

PEER SUPPORT SELF-ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this quick, (optional) self-assessment is to recognize the differences between peer support and clinical support (e.g., counselling) and to help you identify what support may fit your needs best. **See pages 2 and 3 for the quick assessment** (approx. 2 minutes to complete).

Peer Support is the emotional and practical support between two people who share a common experience. A Peer Supporter has lived through that similar experience and is trained to support others (Peer Support Canada). **Counselling** addresses other areas in and out of grief, such as wellness, relationships, personal growth, career development, mental health, and psychological illness or distress (Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association).

Peer Support	Similarities	Counselling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects you to a helper with a shared background or experience (being grief and loss) in which the helper shares their experiences and knowledge to support you • Discusses topics or difficulties you may have experienced • Provides hope, acceptance, empathy, and freedom to express ideas • Provides information and strategies to normalize your experience and give some guidance through the self-disclosure of the helper • Provides personal coping strategies for triggers • Provides ways to practice self-care, self-compassion, and self-soothing • Gives a sense of belonging to a community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will listen carefully and respectfully to your story and get to know your loved one through you • Will commit to being non-judgmental • Helpers have an awareness of their own values and beliefs • May provide information and brief education on certain topics • Will ensure confidentiality is maintained • Will have a commitment to supporting you in finding your own ways of learning to live with your grief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is guided by a theoretical framework to help resolve or better manage problems and challenges • Involves being an ‘expert helper’ as they help you to understand what grief means to you • Rarely discloses personal experiences of grief • Draws on objective knowledge • Supports pre-existing concerns (e.g., marriage and/or relationship support, navigating family dynamics, trauma, domestic violence, mental health challenges, etc.) • Supports serious difficulties in grief (risk of suicide, prolonged effects on health, sleep, eating, etc.) • Can try to find ways to strengthen the relationships with friends and family

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE PART 1

#	Questions	Yes	No
1	I am uncomfortable with or dislike hearing others share their experiences with grief, loss and death?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I am looking for support for my mental health challenges (e.g., Anxiety, Depression, PTSD, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I am looking for a diagnosis and/or assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I am looking for support with navigating my family or friend dynamics?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I am experiencing suicidal thoughts/ideation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	I am looking for support with processing my trauma?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	I am looking to do some goal setting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I am looking to access therapeutic techniques?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	I am looking for support with my eating, sleeping, and/or exercise habits?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	I have great difficulty with completing regular, day-to-day activities and would like some guidance on this?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	I am looking for support in solving current problems/challenges happening in my life, grief or not grief related?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	I am uncomfortable with having any demographic support me (a student or volunteer, staff member, a male/female, any age, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered 'Yes' to more than 6 questions, especially #1 and #12, clinical support such as counselling is highly encouraged. Here, we recommend accessing counselling prior to/after accessing peer support, or, accessing it alongside peer support and staying within the boundaries of what peer support can provide. See the next page for Part 2 of the self-assessment.

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE PART 2

#	Questions	Yes	No
1	I am comfortable with or like hearing others share their experiences with grief, loss and death?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I am looking for ways to practice self-care, self-compassion, and/or self-soothing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I am looking for ways to remain connected with my loved one(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I am looking for ways to cope with difficult days such as special occasions and/or triggers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I am looking to talk to someone who 'gets it'?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	I am looking to talk to someone who can validate and/or normalize my grief experiences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	I am looking to access additional resources such as suggested books, worksheets, community organizations, etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I am looking for supportive, non-judgmental listening?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	I am looking to talk with someone who is equal to me in that there is no 'expert'?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	I am looking to receive some brief education/knowledge on grief and loss?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	I am comfortable with having any demographic support me (a student or volunteer, staff member, a male/female, any age, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered 'Yes' to more than 5 questions, then peer support is a good fit for you and your needs! We still recommend accessing some form of counselling should you have answered 'Yes' to any question in Part 1 of the self-assessment or 'No' to more than 5 of these questions in Part 2.