

# Ambiguous Loss: Its Meaning and Application

## Non-Credit Professional Development Training Course

### Module 1: Ambiguous Loss Definition, Two Types

#### Overview

- Theory and Assumptions of Ambiguous Loss
- Where Ambiguous Loss Fits into the Contextual Model of Family Stress (CMFS)
- Definition of Ambiguous Loss
- Two Types of Ambiguous Loss
- What Ambiguous Loss is NOT

#### Learning Objectives

- Understand ambiguous loss theory, its assumptions, and relation to stress theory
- Define ambiguous loss and the two types
- Recognize what ambiguous loss is not

### Module 2: Loss and Grief: History and Update

#### Overview

#### Brief History of Ideas About Grief

- Personal vs. Professional, Freud
- Grief as Repressed or Delayed, Erich Lindemann
- Grief in Five Stages, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross
- Update on Grief Research with a focus on:
  - More nuanced types of grief; disenfranchised, chronic sorrow, grief as normal oscillation
  - Living with grief; no need to get over it, no timeline
  - Types of grief
  - Resilience Instead of closure
  - Family/community after loss
- Cultural Views
- Religious and Secular Views
- Ambiguous Loss and Religious Beliefs

#### Learning Objectives

- Describe the progression of views about loss and grief in the past and in contemporary research
- Distinguish between Western and Eastern cultural views of loss and grief
- Examine relationship between ambiguous loss and religious beliefs

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### Module 3: Effects and Assessment of Ambiguous Loss

#### Overview

- Effects of Ambiguous Loss
  - Individual effects of ambiguous loss
  - Sadness vs. depression
  - Family systemic effects
- Assessment of Effects - The 3 Rs
  - Family roles
  - Family rules
  - Family rituals

#### Learning Objectives

- Recognize the individual effects of ambiguous loss and distinguish between sadness and depression
- Recognize family systemic effects of ambiguous loss
- Apply assessment questions to determine effects of ambiguous loss

### Module 4: Treatment and Intervention - Goals and Guidelines

#### Overview

- Resilience: The Goal for Treatment and Intervention
- Resilience: Definition, Update, and Cautions
- How to Increase Resilience

#### Learning Objectives

- Understand various definitions of resilience
- Recognize cautions surrounding the goal of resilience
- Identify techniques to increase resilience

### Module 5: Guidelines for Resilience to Live Well

#### Overview

- Treatment and Intervention Guidelines
  - Finding meaning
  - Adjusting mastery
  - Reconstructing identity
  - Normalizing ambivalence
  - Revising attachment
  - Discovering new hope
- Self-Care
  - Warning signs of burnout
  - How to stay resilient and strong despite ambiguous loss and unanswered questions

#### Learning Objectives

- Understand and apply the guidelines for living well
- Recognize and manage need for self-care
- Recognize warning signs of burnout: physical, psychological, and relational
- Identify techniques to build resilience