UNTANGLING GRIEF AND DEPRESSION

Allison Fine, MSW, LICSW
Clinical Social Worker and Counselor
BalanceMaintains@gmail.com
Seattle, WA

Angela
- Caucasian female; 50 years old
- Married 30 years, but recently separated
- Stay-at-home mom turned photographer
- MS - fatigue, pain, mild cognitive challenges
- Comorbidities - Trigeminal neuralgia
- SSDI; Money challenges
- Religious affiliation - Christian
ANGELA'S SYMPTOMS

- Isolation
- Sadness
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities
- Difficulty concentrating
- Decreased energy and lethargy
- Guilt

GRIEF VS. DEPRESSION

- GRIEF - A natural response to some type of loss; the emotional suffering you feel when something or someone you love is taken away

- DEPRESSION - A clinical diagnosis, also known as Major Depressive Disorder, that describes feelings of sadness, apathy, hopelessness, and helplessness lasting two weeks or more
CLINICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN DIAGNOSING ANGELA

- Depression screening tools vs. grief scales
- Use of antidepressants for lengthy or complicated grief?
- Fatigue and cognitive challenges - MS?
- What is she grieving? - MS/loss of career/failing relationship
- Religious complications?
- Role strain on the clinician

ROLEPLAY
POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS?

- Grief counseling (normalization of feelings and education on the grieving process)
- Cognitive behavioral therapy (thought changing and behavioral modifications)
- Acceptance and commitment therapy (mindfulness and acceptance)
- Psychiatric referral for anti-depressants

RESOURCES


