

Listening Without Rushing Grief

Grief and life transitions | Clinicians | 10 to 15 minutes

Support a grief conversation with permission, specificity, and room for complicated feelings.

These prompts help the clinician remain present without offering a timeline or a lesson. Use the client's name for the person or loss when invited. Ask what kind of conversation would be useful before choosing an exercise.

Ask what would help

Clinician: Would you like to talk about what happened, what life is like now, or something else today? Client: I am tired of telling the story. Clinician: We can leave the story alone. What has been hardest about getting through this week?

Make room for mixed feelings

Client: I feel relieved, and then I feel guilty. Clinician: Both feelings are here. What does the relief connect to, and what does the guilt say you should be feeling? Avoid assuming relief means the relationship did not matter. If the client becomes overwhelmed: Would you prefer a pause, a change of subject, or some company while we sit?

Invite a concrete preference

Clinician: When people try to help, what do they do that fits, and what makes things harder? What would you like them to understand? If appropriate, offer GRF04 for a difficult date or GRF05 for a practical burden. Close with: What do you need for the period after this session?

Client preferences, helpful language, and a support request to remember