

Six Reconciliation Needs of the Mourner

Recognize the Reality . . .

To experience and express the reality of the death outside of oneself

- confront the reality that the person loved has died and will not return
- have opportunities to talk about the nature of the death
- experience repetitious confrontations with thoughts, feelings and memories

To tolerate the emotional suffering that is inherent in the work of grief while nurturing oneself both physically and emotionally.

- express a wide range of thoughts and feelings as a result of the death (confusion, helplessness, fear, grief)
- recognize the need to care for oneself emotionally and physically (nurturing, supportive support system; adequate nutritional balance; daily exercise; daily rest)

Transform the Relationship . . .

To convert the relationship with the deceased from one of presence to a relationship of memory

- modify and detach the emotional ties to the person who has died (move from a relationship of presence to a relationship of memory)
- achieve a new form of relationship rooted in the context of memory

To develop a new self-identity based on a life without the deceased

- develop of a new self-identity reflecting the reality of the loss and its consequences
- negotiate role confusion, changed social status, questioning one's self-worth, doubts about the future, fears of new autonomy

Reinvest in the Future . . .

To relate the experience of loss to a context of meaning

- renew one's resources for living
- discover some sense of meaning in all death
- change one's perception of life itself

To experience a continued supportive presence in the future

- recognize grief as a process, not an event
- create a safe place for natural "grief bursts"