

2W TEAM MEETING SERIES

COVID 19: FROM GRIEF TO GIDDY UP

COACHES' RESOURCES

Today, our athletes are being asked to do something really scary: to open up about their feelings. We have asked them to talk about their emotions, the good and the bad, surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. It's a difficult time, a difficult subject, and a difficult thing to do.

We're asking them to be vulnerable. We've encouraged them to be strong enough to ask for help. We've explained that their coaches are there for them always. Now comes the hard part: How do we help our student-athletes do this very tough thing?

We keep the door open. When you're scared to bring up a topic, knocking on a door can look like Mt. Everest. We can remove that step so our athletes don't have to knock. Knocking on a door here is representative of any barriers to having those difficult conversations. The easier it is for athletes to reach us to talk, the more likely it is that they will actually talk.

We listen to them. When they're talking, we need to carefully listen. The common refrain from teens is that adults do not listen to them or respect their opinions because they are kids. Whether that's perception or reality doesn't really matter; what matters is that it's how they feel about it. We can provide examples for them of adults who listen.

We thank them for coming to us with this. When one of our athletes is strong enough to come to us for help, that's something to be celebrated. That's a proud moment because it is not an easy thing to do. When we thank athletes for sharing their feelings with us, we demonstrate that we care enough to actually want them to bring their troubles to us to discuss.

Opening up to others about our feelings isn't easy. We might trust someone with our back but not our heart. We might fear rejection or ridicule. It's a difficult thing to do, and we can be proud when our athletes take that step.

QUOTES

"The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials." Chinese Proverb

"We acquire the strength we have overcome." Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Everyone goes through adversity in life, but what matters is how you learn from it." Lou Holtz

MORE RESOURCES

Website: ["Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\): Support For Teens and Young Adults"](#) Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Article: ["Helping Children and Teens Cope with Anxiety About COVID-19"](#) by Heather Cooper, Seattle Children's Hospital

Video: ["Helping Teens Cope with Anxiety Regarding COVID 19 with Dr. Tanya Stockhammer"](#) Operation Parent (YouTube)

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RECAP

You don't have to get sick to be affected by the pandemic. Everyone is experiencing loss due to COVID-19, whether that's loss of a season, loss of experiences, or loss of loved ones. Going through this difficult time is naturally going to bring up a lot of emotions, and it's not uncommon to feel like you're on an emotional roller coaster. It's okay to grieve. But it's not okay to stay in that grief for too long. At some point, you've got to go from grief to giddy up.

Here is a brief synopsis of the five stages of going from grief to giddy up that you learned about in the video lesson.

- 1. Denial.** This is the stage where you try to ignore the loss and its effects on you, as if by not looking at it, it won't be real. But you aren't a baby playing peek-a-boo, so you know that removing something from sight doesn't actually make it disappear. Until you get to a place where you recognize that loss is affecting you, you're going to stay in denial.
- 2. Anger.** In this stage, your denial turns into anger or protest. Anger can be helpful so long as you remember your anger rights. You have the right to be angry, but you don't have the right to get angry too fast, to be disrespectful, or to lose control of your anger. When you value your goals more than your anger, you'll be able to move beyond anger.
- 3. Bargaining.** In an effort to prevent the destruction of your well-laid plans, you might try to bargain with a higher authority, writing checks that it would be really painful to cash later. The only way to get out of the bargaining stage is to let go of the original plan, and focus instead on reaching the goal.
- 4. Depression.** This is the stage where you feel the loss most. It's the deepest trough of the emotional roller coaster. As with the other stages, it's okay to be there, but it's not okay to stay there. To get out of the depression stage, you need hope, and hope comes (mostly) from other people. Talk about your feelings with someone that you trust. Don't isolate yourself from the people who care about you.
- 5. Acceptance.** At this stage, you've felt the loss, and you've experienced the emotional roller coaster. Maybe you're still feeling a bit sore, but you've accepted what has happened, and you've begun to move forward. Acceptance is all about learning from the loss and moving on with that new knowledge.

Remember: You don't have to go through this alone. Your coaches and your teammates are there for you. The emotional roller coaster is totally normal, and there's nothing wrong with asking for help coping with it.

On the road from grief to giddy up, there will be obstacles and setbacks, but you can make it through. And on the other side, you'll be stronger than you've ever been.

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VIDEO NOTES

As you watch the video lesson, use this space to take notes.

After watching the video, write down your BIG THREE here:

1.

2.

3.

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DISCUSSION

Use the following questions, as well as your answers and notes from the previous sections, to discuss COVID-19 and the stages of going from grief to giddy up.

SECTION ONE: WHERE ARE WE?

1. How have you or someone you know been impacted by COVID-19?
2. What is the biggest loss due to COVID-19 that you are facing?
3. Who can you talk to about what you're feeling and experiencing?
4. Which stage of grief are you in or are you bouncing between a few?
5. What do you need to move past the current stage?

SECTION TWO: WHERE ARE WE GOING?

1. Which stages do you still need to go through to reach acceptance?
2. What do you think acceptance of the situation will look and feel like?
3. Why is it important to move through the stages of grief to acceptance?
4. What happens if you just stay in one stage and never learn the lesson of the loss?
5. What lessons do you think the COVID-19 situation may be teaching you?

SECTION THREE: HOW DO WE GET THERE?

1. What steps do you need to take to reach acceptance?
2. What is standing in your way of accepting the situation and using the lesson for growth?
3. Who is in your corner to help you through these five stages?
4. What is one thing you can do today to help you move on to the next stage?
5. How can you help others during this season of loss?