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How to cope with grief, anxiety, and loss? How to talk to others about my diagnosis?

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Outline for discussion

- 1 After your diagnosis
- 2 Talking with others
- 3 Managing emotions



After your diagnosis

- Gather information from reliable resources
- Process emotional response
- Develop a support network
- Focus on healthy habits
- Identify your values, meaning, and purpose
- Set realistic goals
- Focus on abilities, not limitations
- Develop coping strategies

Gather information

- Talk to your medical team
 - Write down questions before appointment
 - Start a healthcare journal
 - Bring someone with you to appointments
 - Ask for reliable resources from medical team
 - Be mindful of online resources



Process emotional response

- Allow yourself to feel normal emotions in response to a medical diagnosis
- Seek emotional support from
 - Family
 - Friends
- Consider professional support
 - Support groups
 - Individual therapy

Develop a support network

- Emotional support
 - Family
 - Friends
 - Other individuals with same/similar diagnosis
- Physical support
 - Assistance with household chores, transportation, and meal prep

Healthy habits

- Diet
- Exercise, if allowed by medical team
- Sleep

Determine your values and meaning

- What brings you joy?
- What activities do you find rewarding?

Setting realistic goals

- How much can you realistically complete in a day?
- What can you say no to?



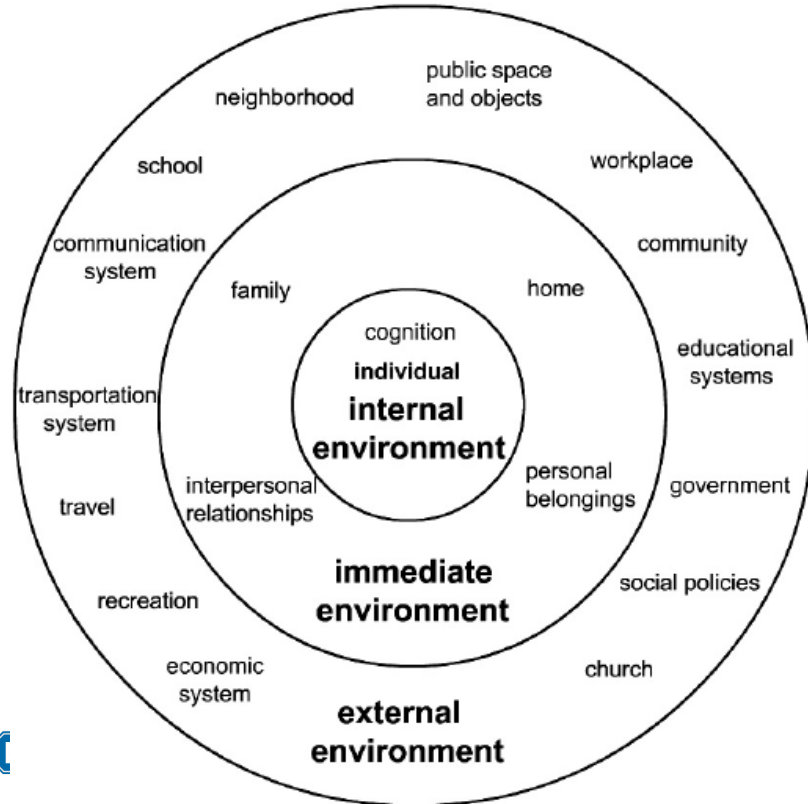
Focus on abilities

- What can I do now that is similar to what I was doing before?
- How can I modify an activity I love so that I can still participate in it?

Develop coping strategies

- Physical
- Cognitive
- Mental

Sharing information about your medical diagnosis



Sharing information: Who

1

Family

2

Friends

3

School

4

Workplace

5

Community-
based
activities

Sharing information: Why

1

Is it
necessary?

2

Do I want
to tell
this
person?

3

Is this
someone I
can trust?

Sharing information: What

1

Name of
diagnosis

2

Describe
symptoms

3

What can
the
person do
to help?

Sharing information: When and how

1

Timing

2

Location

3

Amount
to share

Sharing Information: Managing responses

1

Unwelcome
opinions or
recommenda
tions

2

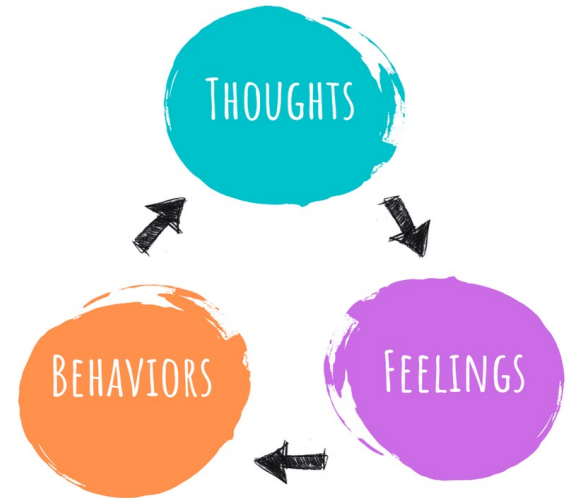
Negative
comments

3

Overly
positive
responses

Managing long-term emotions

- Identify triggers for anxiety or low mood
- Be mindful of “downward spirals”
- Work towards creating “upward spirals”
- Activity monitoring
 - Track your mood
 - Up and down activities
 - Identification of values and associated activities



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Identify values and associated activities

- Physical well-being
- Mental/Emotional well-being
- Family relationships
- Romantic relationship
- Friend relationships
- Community
- Spirituality
- Hobbies/Recreation
- Education/Personal growth
- Employment/Career