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| Loss The situation With COVID-19 and other traumas, our worlds can collapse into the most complicated transition stage of all…the transit stage. What to remember Ironically, with or without formal understanding of the process, those living with global mobility have usually developed useful skills to help them in their many transitions. Using lessons learned from those times can help us now. | |  | | --- | | **Lost Dreams*****Hidden Losses and Our Resilience*** |  the resultUnfortunately, for the most part we skipped the critical leaving stage. Because we had no awareness this change was coming, we had no time to prepare including:No time to say proper ‘thank you’s’ to significant peopleNo time to say proper farewells to family/friendly/co-workersNo time to visit our favorite place one last timeNo time to collect our ‘sacred objects’No time to prepare for the futureAPPLY Lessons from ‘normal transition’**First, recognize the enormity of this transition**Normal transitions include loss as well as gain. Losses need to be mourned to proceed into the next stage well. That’s why farewells are important. But the multiplicity of losses caused by rapidity and unexpectedness of COVID-19 has complicated that process.**Second, recognize four common obstacles to processing loss healthfully.**Lack of awareness --Losses are often hidden or ‘ambiguous’.e.g.Loss of our worldLoss of our identity/statusLoss of our dreamsLack of permission to grieveLoss is discounted, denied, or compared othersLack of time to processLack of comfortRemember comfort must come before encouragement! |

### BBL June 4 2020 - PowerPoint**how do we begin to mourn well so we can move on well?**

**Name our losses – overt and hidden**

1. Look at this list and write down particular losses that may relate to any/all of these.

2. Consider specifically what you lost in each situation besides the overt loss.

3. In particular, what were the dreams you had that COVID-19 has at least interrupted?

**Give yourself permission to feel the sadness when it comes**.

* Don’t rationalize your loss away by comparison to others or shame that you ‘should’ be tougher. This is your loss despite what others have experienced and can be acknowledged for what It is.
* Recognize ‘normal’ stages of ‘normal’ grief – denial, anger bargaining, sadness, and acceptance. It is helpful if you can name your feelings and where you are in the transition/grief cycle to give yourself permission to experience whatever you are.

**Give yourself and others time**

* Remember we all go through mourning at a different rate and process. Particularly in a family, it is tempting to want ‘one speed fits all’. Give yourself and others time even though you also believe that one day it will be better, even if today is hard.

**Comfort others and allow yourself to be comforted**

* Often in our attempts to console our children, friends, or ourselves, we offer encouragement for all the good that will be ahead but we forget to simply comfort for the loss that is. Encouragement is important, but comfort validates our feelings so we *can* go ahead one day.

### BBL June 4 2020 - PowerPoint**Moving to new entry phase after disruption**

Go through each of these suggestions and write down your thoughts.

And when you finish, see what action you can take today to do that one thing possible, even when other things still aren’t!

And don’t forget the advice Ruth’s dad gave her years ago:

“Wherever you go, ***unpack your bags and plant your trees.*** If you aren’t there long enough to eat the fruit, someone else will and they’ll be glad you did!”

Handout prepared by Ruth E. Van Reken June 4, 2020

Material adapted from her co-authored book, Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among World, 3rd Ed.