Uncomplicated and Complicated Grief

Mental health and healthcare professionals are faced with the often misunderstood and misdiagnosed symptoms of uncomplicated and complicated grief. Formal education rarely, if ever, provides extensive enough training to accurately identify and treat those who are grieving. Often grieving clients present with other diagnoses because symptoms can mimic uncomplicated or complicated grief. The grieving process is often pathologized, or misdiagnosed, resulting in potential exacerbation of the presenting issues because inappropriate interventions are utilized. As a result, those who are grieving are often inadvertently disenfranchised by providers, which can make the professional support sought to reconstruct their previously shattered identities and worldviews ineffective. It is essential to be versed in identifying grief-related constructs that may linger, or even cause, mental health difficulties.

This presentation aims to provide current information on the grieving process, clarify misconceptions of outdated theories, and differentiate between uncomplicated and complicated grief, and also examines the changes in conceptualization, differential diagnosing, treatment planning, and interventions used with grieving individuals. Attendees will leave with an improved clinical skill set they can immediately use to identify and treat their clients.

Learning Objectives
At the end of this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the psychological, physiological, behavioral, spiritual, interpersonal, cognitive, and emotional responses to loss
2. Define both “complicated” and “uncomplicated” bereavement
3. Define disenfranchised losses and work more effectively with individuals experiencing disenfranchised loss
4. Describe why the stage model of the grieving process is no longer utilized to inform treatment planning or develop interventions
5. Identify changes to the DSM-V as it relates to uncomplicated and complicated bereavement

Seminar Schedule
Begin 10 AM ET and end 5:00 PM, with 15 minute breaks at 11:30 and 3:30, and a half hour lunch break at 1 PM