



ASSESSOR GUIDE

CHCCCS017

Provide loss and grief support

Assessment 2 of 2

Case Studies



Assessment Instructions

Task overview

This assessment task is divided into fifteen (15) short answer questions. Read each question carefully before typing your response in the space provided.

Additional resources and supporting documents

To complete this assessment, you will need:

- Learning resources



Assessment Information

Submission

You are entitled to three (3) attempts to complete this assessment satisfactorily. Incomplete assessments will not be marked and will count as one of your three attempts.

All questions must be responded to correctly to be assessed as satisfactory for this assessment.

Answers must be typed into the space provided and submitted electronically via the LMS. Hand-written assessments will not be accepted unless previously arranged with your assessor.

Reasonable adjustment

Students may request a reasonable adjustment for assessment tasks.

Reasonable adjustment usually involves varying:

- the processes for conducting the assessment (e.g. allowing additional time)
- the evidence gathering techniques (e.g. oral rather than written questioning, use of a scribe, modifications to equipment)

However, the evidence collected must allow the student to demonstrate all requirements of the unit.

Refer to the Student Handbook or contact your Trainer for further information.



Please consider the environment before printing this assessment.

Question 1

Mere and her husband separated six months ago. Their relationship had been an abusive one. In addition to ongoing emotional abuse throughout the relationship, Mere's husband assaulted her several times, leading to a protection order being placed. Their three children are living with Mere while the family are going through family court processes to develop parenting arrangements.

As Mere's husband was the family's breadwinner and did not allow Mere to work or keep her bank account, Mere was left in a poor financial situation after the separation.

The ongoing court case has also created significant problems and conflicts in the extended family and amongst mutual friends, some of whom appear to be 'siding' with Mere's ex-husband.

- a) Identify the primary loss that Mere has experienced.

[Approximate word count: 20 - 30 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to identify primary losses.

The response should refer to the loss of a relationship/husband.

- b) Identify three [3] secondary losses that Mere and her children are experiencing.

[Approximate word count: 15 - 30 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to identify secondary losses.

The student's response needs to include a reference to **any three** of the following points.

- Loss of family roles
- Loss of financial security/experience of financial difficulty
- Loss of family support
- Loss of support from friends/experience of isolation
- Loss of sense of safety

- c) Mere suffered from stillbirth three years ago. Soon afterwards, she and her husband moved from New Zealand to Australia, leaving behind their home and her previous job. Mere separated from her husband shortly after her grandmother's death.

Which term is used to describe a series of losses such as this?

Assessor instructions: The student's response must be 'Cumulative loss.'

Cumulative loss

Question 2

Alfred tells his counsellor that he lost his wife Meg, whom he had been married to for 33 years, two months ago, after a long illness. He describes an intense wave of grief and loneliness every morning when he realises his wife is not with him and often stays in bed for hours, longing for her and thinking about their time together.

Alfred no longer reads or watches television, saying that he finds concentrating or focusing on anything complicated. Although his friends keep popping in to check on him and invite him out, he pretends he is not home most of the time, saying that he finds talking exhausting and that being with them reminds him that Meg is not there anymore.

Alfred describes finding it difficult to sleep and often staying up all night. He also describes how when he did go out shopping, he thought he saw Meg across the road and rushed over to greet her, only to realise when he got there that it was someone else.

Based upon the information given in the case study, complete the following table by briefly describing the emotional, cognitive, physical, and behavioural features and impacts of grief that Alfred is experiencing.

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate recognising reactions to grief and loss.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points.

Category	Features and Impacts that Alfred is Experiencing
a) Emotional features and impacts	[Approximate word count: 10 - 15 words] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of grief and loneliness • Yearning and pining
b) Cognitive features and impacts	[Approximate word count: 15 - 20 words] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in concentration and focus • Preoccupation with thoughts of the deceased • 'Hallucinations'
c) Physical features and impacts	[Approximate word count: 2 - 10 words] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty sleeping
d) Behavioural features and impacts	[Approximate word count: 5 - 10 words] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social withdrawal • Staying in bed

Question 3

James' wife was diagnosed with cancer a year ago and had to stop working. James took out a personal loan and borrowed money from family and friends to pay for medical expenses not covered by Medicare or their private health insurance. Recently, James lost his job due to restructuring in his company.

Briefly outline how James' circumstances before loss might have influenced the impact of his loss of employment.

[Approximate word count: 30 - 40 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding the potential impacts on the grief of contexts/circumstances present before the loss.

Responses should refer to the fact that his wife's illness and financial difficulties before the loss may exacerbate James' grief reactions/effects of loss or that he might have more difficulty coping with the loss of employment.

Question 4

Imagine that you will use the stress vulnerability model in working with a client who has experienced loss and is feeling overwhelmed.

Write down what you would say to the client to explain the interaction between stressors, resources, and vulnerability **and** how understanding the stress vulnerability model may be helpful.

[Approximate word count: 85 - 95 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must provide an understanding of applying the stress vulnerability model to loss and grief support.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

Responses should refer to the following:

- Grief and loss present significant stressors. Interacting with the person's vulnerability and available resources (helpful coping strategies, social supports, financial resources, etc.) may lead to well-being issues.
- The stress-vulnerability model can help understand the factors that may impact an individual, consider their multiple stressors, and identify what strategies may be helpful (including specialist referrals).

Example response:

"Stress vulnerability model can be useful to help us understand your experience. This model suggests that your vulnerability, resources, and the nature of stressors influence how well you might cope with the loss. Losses bring a range of stressors to anyone; some people have more difficulty coping because of their genetic makeup or prior experience. That said, while we may not be able to change your vulnerability, we can look at reducing some stressors and increasing resources to help you cope better."

Question 5

Alena's mother was diagnosed with dementia 12 months ago and died shortly afterwards. During her initial counselling session, Alena tells the counsellor that she experienced a depressive episode in her teens and that mental health issues run in her family. She also has significant current health challenges, diagnosed with multiple sclerosis five years ago.

In addition, her relationship broke up recently, resulting in significant economic stressors. Alena also tells the counsellor she has a sound support system, close family, and several reliable and caring friends. She is attending a support group for families of dementia patients.

Using the stress vulnerability model, identify two [2] indicators of vulnerability, current stressors, and resources and protective factors relevant to Alena as she deals with the loss of her mother and other associated losses.

[Approximate word count for each response: 15 - 20 words per response for a) to c)]

a) Indicators of vulnerability.

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to apply the stress vulnerability model in practice by identifying relevant indicators of a client's vulnerability.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Depressive disorder in her teens
- Family history of mental health issues

b) Current stressors.

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to identify client stressors.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Current health challenges
- Relationship breakup
- Economic stressors

c) Resources and protective factors.

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to identify a client's resources.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Close family nearby
- Reliable and caring friends
- Support group

Question 6

When counselling clients who have experienced loss, your manner must be empathic, sensitive, professional, and courteous.

Imagine that you are working as a counsellor. This is your first counselling session with Christine.

She tells you about the loss of her mother to breast cancer a year ago, which reminds you about your sister, who was recently diagnosed with stage two breast cancer. Christine is distressed.

Complete the following table by describing what you might say or do regarding each aspect of these areas.

[Approximate word count: 15 - 50 words per counsellor response]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate their ability to interact with empathy, sensitivity, professionalism, and courtesy.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

Skill/Behaviour	Counsellor's Response
a) Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using attending and active listening skills. • "Losing your mother to cancer must be devastating for you. Would you like to tell me more about it?"
b) Sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging the upsetting nature of the client's experience. • Providing an emotionally safe space may involve slowing down storytelling, focusing on other things, and taking more time in the assessment.
c) Professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carefully manage responses and emotions during the session. • Be reliable (e.g., being on time for sessions, following up on the agreements made). • Maintaining healthy professional boundaries. • Support systems such as debriefing and supervision are used to process the emotions that have come up.
d) Courtesy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being polite and respectful. • Acknowledging the client's role as an 'expert' in their experience.

Question 7

Frances saw her 5-year-old daughter killed in a hit-and-run car accident in their isolated outback town.

a) List three (3) risk factors that would make this client more vulnerable to developing complex grief.

[Approximate word count: 25 - 35 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of the risk factors that predict which clients will likely have a severe or prolonged grief reaction.

Responses should include the following examples. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following criteria.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witnessing a sudden and violent death. • The death was unexpected because of the age of the child. • The death involved the client's child. • The client is geographically isolated.

b) Imagine that you are a counsellor working with Frances. It has become apparent during the session that

Frances may be experiencing complex grief or trauma. You haven't had specialist training in grief and loss counselling.

Briefly describe one legal or ethical consideration you will need to consider in this situation and outline the action you will undertake as a result of such consideration.

[Approximate word count: 50 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of legal and ethical considerations and indicate that they would refer the client for specialist counselling.

Responses are expected to refer to work-role boundaries. Still, another legal/ethical consideration may be acceptable, provided that it is relevant to the scenario and the determination that referral is required.

This question requires students to apply knowledge of legal and ethical considerations as discussed throughout their diploma.

Question 8

Agnes has not removed her husband's clothing from their wardrobe two months after his death. She also engages in regular séance sessions (for example, attempting to contact her husband's spirit) and tells her friends that he has been in contact with her during these sessions. Her friends are concerned that her reaction is 'not normal'.

Based on this information, do you think Agnes shows signs of complex grief? Why or why not?

[Approximate word count: 35 - 45 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate understanding of grief's various features and expressions.

Responses should indicate that Agnes is **not** likely to be experiencing complex grief.

Responses may also refer to the following:

- Two months is still quite soon after the death, although social norms may dictate that people should have removed personal items by then.
- Engaging in séance sessions may be a way for Agnes to continue bonding.

Question 9

Julie, a 15-year-old in foster care, recently lost her only friend, Taylor, due to suicide. She has been referred to you, the counsellor at the local youth service, as she has been crying in class and has not completed any schoolwork, saying, "There's no point".

Write down [3] questions that you could ask Julie to assess whether she is at risk of suicide.

[Approximate word count: 65 - 75 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to identify and assess an individual's suicide/self-harm risk concerning three **relevant** and **appropriately worded** questions.

The student's response needs to include a reference to **any three** of the following points. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- “Are you feeling hopeless about the present or future?”
- “Have things been so bad lately that you have thoughts that you would rather not be here?”
- “It is common for people who have lost someone close to them to start thinking about suicide as a way to escape the pain. Have you ever felt so bad that you have started thinking about this?”
- “Have you had any thoughts of joining Jordan?”
- “Have you had thoughts about taking your life?” If yes. “When did you have these thoughts, and do you have a plan to take your life?”

Question 10

Imagine you are working with Yvette, who had a miscarriage at ten weeks of pregnancy. Aside from her husband, none of her friends or family knew she was pregnant. Neither Yvette nor her husband has told anyone else about the miscarriage, and Yvette finds coping challenging.

- a) You would like to provide Yvette with resources relevant to her loss and information about appropriate support services. Complete the following table by conducting your research and listing two (2) examples for each type of resource listed in the table following table.

Note: You **must** include links to any websites you mention.

Assessor instructions: The student’s response must demonstrate an ability to identify appropriate resources and information relating to loss and grief.

Examples of responses are provided in the following table. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following criteria.

Type of Resource	Resources/Support Services
i) Books about coping with miscarriage <i>Note: Book titles only required</i>	[Approximate word count: 20 - 30 words] The student’s response must include two book titles relevant to grief due to miscarriage. Example response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty Arms: Coping with Miscarriage, Stillbirth, and Early Infant Death • Empty Cradle, Broken Heart: Surviving the Death of Your Baby
ii) Websites or brochures available online <i>Note: Include links</i>	[Approximate word count: 20 - 30 words] The student’s response must include at least two links to brochures/websites containing information to support individuals who have experienced miscarriage. Example response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au/emotional-support-after-miscarriage

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.thewomens.org.au/health-information/pregnancy-and-birth/pregnancy-problems/when-a-baby-dies/grief-after-the-death-of-a-baby
iii] Support groups or services in your area <i>Note: Include links</i>	[Approximate word count: 20 - 30 words] The student's response must include at least two links to support groups or services that help individuals who have experienced miscarriage. Example response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SANDS: https://www.sands.org.au/ • Bears of Hope: http://www.bearsofhope.org.au/a/173.html

b) When presenting the information from Question 10 a) to Yvette, what (2) factors should you consider to increase the likelihood that the information and resources you present are appropriate?

[Approximate word count: 20 - 30 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of providing appropriate information and resources to clients experiencing grief and bereavement by identifying at least two relevant factors they should consider.

The student's response needs to include a reference to **any two** of the following points. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Ensuring that the information is current and suitable.
- Critically evaluating for inaccurate or even harmful information or services.
- The resources and the way they are discussed need to be developmentally appropriate.
- The resources and how they are discussed must be responsive to any language, intellectual, or comprehension needs the client has.

c) Considering the impacts of cognitive features of grief on Yvette's ability to process information, briefly describe how you would present the information to Yvette.

[Approximate word count: 30 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to provide information about grief support services/resources clearly and sensitively.

Responses should refer to presenting information slowly and clearly and not overloading clients with much information at once.

d) Based on your responses to Question 10 a), imagine you will tell Yvette about the two support groups or services you've researched and encourage her to consider attending one. Write down what you would say to Yvette when presenting the information.

Note: You are not expected to cover each option in detail, but you should include a brief description of each service option's support.

[Approximate word count: 90 - 100 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to appropriately provide information about grief and bereavement support services and resources. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

Example response:

"Yvette, there are two support services that I'm aware of that specialise in supporting individuals who have lost their child.

The first one is called SANDS, and they run a national support line for bereaved parents as well as email, live chat and local face-to-face support groups.

The other one is Bears of Hope. They also support groups, online groups, and phone and email counselling for families who have experienced the loss of their baby. You could contact them to learn more and consider attending one of their support groups."

- e) Briefly describe how you would obtain feedback from Yvette about whether she understands the options and information you have presented.

[Approximate word count: 30 - 40 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of the importance of obtaining client feedback to confirm that options have been clearly understood.

Responses should refer to 'checking in' with the client frequently to see whether they have understood the information and options presented and whether it is helpful to them and to provide clients with the opportunity to give feedback.

Question 11

Imagine you have undertaken further training in bereavement counselling. You are working with Maya, a 27-year-old woman who identifies as an Anglo-Australian and Catholic in her intake paperwork.

Maya's 4-year-old son, Jordan, died of bacterial meningitis (inflammation of the membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord) several months ago. Jordan was Maya's first and only child, and she was devastated by his death. She also blames herself for not recognising the signs of the infection and seeking help sooner.

Maya describes frequent bouts of uncontrollable sobbing, disturbed sleep, and vivid nightmares where she has lost Jordan in the playground near her house and can't find him. She is having trouble eating and has lost a significant amount of weight. She also appears extremely tired; when you ask her about this, she tells you she is exhausted and has frequent headaches, leaving her more tired and irritable. Maya says that she still can't believe that Jordan is gone – that she expects to see him sometimes and then feels a severe shock when she remembers that she will never see him again. She also shares that she keeps 'seeing him' in the shops and when she walks past the local playground.

The death of their child has put a tremendous strain on Maya's marriage. Her husband, Karl, refuses to talk about Jordan's death and has begun drinking heavily after work each day, arriving home intoxicated late at night. They do not speak about Jordan or their grief, and Maya says she does not think their marriage will survive.

Maya tells you she has several close friends she has relied on for support but is beginning to feel distanced from them. Most of their activities revolve around their children, which is painful for Maya. Sometimes, she feels resentful that her friends still have their children when she does not, and then she tells herself she is "an awful person" for feeling that way. In addition, she is worried about burdening her friends or trying their patience with talking about Jordan and the grief she is experiencing. Some of Maya's most supportive friends are members of her church, and while they have tried to be helpful, Maya also feels that she needs to hide the fact that she now sometimes questions her belief in God. As a result, she speaks to her friends less and less frequently.

Note: Remember that your responses to your client must demonstrate sensitivity, professionalism, and courtesy. Your answers to each question require you to write what you would do or say to Maya. You must not only demonstrate your understanding of concepts and practices relating to grief and loss support. Still, it must also be written to display sensitivity, professionalism, and courtesy.

- a) List five (5) grief reactions evident in the Maya case study.

[Approximate word count: 15 - 20 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to recognise grief reactions.

Responses should include five of the following:

- Sobbing
- Disturbed sleep
- Dreams of the deceased
- 'Visual hallucinations' of the deceased
- Blame/guilt
- Appetite disturbance
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Sense of unreality/disbelief

- b) Briefly describe the primary loss that Maya has experienced and **three** secondary losses she has experienced or is experiencing.

[Approximate word count: 20 - 30 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to identify primary and secondary losses. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

The response **must** indicate that the client's primary loss is her son's death.

Secondary losses must include **three** of the following:

- Role as a mother

- Friendship group/social support
- Relationship with husband
- Sense of safety
- Potential loss of faith

c) Describe three (3) nonverbal communication skills that you would use to enhance your connection with Maya in the counselling session.

[Approximate word count: 15 - 20 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of using nonverbal communication skills when working with clients in grief.

The student's response needs to include a reference to **any three** of the following points.

- Appropriate eye contact
- Appropriate body language
- Non-verbal encouragers (e.g. nodding)
- Mirroring Maya's posture or body language
- Maintain a respectful silence when necessary

d) Maya becomes distressed and overwhelmed while talking to you.

Describe in detail how you would respond to this. In your answer, include what you would do and say.

[Approximate word count: 80 - 90 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of using a grounding technique to help reduce a client's sense of overwhelmedness.

In describing their response to Maya, the student must also demonstrate sensitivity, professionalism, and courtesy. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

Example response:

"I would use mental grounding techniques to help Maya reduce her immediate sense of being overwhelmed. I would ask her to describe her surroundings in detail, using all her senses – including vision, hearing, smell, taste, and feeling – to help her temporarily distract herself from the intense emotional pain. However, I would be careful not to use this technique to "shut down" her emotional process. I would continue facilitating her experience and processing her emotions once she was calm enough to proceed."

e) Maya has indicated in her intake paperwork that she is Catholic.

How would you learn about her spiritual beliefs and explore the impact these may have on her experience of grief?

Include specific things that you would say to Maya in your response.

[Approximate word count: 100 - 115 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response needs to reflect a respectful inquiry about religious and spiritual beliefs. In describing their response to Maya, the student must also demonstrate sensitivity, professionalism, and courtesy. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points:

- Religious and cultural beliefs/traditions
- Impact of loss on beliefs
- Exploring ideas about what happens after death.

Examples response:

"I would ask Maya, 'Would you like to tell me about your religion and cultural beliefs or traditions?' I would ask, 'What are your beliefs about death?' and explore how these might influence how she thinks or feels about Jordan's death.

I would try to find out whether she finds comfort in her beliefs and whether there are supports and resources in her faith community that could be helpful to her. I would reassure her that questioning her faith is normal after such a significant loss and that it's okay for her to talk about that."

- f) Maya tells you that she feels okay one minute, and the next, she is "in hell". She says she feels like she is "going mad". What would you say to Maya to acknowledge, validate, and help normalise her experience?

[Approximate word count: 120 - 130 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to acknowledge, validate, and normalise grief responses.

In describing their response to Maya, the student must also demonstrate sensitivity, professionalism, and courtesy. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following example.

"I know it feels like that – in fact, many people who have experienced the death of someone close to them feel just like you have described.

It's normal to feel intense pain – it's an extremely and intensely painful, awful thing to go through. It's also normal for that experience to affect how we think, which is one of the reasons why sometimes people are afraid they're 'going mad' after such a horrific event.

It's also normal for these feelings to come and go – sometimes, grief is like waves coming and going.

This can be a good thing – it can mean you have the space to process items and get other things done, rather than wholly overwhelmed all the time."

- g) Maya tells you that sometimes she feels overwhelmed and confused and can't figure out what she's feeling or why. What would you do and say to help Maya identify and start to work with the emotions she is experiencing?

[Approximate word count: 80 - 90 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate appropriate use of strategies for working with emotions in grief and bereavement support.

In describing their response to Maya, the student must also demonstrate sensitivity, professionalism, and courtesy.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Helping Maya sort out confused or conflicted thinking.
- Helping Maya understand that she can have more than one feeling at a time/that it is normal to have dichotomous feelings coinciding.

Example responses:

"I would provide brief psychoeducation to help Maya understand that experiencing many feelings at once is normal and then help her learn ways to figure out what she is feeling. I would say, 'It's very common in grief to simultaneously feel a whole range of things – sometimes seemingly contradictory things.' I would then guide her through drawing a pie chart where she could label different feelings and show how much of the 'pie' was made up of particular feelings."

- h) Describe three (3) things Maya could do to support remembering and continuing bonds with her son. Remember to tailor your responses to the particular loss that Maya has experienced.

[Approximate word count: 30 - 50 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of the techniques and strategies for supporting continuing bonds with the deceased person, with at least three strategies relevant to the **case study scenario**.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Writing a letter to Jordan.
- Putting up photos of Jordan in the home or creating a collage of pictures of him.
- Anniversary celebrations, e.g., celebrating Jordan's birthday.
- Rituals, e.g., lighting a candle each evening or at particular times.
- Returning regularly to a particular place, e.g. to the park where Jordan used to play.
- Using symbolic/linking items/items essential to Jordan, e.g., a favourite toy.

Students must integrate their knowledge about continuing bonds with their understanding of person-centred work to suggest strategies relevant to the scenario.

- i) Maya tells you that one of the things she wants help with is to figure out what she can do to help "get

through the day”. Describe three (3) cognitive behavioural strategies you could suggest to help Maya enhance her self-care and coping strategies. In your response, write what you would say to Maya to introduce these strategies and how she could use them.

[Approximate word count: 150 - 170 words]

Assessor instructions: The student’s response must demonstrate the student’s response and understanding of at least three CBT strategies relevant to grief support and the ability to communicate these effectively to a client.

The student’s response needs to include a reference to **any three** of the following dot points. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Establish a simple routine, including regular meals and bedtimes.
- Increase pleasant events.
- Promote self-care activities, such as:
 - Regular medical check-ups
 - Daily exercise
 - Limited alcohol intake
- Provide information about grief and what to expect:
 - Grief is unique and follows a wave-like pattern.
 - Grief is not an illness with a prescribed cure.
- Compartmentalise worries:
 - List the things that are worrying.
 - Create a ‘to-do’ list, prioritise and tick off items as they are completed.
- Prepare to face new or difficult situations (e.g., when spending time with close friends who have children):
 - Graded exposure to situations that are difficult or avoided.
 - Plan for the ‘firsts’ such as the first anniversary of the death – How do you want it to be acknowledged? Who would you like to share it with?
 - Adopt a ‘trial-and-error approach and be prepared to try things more than once.
- Challenge unhelpful thinking
 - Encourage the identification of thoughts leading to feelings of guilt and anger.
 - Gently ask the following questions – What would your loved one tell you to do if they were here now? What are the alternatives to what you thought? Where is the evidence for what you thought?
- Provide a structured decision-making framework to deal with difficult decisions, e.g., When to sort through belongings? Whether to move or not?
 - Base decisions on evidence, not emotions
 - Avoid making major, irreversible decisions for 12 months to prevent decisions from being based on emotion.

- Identify the problem and possible solutions.
- List the positives and negatives for each potential solution.
- Determine the consequences for each solution – can they be lived with?

Example response:

“Let’s explore a few practical things that could help you get through the day. First, we can look at setting up a daily routine, having regular mealtimes and bedtimes, so you know you’re looking after yourself and that your body is getting the rest and nutrients it needs.

If you worry about things not getting done, it can be useful to write them down, so they don’t build up and become too overwhelming. Using a to-do list or setting reminders on your phone also helps spread things out so you get them done one time.

We might also look at preparing you for future situations that might be difficult for you, such as Jordan’s birthday, and have some strategies to help you manage them as best you can, including who you might be able to get support from when they come up.”

- j) Maya’s husband, Karl, calls you the day after the session and wants to know how Maya is doing and what happened in the session. What should you tell him?

[Approximate word count: 30 words]

Assessor instructions: The student’s response needs to indicate that they would not provide any information without the client’s consent.

Students are required to apply knowledge about privacy, confidentiality, and disclosure.

Question 12

Marie is a trauma counsellor currently counselling a client whose two-year-old daughter was abducted and murdered. The client recently shared what had happened to her daughter in graphic detail. Marie has a daughter of a similar age and often thinks about the client’s daughter. She has become increasingly protective of her daughter and has trouble sleeping, waking up frequently at night and having troubling dreams about her daughter being hurt. Marie also drinks far more than usual to “get the pictures” out of her head. She dreads work and is having difficulty being present with her clients.

- a) What term describes what Marie is likely to be suffering from?

[Approximate word count: 10 words]

Assessor instructions: The student’s response needs to indicate that the counsellor is likely suffering from compassion fatigue or secondary traumatisation.

The counsellor is likely suffering from compassion fatigue or secondary traumatisation.

- b) Briefly outline three (3) strategies a counsellor can use to reduce the risk of such responses to grief and loss support.

[Approximate word count: 25 - 40 words]

Assessor instructions: The student’s response must demonstrate an understanding of the self-care strategies

counsellors can use to protect themselves against the risks associated with grief and loss counselling, concerning at least three relevant strategies.

The student's response needs to include a reference to **any three** of the following points.

- Adherence to professional boundaries between client and counsellor.
- Limiting self-disclosure.
- Restricting the amount of overtime spent at work (and limiting caseload).
- Recognising professional (and personal) limitations and referring clients when appropriate.
- Additional training and professional development in grief and loss counselling.

Question 13

Imagine that you are working as a counsellor, supporting people who have experienced loss and grief.

- a) Briefly describe two (2) situations or issues that indicate that you should seek supervision or debriefing.

[Approximate word count: 80 - 90 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to identify the need for attending supervision and debriefing.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following two examples.

"I will go to supervision when I feel the need for an expert perspective on client issues that I do not know enough about. I will also know that I need supervision or debriefing when a personal issue is triggered or impacts my work."

"One indicator that I need to attend supervision is when I feel overwhelmed and exhausted after a client session. I will also seek supervision when a significant stressor impacts my ability to focus on my clients."

- b) Briefly describe two (2) ways supervision could help you address the situations or issues identified in your response to Question 13a) and help you maintain competence in grief and loss work.

[Approximate word count: 45 - 55 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of two ways supervision could address the identified issues.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points.

Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of the following examples.

- Identify the areas in which they are uncomfortable, address the personal factors impacting their practice, and learn helpful strategies for improving their practice in this area.
- Identify and acknowledge the impacts of other stressors in life on the counsellor's work with the client.

- Reflect on client sessions during supervision and gain insights into what was happening for the counsellor during the session.
- Supervisors can provide a more objective and expert perspective on client issues, the interactions between client and counsellor, the counselling process, and the counsellor's own issues. Counsellors can then use this feedback to improve their practice.

Question 14

Jamil is currently working with Jack, a client who identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Jack has separated from his wife and has been unable to spend time with his three children.

- a) Through self-reflection, Jamil recognises that he does not understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in the context of grief and loss. What could he do to address this knowledge gap?

[Approximate word count: 20 - 30 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of how counsellors can address gaps in knowledge and skills.

The student's response needs to include a reference to the following points.

- Independent research (e.g., textbooks, journals)
- Workshops or other professional development opportunities
- Discuss the matter in supervision

- b) During the session, Jack indicated that he has been drinking more and has started using marijuana because he couldn't sleep at night. He recognises that these do not help with his grief, but he doesn't know what to do about it. What could Jamil do to support Jack's needs?

[Approximate word count: 15 - 30 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to identify where further support is required and make appropriate referrals.

Responses must refer Jack to specialist services or professionals such as GP, drug and alcohol counsellor/services.

- c) Two weeks later, Jack attends another session with Jamil and says he is "just starting to get back on track." However, he misses his children a lot, and his ex-wife will not let him visit his kids.

Jack tells Jamil that he wants to know his rights as a father and would like to get something in place to arrange for him to have his children in his care for at least some time.

What could Jamil do to support Jack's needs?

[Approximate word count: 15 - 30 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to identify where further support is required and make appropriate referrals.

Responses must refer Jack to a legal or related service [e.g., mediation, family dispute resolution, or family lawyer].

Question 15

Clara has recently started working in a small counselling clinic. The clinic has developed structured assessment forms and requires all counsellors to administer these forms in the first session.

Clara recently had an initial session with Peggy, who lost her house in a fire. She was sobbing in the session and was highly distressed. Clara felt uncomfortable with the intense emotions in the room and worried that she would be unable to complete the assessment form on time.

As such, she focused on completing the assessment forms, asking Peggy detailed questions about her background and history. She did not get around to asking Peggy how she was doing or helping her deal with the emotions she was feeling in session.

Peggy didn't feel heard or supported, leaving the session highly distressed. She did not return for another session.

- a) Imagine you are Clara. You are discussing Peggy's decision not to return for another session with your co-worker, who suggested you use the reflective practice cycle to reflect on the session and determine areas for improvement critically.

For each step listed in the table, write a brief response that shows your ability to reflect at each stage of the process according to the reflective practice cycle.

[Approximate word count: 130 - 150 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an ability to engage in the self-reflection cycle to reflect on counselling practice and identify areas for improvement.

Responses must include a relevant response at each step.

The student's response must reflect the exemplary answers in the following table.

Steps in the reflective practice cycle	Response
Step 1 Select	"Initial counselling session with Peggy."
Step 2 Describe	"Peggy was highly distressed in the session. I felt very uncomfortable in the room and focused on completing the assessment form."
Step 3 Analyse	"I felt comfortable because I could not work with Peggy's intense emotions and felt under pressure to complete the assessment form."
Step 4	"It was inappropriate to ignore Peggy's emotional needs and focus on completing the form. That could lead to Peggy not feeling heard or supported"

Steps in the reflective practice cycle	Response
Appraise	and not returning for further sessions.”
Step 5 Transform	“Whilst gathering information, focusing on the client and their emotions are also important. I will change my approach and ensure the client is at the centre of my work. When a client is distressed, I need to acknowledge and normalise their responses and help them manage their emotions rather than focus on paperwork. I would also benefit from further training in working with strong emotions.”

- b) It is now months later. Clara is working in the same practice and is confident that her comfort with clients' strong emotions is improving. However, she has been feeling particularly stressed recently. In addition to working in a challenging role, her husband's business is failing and is on the verge of bankruptcy.

Her first client today is a young woman who became estranged from her family after she told them that her uncle sexually assaulted her, and they did not believe her. Clara finds her client's story extremely disturbing but puts her feelings aside to see three other clients.

After work, she meets her best friend, Wendy, for dinner. Noticing that Clara is quieter than usual, Wendy asks Clara if everything is all right. Clara tears up and tells Wendy about the client's story she heard today.

If you were Clara, what would you have done differently to process the issues described appropriately?

[Approximate word count: 20 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate the ability to identify and respond to the need for supervision and debriefing.

Responses should include a reference to the fact that Clara should attend debriefing and supervision.

- c) Consider the legal and ethical requirements for a counsellor's practice. Outline one requirement that Clara has breached in this case and how she has breached it.

[Approximate word count: 20 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of privacy/confidentiality/disclosure.

Responses must indicate that Clara has breached client confidentiality/privacy by disclosing the client's story to Wendy.

- d) Describe three [3] self-care strategies that Clara could integrate into her general routine to help her manage both personal and professional stressors in the future.

[Approximate word count: 30 - 85 words]

Assessor instructions: The student's response must demonstrate an understanding of self-care strategies to minimise risk to their well-being, providing three relevant strategies.

Example responses are provided. Wording may differ, but appropriate answers must reflect the themes and characteristics of **any three** of the following examples.

- Recognise and honour her limitations/recognise that she is a human being whose capacity to care for others hinges upon her ability to care for herself.
- Have a place to go for support and debriefing that will respect the confidentiality of her and her clients.
- Have regular supervision with someone who is experienced in this type of work.
- Cultivate self-awareness of her issues, feelings, and values so that she can separate them from those of clients.
- Take advantage of professional development opportunities, such as workshops, courses, reading journals, and new materials.
- Align herself with a professional code of ethics and standards of practice within a counselling field.
- Monitor her health and well-being.
- Develop her private world in a way that is nurturing to her.
- Monitor her working hours and time spent focused on client-related topics.
- Recognise her philosophy of life and how that impacts her work as a counsellor.
- Be aware of the unique signals from her body that may indicate you need to attend to work-related stress, such as disturbed sleep patterns, changes in eating patterns, bodily aches and pains, and frequent illnesses that may indicate your immune system is being challenged.

Assessment checklist:

Students must have completed all questions within this assessment before submitting. This includes:

1	Fifteen [15] short answer questions are to be completed in the spaces provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Congratulations, you have reached the end of your Assessment!

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