Scale

RANK	LIFE EVENT	MEAN VALUE
1	Death of spouse	100
2	Divorce	73
3	Marital separation	65
4	Jail term	63
5	Death of close family member	63
6	Personal injury or illness	53
7	Marriage	50
8	Fired at work	47
9	Marital reconciliation	45
10	Retirement	45
11	Change in health of family member	44
12	Pregnancy	40
13	Sex difficulties	39
14	Gain of new family member	39
15	Business readjustment	39
16	Change in financial state	38
17	Death of close friend	37
18	Change to different line of work	36
19	Change in number of arguments with spouse	35
20	Large mortgage	31
21	Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30
22	Change in responsibilities at work	29
23	Son or daughter leaving home	29
24	Trouble with in-laws	29
25	Outstanding personal achievement	28
26	Wife begins or stops work	26
27	Begin or end school	26
28	Change in living conditions	25
29	Revision of personal habits	24
30	Trouble with boss	23
31	Change in work hours or conditions	20
32	Change in residence	20
33	Change in schools	20
34	Change in recreation	19
35	Change in church activities	19
36	Change in social activities	18
37	Small mortgage	17
38	Change in sleeping habits	16
39	Change in number of family get-togethers	15
40	Change in eating habits	15
41	Vacation	13
42	Christmas	12
43	Minor violations of the law	11



- A score of **more than 300** puts us at significantly increased risk of stress-related illness
- A score of 150 - 299 - places us at moderate risk of
- A score 150 or less - a slightly raised risk of stress-related illness

Psycho-Somatic Effects of Grief

- ☞ Grief increases levels of the stress hormone Cortisol
weakens the immune system
- ☞ Increases then Depletes adrenaline reserves
Breaks the 'oxygen Krebs cycle' within normal cells of the body
Emotional reflex center in the brain slowly breaks down
Formation of cancer cells in corresponding organs
- ☞ Sleep and appetite disturbances
- ☞ Alcohol &/or Drug dependence
- ☞ Heightened blood pressure
- ☞ Greater risk of cardiac problems
- ☞ Increase in cancer risk

What is stress?

- ☞ “Coping resources are not able to counteract the demands of the environment”
- ☞ Acute Stress
 - ☞ Short lived, typical life stressors
- ☞ Chronic Stress
 - ☞ Prolonged seemingly never ending, becomes old and familiar

Stress Hormones

- ☞ Aldosterone – (Mineralocorticoid)
 - ☞ Retain salt and water, increase blood pressure
- ☞ Cortisol - (Glucocorticoid)
 - ☞ Increases blood sugar, Glucose
 - ☞ Suppresses immune response
 - ☞ Aids metabolism of fat, protein, carbohydrates
- ☞ Catecholamines
 - ☞ Epinephrine (Adrenaline,) Norepinephrine
 - ☞ Increase HR, BP

Cortisol

- ☞ Inhibits Killer cells-”pro-inflammatory cells”
- ☞ Relative increase in antibody mediated immunity-”anti-inflammatory”
- ☞ Increases glucose (blood sugar)
- ☞ Beneficial in short term stress
 - ☞ Fight or Flight
 - ☞ Reduces acute stress induced inflammation

Chronic stress leads to Chronic Inflammation

Inflammatory diseases

- ☞ Heart disease
- ☞ Osteoporosis
- ☞ Autoimmune diseases
- ☞ Type 2 diabetes
- ☞ Allergies

Catecholamines

- ☞ Adrenaline compounds
- ☞ Stimulates sympathetic nervous system

- ☞ Acutely increases with stress, part of fight or flight
- ☞ Acute increase Antibody immunity while inhibiting killer cells
- ☞ Chronic activation dysregulates immune function
- ☞ Chronic stress-depletion of adrenaline
 - ☞ Induces an environment more favorable for cancer

Sympathetic Nervous System – (Catecholamines)

- ☞ Increase heart rate
- ☞ Increase blood pressure
- ☞ Anxiety
- ☞ Palpitations
- ☞ Countered by parasympathetic

Increased Risk of Heart Diseases

- ☞ Increase risk of heart attack
 - ☞ Smoking > STRESS > hypertension & obesity
 - ☞ 21 times higher within 24 hours and 6 times higher within a week
- ☞ Increase risk of sudden death
- ☞ Stress induced Cardiomyopathy
 - ☞ Broken heart syndrome

Cancer

- ☞ Grief increases Cortisol
 - ☞ White Blood Cell function impeded
 - ☞ T-Cell & Natural Killer Cells
 - ☞ Cells that defend against viral infections and tumors
- ☞ Increases then Depletes Adrenaline creating the perfect cancer environment
- ☞ Helplessness, a key component of complicated grief, is a strong developmental factor of cancer
- ☞ Disrupted Sleep Suppresses the Immune System

Miscellaneous Health Effects of Grief

- ☞ Hair loss
 - ☞ Sudden synchronization of follicle cycles
- ☞ Weight gain
 - ☞ Cortisol causes abdominal obesity
 - ☞ “Cushingoid”
- ☞ Autoimmune disease
 - ☞ Rash, psoriasis
 - ☞ Arthritis

Substance Use As Adverse Coping Mechanism

- ☞ Alcohol
- ☞ Prescription Sedatives
 - ☞ Benzodiazepines
 - ☞ Ambien
 - ☞ Soma
- ☞ Marijuana
- ☞ Narcotics

Numb-er

- ☞ Coping Mechanism
- Stop Pain, Racing Thoughts, Crying
- ☞ 20% of rehab patients report significant grief
- ☞ Recently widowed men
- 19% drank >5/day c/w 8% married men
- ☞ Marked increase hospitalization after loss of Child
- Bereaved Mothers 50% greater than non-bereaved
- ☞ 1995 Oklahoma City, September 11 bombing
- 29% Increased use after September 11

Addiction vs. Abuse

Substance Dependence

"craving or a strong desire or urge to use a substance"
Tolerance, withdrawal or a pattern of compulsive or uncontrolled use

Substance abuse

Significant **negative physical, social, interpersonal or legal consequences**. Does not include tolerance or a pattern of compulsive or uncontrolled use.

Heavy Drinking

Consistent use of more than seven drinks a week for women and more than 14 drinks a week for men.

Or

Consistent binge use of more than 3 drinks at any one sitting for women and more than 4 drinks for men on 5 or more days within the past 30 days.

Positive relationship between number of past-year stressors & heavy drinking.

Increased by 24% per stressor in men
13% with each additional stressor reported by women

Dependence

3 or more of :

1. Tolerance

Patient tends to need more of the drug over time to get the same effect

2. Withdrawal symptoms

3. Continued use despite Negative consequences(CUDNC)

4. Loss of control

Takes the drug in larger amounts, or for longer than planned

5. Attempts to cut down

Has the patient made a conscious, but unsuccessful, effort to reduce his or her drug use?

6. Saliency

Spends significant time obtaining or thinking about the drug, or recovering from its effects

7. Reduced involvement

Given up or reduced involvement in social, occupational or recreational activities due to the drug

Craving and Obsession are a hallmark of addiction

Reducing Cortisol (and therefore stress)

- ☞ Sleep
- ☞ Exercise
- ☞ Meditation
- ☞ Hypnotherapy
- ☞ Yoga
- ☞ Massage (30% reduction)
- ☞ Spirituality/prayer
- ☞ Music
- ☞ Dancing
- ☞ Laughing
- ☞ Sex
- ☞ Avoid Isolation (Isolation increases Cortisol)
- ☞ Magnesium
- ☞ Omega-3 fatty acids
- ☞ Phosphatidylserine – white beans, barley,? soy
- ☞ Black tea
- ☞ Aromatherapy – e.g.. lavender
- ☞ Dark Chocolate – 49 grams per day (?)