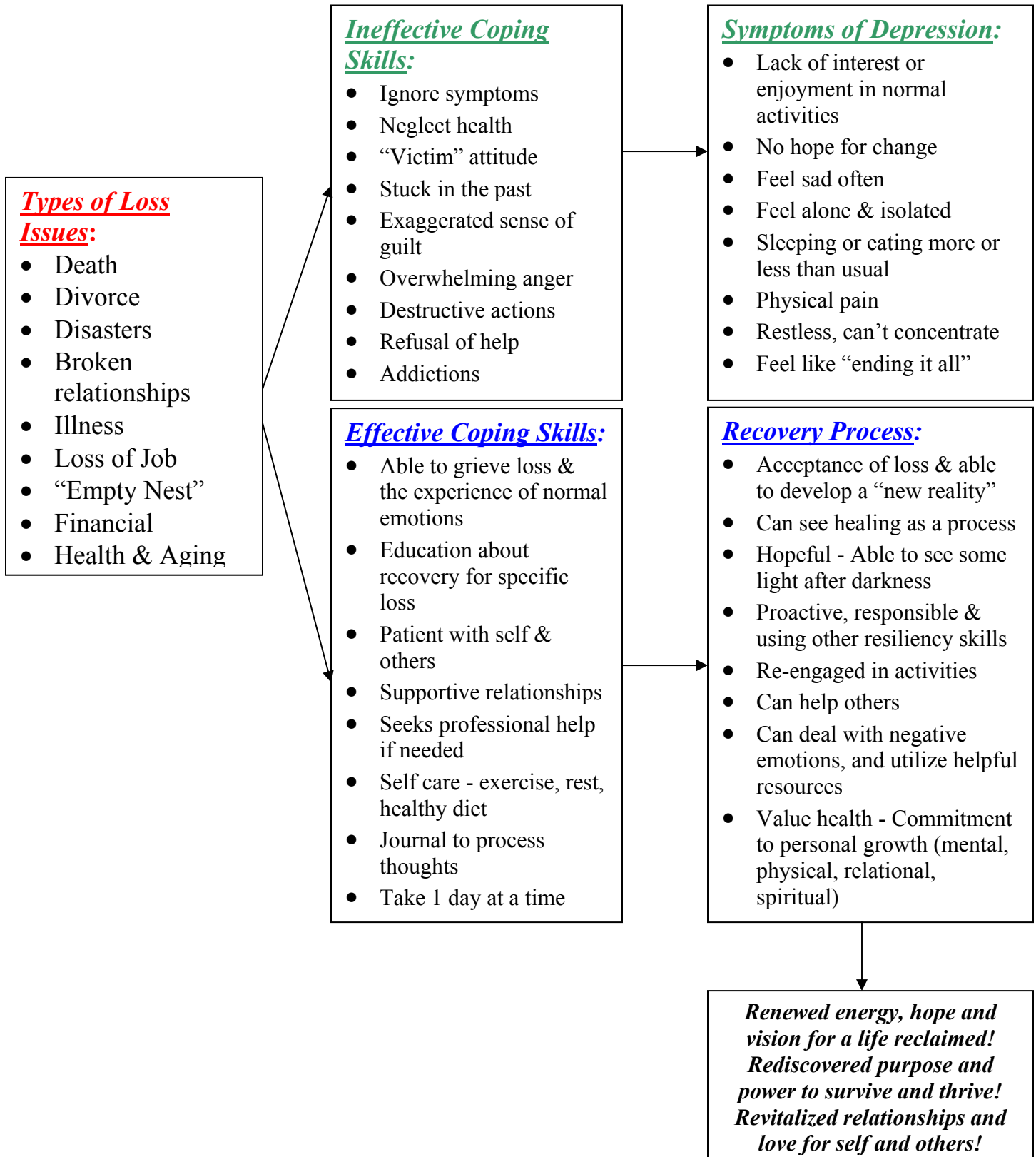


Living Beyond the Losses of Life: Hope and Healing in Recovery



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Loss is a part of all our lives. At some time we will likely experience the death of a loved one, a shattered relationship, or the debilitating effects of illness. And today natural disasters can affect hundreds of thousands of lives – directly and indirectly. How we cope with these significant tragedies is crucial in determining how we will survive, grow, and eventually recover. As the diagram reveals, there are some actions we take that can be healthy, and other actions that can be ineffective and therefore keep us stuck in despair. While there is no one formula for personal loss recovery - no neat plan to overcome great sadness - there are a number of ways to regain hope, healing, and a future with some light when we thought there was only darkness.

The chart also reveals that depression can be an outcome of unresolved grief or loss. Depression is an illness affecting the body, mind, and emotions. It is not a character flaw or a personal weakness. Even at the point of total depression, there is still hope! You may feel you have sunk into a deep, dark place where no one cares and you don't either. Depression can feel like you have a monster for a roommate and only it can do the talking. You may look up at it for a moment, then look back down, and not have the energy to do anything about it. The cloudiness of gloom and hopelessness can be suffocating. Depression is a complicated individual experience. Recovery is also a personal process. There are steps we can follow and positive actions we take, to move in the direction of healthy living. I encourage you to practice the suggestions mentioned above, or find your own healing solutions for surviving the losses you experience. Your life is valuable. You can reclaim your passions, your purpose, your relationships, and your life.

We all need some help, support and encouragement, and sometimes cannot make it on our own. Centerstone Community Mental Health Centers, Inc. can help. For more information about the recovery process, and counseling opportunities in Middle Tennessee, contact Centerstone at (615) 460-4357. Or to request Susan Gillpatrick to speak with your group or organization, call (615) 460-4445. We can help you minimize the consequences of loss or crisis and maximize the recovery. Your new life can begin today!