



Lift the Lid on the Feelings of Loss

sterbs

When loss becomes stuck, we can create short-term energy-relieving behaviours, including:

Eating - Anger - Fantasy
Isolation - Exercise - Shopping
Food - Cleaning - Alcohol

Short Term Energy-Relieving Behaviours (STERBs)

Distractions from the normal flow of energy, resulting from the normal and natural reactions to loss, can lead to STERBs

Advice such as, 'Don't feel sad, have a chocolate to feel better' means that the energy from loss still exists, it's just been side-tracked.

As a result of eating the chocolate, the child might feel different, but they don't feel better

Following a series of events like this, the child will start to identify 'different' as 'better' because this is how the adults have defined it

This can have lifelong negative consequences resulting in an unintentional and incorrect habit for dealing with grief and loss

How You Can Help

Open with how you're feeling

Patiently wait for their response

Establish a tone of trust and safety

Note that grief is emotional, not intellectual

Each reaction is normal and natural

Avoid phrases that discourage painful feelings

Remember, listen with your heart, not your head

Summarise by acknowledging their feelings



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