

JUNE 2023



"HEALING GRIEF AND LOSS THROUGH COMMUNITY" FINAL REPORT



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH
hope. recovery. wellbeing.



SPANISH COMMUNITY PROGRAM
PROGRAMA COMUNITARIO EN ESPAÑOL

El Duelo Tras la Muerte de Un Ser Querido

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ABOUT OUR PROJECT

The following report presents the key findings of the **Healing Grief and Loss Through Community Project**.

The project involved a collaboration between OUR HOUSE Grief Support+Spanish Language Community Program and the Latino Underserved Cultural Communities Subcommittee of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH).

UNIVERSALITY OF GRIEF

Culpa, arrepentimiento, vergüenza, alivio, temor a las emociones (Guilt, remorse, shame, relief, and fear of emotions). These are common responses that a griever might experience after the death of a loved one. Despite grief being a universal human experience, discussing death, dying, and the grieving process often feels like a taboo topic in our society. While each individual will respond in their own unique and personal way, various factors such as age, gender, time since the death, type of relationship, cause of death, culture, and more can influence this process.

Within the Latino culture, individuals will express and understand their grief in diverse ways influenced by their language, values, norms, traditions, and beliefs. Cultural factors specific to Latinos, such as familismo (emphasis on family), personalismo (emphasis on personal relationships), marianismo (idealization of female virtues), fatalismo (belief in fate), religion/spirituality, types of losses, and limited education on mental health and community resources, can act as barriers to seeking and accessing emotional support following the death of a loved one.



Healing Grief and Loss Through Community Project

1

To normalize the grief experience of Latinos through basic education about grief and bereavement

- Curriculum offered a general education on grief and its effects following the loss of a significant person.
- Exploring the specific impact of the pandemic on grief and the loss of a significant person

2

To identify risk factors and differentiate features associated with complicated grief, depression, anxiety, PTSD as compared with the grief experience

- Exploring cultural factors within the Latino community that can serve as sources of strength but also act as barriers to accessing support
- Distinguishing between mental health conditions and providing guidance on when it is essential to seek professional assistance

3

To educate on coping mechanisms for grief and bereavement

4

To reduce the stigma of accessing support by educating on available resources

- Providing individuals with effective strategies and coping mechanisms to navigate life after the death of a significant person

DELIVERY OF PROJECT

The Grief and Loss Workshops in Spanish were conducted virtually, reaching individuals in SPA 2, SPA 3, SPA 4, SPA 5, SPA 6, and SPA 7. A total of 8 workshops were carried out, ensuring broad access and engagement within these regions. In each SPA, dedicated community outreach efforts were undertaken; these targeted outreach initiatives were designed to effectively engage and involve grieving individuals (experienced a death of a significant person) from within the Latino community and ensure their active participation. All 8 Grief and Loss workshops were conducted only in Spanish.

Date	Time of Day	Number of Participants Registered	Number of Actual Participants
10/11/22	Evening	25	2
12/13/22	Evening	34	10
2/3/23	Morning	77	12
2/28/23	Evening	69	19
4/11/23	Evening	20	1 (cancelled)
4/24/23	Morning	21	4
5/16/23	Evening	4	0
5/31/23	Morning	10	2
Total Registered: 260			Total Actual Participants: 49

* 1 of the workshops was cancelled due to only 1 person attending and being underage (17yrs).

MEASURING IMPACT

A Pre and Post Survey was developed specifically for evaluating the effectiveness of the project among the participants who attended the workshops. By conducting this survey, valuable insights could be obtained regarding the participants' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors before and after their involvement in the workshops. This allowed for a general assessment of the project's influence on the participants, highlighting areas of improvement and success.

The surveys were comprised of six statements in Spanish presented in a Likert scale format. The 6 statements are listed below:

1. I recognize how the norms/values of the Latino culture offer resilience and protection from stress and trauma.

2. I know what the natural reactions are after the death of a loved one and the ways in which it impacts our lives.

3. I know the symptoms of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and bereavement.

4. I feel more comfortable accessing mental health resources in the community.

5. I am aware of the stigmas that create a barrier to seeking mental health support.

6. I am aware of and feel comfortable going to bereavement resources in the community.

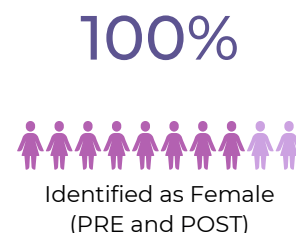
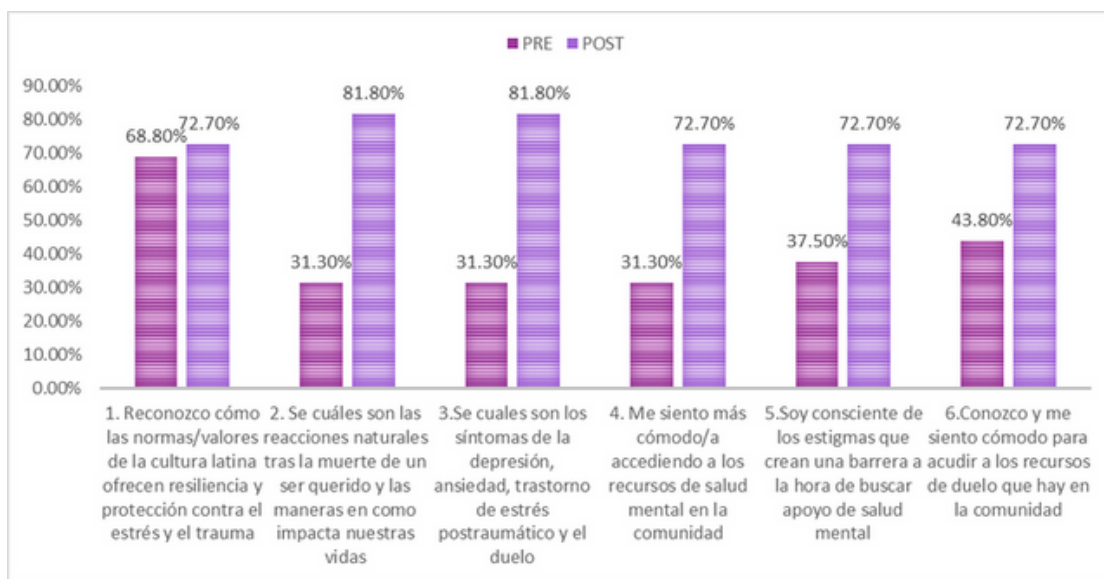


The participants who registered for the virtual workshops were provided with the Pre Survey at the time of their registration. The Post Survey was provided at the end of the workshop to the individuals who participated. Along with the Likert scale statements, the survey included additional items such as Name, City, Age, and ethnicity, aiming to gather supplementary information. The surveys were conveniently completed through Forms (an online application), providing an efficient means of data collection.

The following sections present the findings derived from 16 completed Pre-Surveys and 11 completed Post-Surveys, all of which were submitted online. It is important to note that the data presented here encompasses a broader range of responses beyond those exclusively from registered participants who completed the Post-Survey. It is also essential to acknowledge that there are several factors that may limit the validity of the collected data (people out of state/country, etc.)

Participants had an opportunity to complete the 6 statements using the likert scale from "Strongly disagree", "Somewhat disagree", "Undecided", "Somewhat Agree" and "Strongly Agree". After the workshop, participants indicated that they had learned about the natural responses to grief after the death of a loved one and the ways in which it affects our lives; learned about the symptoms of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and bereavement; feel more comfortable accessing mental health resources in the community; learned about stigmas that create a barrier to seeking mental health support; feel more comfortable accessing bereavement support in the community. The graph below shows the responses before and after their participation.

Grief and Mental Health Awareness



- Participants that completed both Pre and Post Surveys identified as female
- Ages ranged from 20 yrs to 78 yrs old.
- 63% who participated the workshop stated that they lived in Los Angeles

OBSERVATIONS

7

Virtual Grief Support Workshops

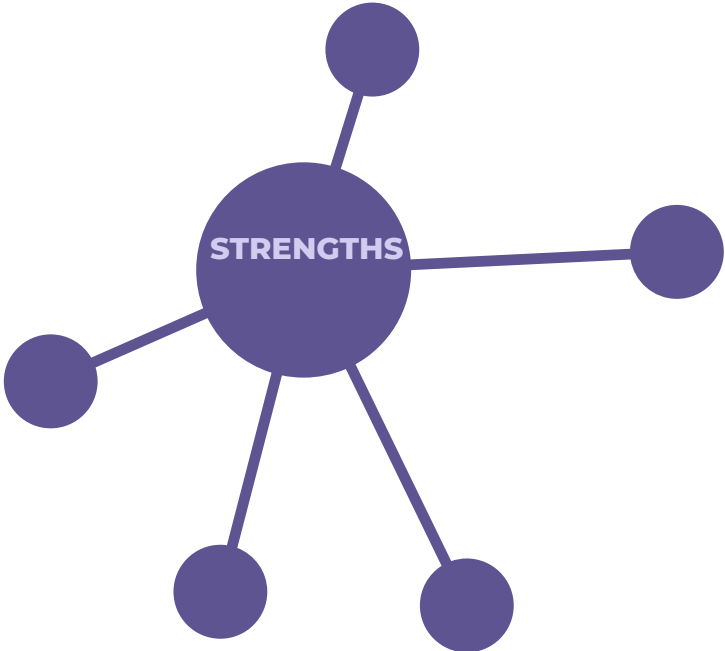
To foster a sense of connection and active participation, participants were encouraged to keep their cameras on during the workshop, considering the sensitive nature of the topic. However, it was observed that the majority of participants opted to keep their cameras off while attentively listening to the content.

Sharing Personal Experiences:

Throughout the workshops, participants were encouraged to share their personal experiences with grief. However, it was noted that only a few participants felt comfortable enough to openly share their experiences. In some instances, participants preferred to solely listen to the material without actively contributing their own stories.

Attendance

A notable increase in participant attendance was observed during the holiday season and the beginning of the year. This surge in attendance can be attributed to the fact that individuals often find this time particularly challenging, as they grapple with the absence of their loved ones during the holiday season and the prospect of starting a new year without them.



Stigma around Grief and Loss

Grief and Loss became even more apparent due to the deep-rooted stigma associated with seeking support and actively addressing these issues.

Virtual Platform

While the virtual workshop offered increased accessibility to individuals who might not have been able to attend an in-person event, it also presented limitations for those who were less comfortable with technology.

Completion of Surveys

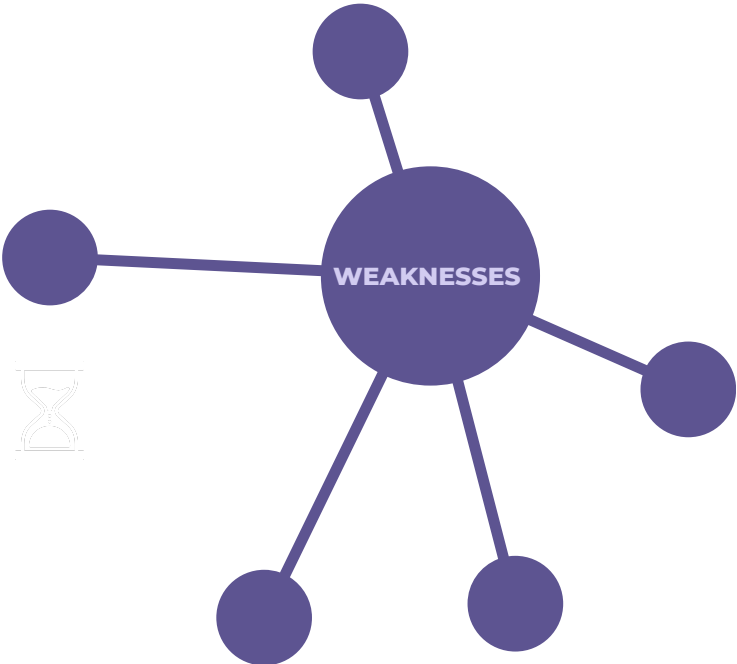
Administering surveys posed a challenge as a significant number of individuals did not complete the Post Survey.

Family

Family played a pivotal role in this context, as cultural values emphasized the importance of familial support. It was observed that some participants had family members present in the same room, sitting together, further highlighting the significance of collective support in navigating through grief.

Referrals to a Grief Support

The workshop provided interested individuals who are grieving with an opportunity to establish a connection with OUR HOUSE Grief Support and explore the possibility of joining a grief support group. This allowed them to engage in a supportive environment and potentially receive further assistance in their grief journey



FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS



In Person Grief Support Workshops

In-person grief support workshops provide griever with the opportunity to participate in a warm, safe, and intimate environment. It fosters connections with other individuals who are also navigating through grief, allowing for the exchange of contact information and meaningful interactions among participants



Workshop Series

By offering a variety of workshops throughout the year, each focusing on different themes/topics related to grief and loss after the death of a loved one, participants are provided with valuable resources to navigate various aspects of their grief journey. These workshops can offer support in coping with significant events such as holidays and other memorable occasions, while also guiding participants in maintaining a meaningful connection with their loved ones. Participants gain knowledge and strategies to effectively cope with their loss, helping them navigate the challenges of grief with greater resilience



THANK YOU



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