



Skillbuilders

EDUCATION & SUPPORT FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING LIFE TRANSITIONS
DUE TO GRIEF & LOSS

Grief & Loss

- Grief & Loss comes in many forms & from many sources
- Grief & Loss affects how one perceives self and one's place in the world
- Grief & Loss affects decision making and self-confidence
- Grief and Loss effects physical, mental and emotional health

Life Transitions

- Death of a loved one. Spouse, Partner, Child, Parent, Relative, Friend
- Illness of a loved one
- Personal illness
- Divorce
- Change of Address or Living Arrangement
- Aging Limitations

Skillbuilders Perception of Change

- Skillbuilders presents common topics from a unique perception. Grief and Loss can hinder thought patterns making it difficult to make decisions. Presenting information on commonly needed topics from the perspective of one that is dealing with loss, the focus comes from one seeing the needed information through a prism of differing emotions. For someone that was not accustomed to making financial decisions or knowing how to cook or keeping a vehicle in running order, what would seem to be an easy decision can be challenging.

Transitions (continued)

- Though Skillbuilders focuses on those experiencing grief and loss, it is NOT intended to be a grief support group. It IS intended to be a “toolkit” to provide useful information on common topics of daily living and personal care.
- It is intended to provide confidence in knowing who to contact, how to understand oneself and what others have done in similar circumstances. Often, older adults do not want to tell their children that they are uncertain about decisions or ask how to make some decisions due to the fear of being seen as unable to handle their own affairs. These are capable people who are temporarily stuck in needing information. They may decide to include another person in the process but at this moment, they want the information themselves.

How to Establish a Skillbuilders Group

- Determine focus group
- Determine what is currently being offered in your community
- Determine what topics you would offer; what would be your core topics.
- Determine how many programs in the series would be most feasible
- Determine the day of the week, time and location of programs
- Who would be good partners with you?
- Who would be presenters?

Maintenance

- Arrange the room to be as welcoming as possible. Tables for small groups or chairs arranged in semi-circle generally is suggested. Tables are convenient for convenience of writing information.
- Select person(s) to be the “host” for the group. A core person should always be at the program. This person will welcome the attendees, introduce the topic & speaker, keep the conversation continuing (including asking questions when group is hesitant), thank the attendees for coming and preview the next program. This person will also announce at the beginning that questions are encouraged and encourage sharing of experiences (also keeping one person from dominating the discussion if need be), no one is required or expected to do so. It is a place where a person can participate as much or as little as is comfortable.
- Guidelines for discussion can be either briefly announced or a handout on good group discussions may be on the tables. It should be expected that respect for all attendees is the main guideline.

Maintenance (continued)

- Handouts are encouraged. Paper for keeping notes is also suggested.
- Sign-in sheet for contacting for future Skillbuilder events. Having a flier with the series programs, dates and additional information is encouraged.
- If at all possible, refreshments add a comfortable aspect to the gathering.
- At the end of the series:

Evaluate the topics and how the attendees reacted to the information.

Evaluate the speakers, the location, the dates, etc.

Evaluate what should be offered at the next series; what new topics might be of interest and value to the attendees.

Outcome

It is difficult to measure the outcome of any program that is as subjective as this. Attendance is measurable but the results of the programming are not. Comments from those attending are helpful in determining the impact it may have in the community.

It also may take at least two series of Skillbuilders programming to have measurable results.

Suggested Topics (among many)

- Finances & Budgeting
- Basic Legal Concerns
- Understanding Grief & Loss Handling the Holidays Family Dynamics as Life Changes Occur
- Who Am I Now? Learning to be Single in a Couples World
- Physical Fitness Stress: the good, the bad, the inevitable Cooking for 1 or 2 (including nutrition tips)
- How to Have a Successful Doctor Visit Your Pharmacist and Common Meds What Tests Should I Have?
- Downsizing, Re-organizing, Housing Options and Knowing When to Decide
- Gardening Car Care 101 Home Care 101
- Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate: how to decide who gets what or where it all should go

Like to establish Skillbuilders in your community?

If you are interested in establishing Skillbuilders, these are available to you:

- Step-by-step instructions and suggestion booklet (no cost)
- Assistance in evaluating your community to determine the feasibility

This can be done either electronically, traditional mail, by phone or in person, depending on your location.

- Suggestion for topics, partners and other pertinent organization ideas

Topics that have proven to be successful are available electronically, traditional mail, by phone or in person, depending on your location.

Contact me:

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Women's Fiction Readers' Advisory

Thursday, March 15 – 10:00-11:00 am ET

Create a Historic Walking Tour Program at the Library

Thursday, March 15 – 1:30-2:30 pm ET

All About Audiobooks

Wednesday, March 21 – 10:00-11:00 am ET

Time Management for Library Supervisors

Wednesday, March 28 – 11:00 am-12:00 pm ET

Thank you
for
attending!

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