



BY Pallium Canada




## Grief & Bereavement Literacy Series

### Session 12: “Disenfranchised Loss: Addressing the Needs of Pet Loss Grief Support”

Presenter: **Pam Bilusack, Executive Director at BC Bereavement Helpline/ BC Victims of Homicide**  
 Lived Experience Presenter: Paris

**September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024: 12pm-1pm**

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION
<b>Objectives, Overview and Session Materials</b>	<p><u>Learning Objectives</u></p> <p>By the end of the session participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize the unique challenges of pet loss grief.</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of the value of support systems.</li> <li>• Learn basic components of an effective pet loss support group.</li> </ul>
<b>Presentation Key Points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The session started with a brief overview of three types of grief with a focus on pet loss that profoundly impact individuals: Complicated/Prolonged grief disorder, Anticipatory and Disenfranchised grief.</li> <li>• Disenfranchised grief is an emotional response to disenfranchised loss.</li> <li>• The presenter further went on to highlight the importance of a pet loss support as it provides a safe place for sharing thereby increasing feelings of connection and reducing isolation. People don't often feel like they can talk about their loss especially when it comes to pet loss and so by providing them with a space that's specific to this type of loss, they are able to foster a sense of community and be with others who understand and can relate to what they are going through.</li> <li>• Amazing conversations come out of grief support groups which really helps to validate feelings and normalize the loss. Other types of support for pet loss could be from family and friends, other pet owners, self-care, online communities, counselling &amp; volunteering, etc.</li> <li>• With statistics provided, the BCBH Pet Loss Program recognized the need for grief support with a focus on pet loss. The structure of this program first started as a peer support model which has transitioned to a support group model – this means a safe structure with a little bit of psycho- educational content.</li> <li>• How can we as a community build more support and awareness for pet loss? - talking about it, give people time to express themselves, give them time to go through the mourning process, normalizing &amp; validating such talk like it were any other form of loss. Other ways to provide pet loss grief support could be providing one on one support where possible, counselling, etc. People can also volunteer by helping to facilitate training support groups.</li> <li>• For an organization that wants to provide support, it could be through having resources available such as brochures, website resources, handy helpline phone number.</li> <li>• Given the opportunities &amp; connection with other people that have been through a similar experience, one can seek support and not be stuck in grief but rather work through it.</li> </ul>
<b>LIVED EXPERIENCE Discussion</b>	<p><b>Q:</b> Can one share how to access the BCBH virtual support with clients?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Right now, it is restricted to people in BC only.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Talk about your relationship with your animal as a pet owner and what that meant to you.</p> <p><b>A:</b> It wasn't 'just a dog' for the lived experience presenter but more like a companion /close friend.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Could you talk a little about just your own grief journey.</p>

	<p>A: Previously used to do volunteer dog walking with the SPCA and took her in as a foster. The loss was too much to deal with on his own and even after 5 years, it wasn't getting better despite receiving counselling &amp; therapy as some people seek therapy, and it isn't all that successful bearing in mind that a regular therapist isn't a grief specialist but after googling &amp; searching that was when he came across BCBH which made a whole lot of difference in his life just having that shared experience of pet loss with other people. The connection with other people that have been through a similar experience was the difference.</p>
	<p>Upcoming Session:</p> <p><b>Oct 24<sup>th</sup> session: <i>The Next Day: What Happens After Someone Dies</i></b></p> <p><a href="#">Register</a></p>
<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p>Recording <a href="#">Link</a></p> <p><b>Past Sessions:</b> <a href="https://www.bc-cpc.ca/echo-project-new-home/echo-project-past-series-and-resources/#1694021429157-e9440b18-3da4">https://www.bc-cpc.ca/echo-project-new-home/echo-project-past-series-and-resources/#1694021429157-e9440b18-3da4</a></p> <p><b>The action plan report link:</b> <a href="https://www.bc-cpc.ca/about-us/activities/new-projects/bereavement-study/grief-and-bereavement-support-in-bc-a-collaborative-improvement-action-plan/">https://www.bc-cpc.ca/about-us/activities/new-projects/bereavement-study/grief-and-bereavement-support-in-bc-a-collaborative-improvement-action-plan/</a></p> <p><b>Other Links:</b></p> <p><b>Joshua's podcast link:</b> <a href="https://www.griefdreams.ca/">https://www.griefdreams.ca/</a></p> <p>Our <a href="#">ECHO program webpage</a> lists all current sessions open for registration</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div data-bbox="391 1118 886 1292"> <p><b>BCBH Contact Information</b></p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:contact@bcbh.ca">contact@bcbh.ca</a></p> <p><b>Phone:</b> 604-738-9950</p> <p><b>Toll-free:</b> 1-877-779-2223</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.bcbh.ca">www.bcbh.ca</a></p> </div> <div data-bbox="1016 1118 1451 1193"> <p><b>Helpline Hours</b></p> <p><b>Monday to Friday</b> 9:00am - 5:00pm</p> </div> </div> <p>Pam Bilusack, Executive Director  <a href="mailto:executivedirector@bcbh.ca">executivedirector@bcbh.ca</a></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div data-bbox="391 1419 964 1677" style="background-color: #e1f5fe; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Pet Loss Specific</b>  <a href="http://bcbh.ca/grief-support/pet-loss-support/">bcbh.ca/grief-support/pet-loss-support/</a></p> <p><b>Traumatic Loss Facilitator Training</b>  October 15 - 29, 2024  1:00 PM to 4:30 PM  <a href="http://bcbh.ca/training-and-education/">bcbh.ca/training-and-education/</a></p> </div> <div data-bbox="1016 1419 1471 1655"> <p><b>Social Media</b></p> <p> BC Bereavement Helpline</p> <p> @BCbereavementhelpline</p> <p> BC Bereavement Helpline</p> </div> </div>