

**Together in Grief:  
Supporting Youth &  
Adults in Schools**



**SCHOOL CRISIS  
RECOVERY**  
and  
**RENEWAL**

# Welcome!

Our guiding question today is:

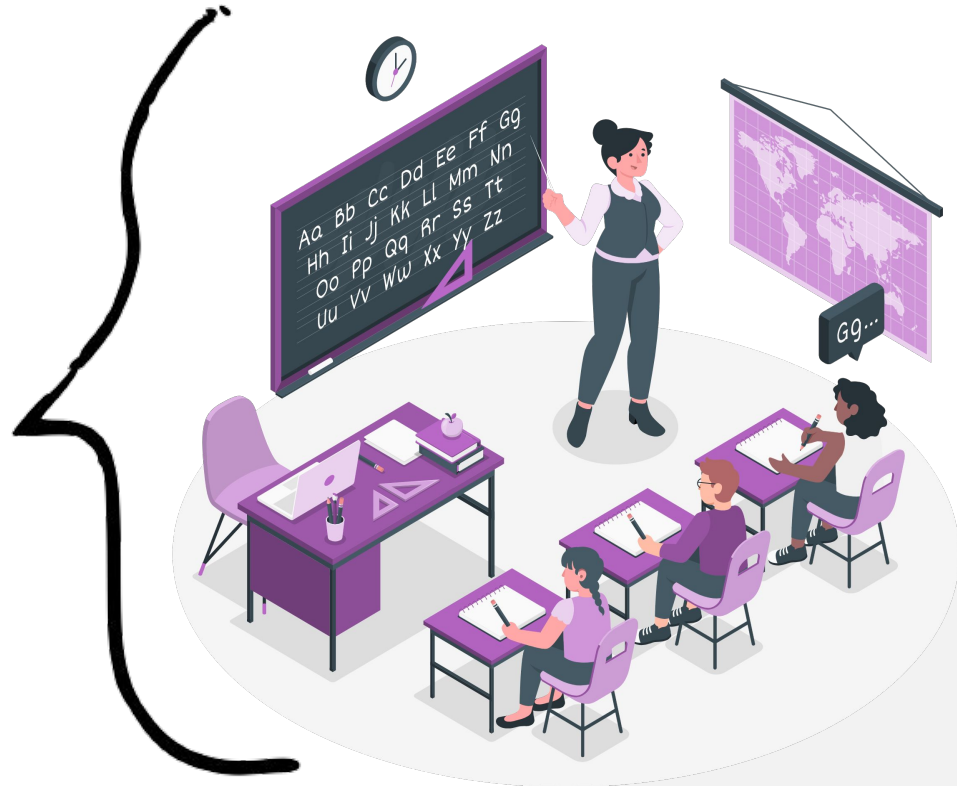
***“How might we, as school-based staff, attend to both the grief of young people and adults in our school communities?”***

If you're able, have your camera on and be prepared to discuss!

# HIGH LEVEL VIEW **HONORING GRIEF SERIES**

The series highlighted a few themes:

- Co-Creating Rituals
- Co-Creating Rhythms
- The Practice of Circles
- Scaffolding Grief Conversations Using Literature
- Practices that Support Reconnection and Recovery after Time Away



# BEARING WITNESS



What is **happening** here?

What is this behavior  
**communicating**?

What **need** is yet unmet?

Curiosity and compassion are critical lenses to hold as we encounter grief.

This may mean persisting through discomfort, being patient, and revisiting the loss with that person.



# Chat + Consider...

Where are adult and student needs **aligned** in processing grief?

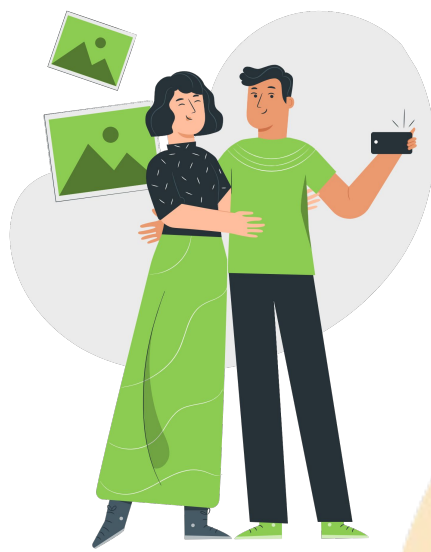
Where are adult and student needs **divergent** in processing grief?

# RECOVERY: REMEMBRANCE & MOURNING

- Holding Space: “offering the experience of being heard without fixing, solving, or treating”
- Tell stories and sharing memories
- Legitimizing emotions
- Self-attunement
- Co-regulation
- Honor proximity to loss



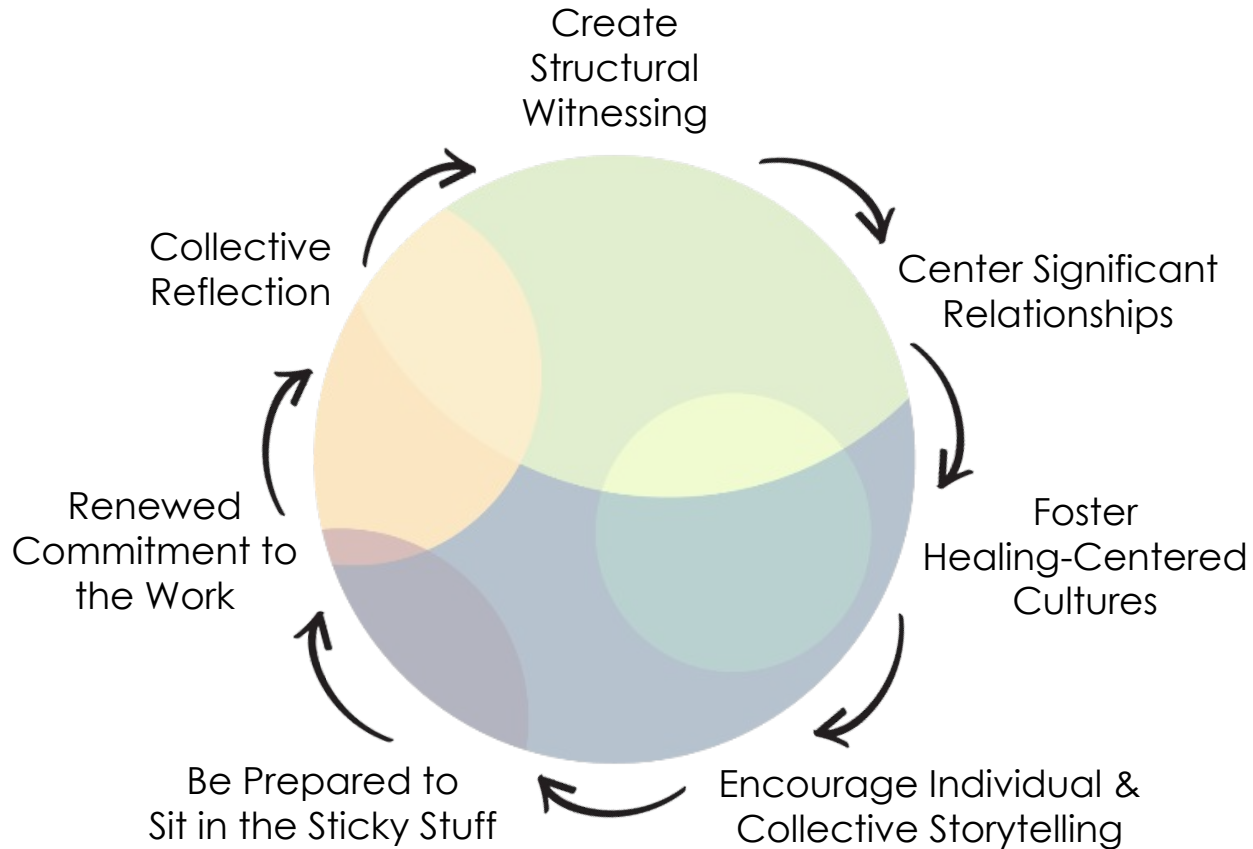
Recovery leaders plan for what spaces need to be held together as a whole, and which members need differentiated recovery spaces/supports.



# Chat + Consider...

How might we lead spaces of remembrance and mourning for teachers/school leaders?

# RENEWAL: Toward Meaning-Making, Healing & Change





# LEADING IN CRISIS & GRIEF



- Toggle between **individual** needs and **system** needs
- Persistence, patience, and **presence**
- Finding rhythms and rituals for connection, meaning making, metabolization, and connection



## Relational Focused Culture

### **Skills, Capacities & Actions:**

- Attend to humanity not just academic responsibilities.
- Be willing to attend to and stay open to others, even under stress.
- Use frequent and intentional appreciation
- Grow capacity to express emotion and vulnerability
- Give and accept challenging feedback openly and gracefully, especially under stress
- Focus on building a sense of team. Each of us holds a piece of the puzzle.
- Consider ways to support connection institutionally (measure connectedness in climate surveys; embed relational skills into performance reviews; offer modes for repairing ruptures in relationships)

**TRY:** Daily circle check-ins, Presence in spaces where students are, Student-led shout outs, Community-focused project-based learning



## Trauma-Sensitive Communication

### **Skills, Capacities & Actions: (scalable for micro and macro crises)**

- Start and end with connecting words (e.g., a feeling, "we," language that signals relationship)
- Right-size information (how much to give, timing/when)
- Consider multi-modal delivery (e.g., virtual connection, written communication, and when it is safe, to do so in person in smaller gatherings) and accessible (e.g., with ASL, interpretation, with cultural brokers)
- Offer stabilization (anticipate predictable stressors; provide "whys," likely impacts, what's next)
- Consider using storytelling to shape the meaning of communication.
- Consider and offer meaningful places and opportunities to receive reactions.

**WATCH:** Tone (written and verbal), Body Language, and Volume



## Mindful & Reflective Practice

### Skills, Capacities & Actions:

- **Presence.** Being with what is in the here and now.
- **Space.** Capacity to see, feel, or tolerate distress without reacting.
- **Respond.** Can exercise choice over habit and comfort; able to move from autopilot to aware.
- **Inquiry.** An orientation toward open inquiry and curiosity; able to maintain open mind, open heart, open will.
- **Eagle eye.** Able to step back and look at the whole system rather than be caught up in the system.
- **Contemplative.** Values building spaces and opportunities to slow down and contemplate even as the culture/system demands continuous and immediate attention.

**CONSIDER:** Doing this with and modeling for students how to engage this way.



# Chat + Consider...

What is coming up for you?

What else is lingering in your mind?