

NHPCO Project ECHO *Equity Where It Matters*

Key Takeaways: Cross-Cultural Variation in Grief and Mourning November 16, 2023

Key points:

- Listen to receive, not to give – Engage in active listening when someone is experiencing grief.
- Consider what has been shared and the cultural highlights before weighing in with a response to what has been shared.
- Hold, navigate, and balance multiple truths (including your own) when navigating conversations surrounding grief.

Actionable Steps:

- Grief can show itself in many ways and often before the actual loss is experienced.
- Grief is always about the person experiencing the loss.
- There are many factors to include culture that impact the grieving process, and each must be considered separately for best outcomes.

Conversation Starters:

1. What specific process does your organization use to navigate similar issues regarding grief, mourning, and faith traditions?
2. What barriers or challenges might prevent a patient from receiving their desired care that follows their faith tradition?
3. How can the IDT best support both the patient and the family as they navigate these complex cultural and religious issues at the end of life?

Participant Perspectives:

- “I wonder if the spiritual caregiver in this instance could offer leading interfaith dialogues between the patient and family member. In these, they could discuss what values of their faiths are important to them and come to an understanding on their differences in a way that enriches their own beliefs.”
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- “Grief is not one-size-fits-all. There will be a variety in emotions and how that impacts everyone differently.”
- “There are so many layers to grief at large, but when something causes a rift, then those layers of grief are even more pointed.”



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