

THE WORKPLACE CURRICULUM INSTITUTE

The GRACE Method

Supporting Employees Through Grief and Loss

SAMPLE EXTRACT — For evaluation purposes only — Full materials available to Licensed WCI Facilitators

What you're looking at

This document gives you a direct look inside The GRACE Method — one of eleven professionally developed workplace wellness programs included in the [WCI Licensed Facilitator Program](#). It contains the programme overview, the full GRACE framework, the six-module structure, all seven proprietary Signature Tools, the organisational cost model, and a complete sample exercise from the programme.

Full facilitator manuals, participant workbooks, manager playbooks, and slide decks are available to licensed WCI Facilitators only.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The GRACE Method is a workplace wellbeing training program designed to help organisations support employees who are experiencing grief or personal loss. It teaches grief literacy — the ability to recognise, name, and respond to grief — as a core professional and leadership competency.

The program does not treat grief as a problem to be solved. It treats it as a human experience to be acknowledged — and gives participants the framework, language, and practical tools to do that well, in professional environments.

FORMAT

**90-Min | Half-Day |
Full-Day**

CONTENT

**6 Modules + 7 Signature
Tools**

AUDIENCE

**All Employees |
Managers | HR**

WHY GRIEF LITERACY MATTERS IN ORGANISATIONS

Most organisations address grief through bereavement leave policy alone. But employees navigate many forms of loss that never appear in a policy document: relationship breakdown, illness, identity loss, financial devastation, collective trauma. When these experiences go unacknowledged at work, they affect performance, engagement, and wellbeing — and organisations lose talent unnecessarily.

Grief literacy is not a welfare initiative. It is an organisational capability that protects performance, retains talent, and builds the psychological safety that high-performing teams require.

Impact Area	What Happens When Grief Goes Unacknowledged
Presenteeism	Employees show up but function at a fraction of their capacity. The cognitive cost of grief reduces output, accuracy, and decision quality without any visible absence.
Absenteeism	Grief-related fatigue, physical symptoms, and emotional depletion drive short-term sick leave. Without support, this extends and becomes recurrent.
Disengagement	Employees who feel unseen or unsupported withdraw — from colleagues, responsibilities, and culture. Disengagement is grief made visible in behaviour.
Performance Decline	The Grief-Performance Misdiagnosis: organisations respond to the visible symptoms of grief with performance management, compounding the problem.
Burnout	Sustained suppression and unprocessed emotional load are primary drivers of burnout. Grief that is never acknowledged accumulates until the system can no longer cope.
Talent Attrition	Employees who experience significant loss and feel unsupported leave — often during the critical 6–18 month post-loss window when integration is most needed.

The Grief-Performance Misdiagnosis

One of the central insights of The GRACE Method: organisations frequently respond to grief's visible symptoms — reduced output, disengagement, apparent attitude shift — with performance management rather than support. This compounds the problem, accelerates exits, and destroys trust. The programme gives managers the framework to make the right call before the wrong one is made.

THE GRACE FRAMEWORK

The GRACE framework is a five-component methodology for supporting grief in the workplace. Each letter represents a distinct step in the support sequence — building from first recognition of loss through to integration and renewed engagement. The sequence has a logic: each step depends on the one before it.

G	Grief Awareness Recognise that loss is present — and name it. The first step is the willingness to acknowledge grief as a real, present, and legitimate experience in the workplace.
R	Recognising the Signs Identify the behavioural and emotional signals of grief at work — before they escalate to burnout, withdrawal, or disengagement.
A	Allowing Emotional Processing Create the conditions for grief to be acknowledged and moved through. Adjusting time, space, and expectations where the organisation permits.
C	Compassionate Communication Use structured conversations to check in and support employees. The GRACE Check-In Model™ provides a five-step conversational sequence.
E	Empowering Resilience Support gradual reintegration, meaning-making, and renewed engagement. Not accelerating recovery — supporting integration.

The GRACE Support Sequence

The GRACE framework is more than a conceptual model — it is a step-by-step methodology. We can't Recognise the Signs if we haven't built Grief Awareness first. We can't Communicate Compassionately until we have created space for Processing. And we can't Empower Resilience if we have skipped the steps that come before it.

By the end of the programme, participants should be able to describe the sequence from memory — and apply it in their own professional context.

THE SIX MODULES

The GRACE Method is structured across six modules, each with its own focus area, learning objectives, and exercises. The modules build progressively — from understanding and awareness through to practical application and sustained support.

#	Module	Focus
1	Understanding Grief	Defining grief broadly; the 10 types of loss; Disenfranchised Grief; the Grief Capacity Map™
2	The Hidden Impact of Grief at Work	The Grief-Performance Misdiagnosis; the Invisible Load Audit™
3	Healthy Ways to Process Grief	Processing practices; Secondary Loss; the Support Circle Map™
4	Managing Energy & Boundaries	Energy Audit; Priority Triage Framework; the Emotional Load Gauge™
5	Rebuilding Stability & Meaning	Resilience Integration Path™; Post-Traumatic Growth; Return-to-Work Compass™
6	Supporting Colleagues	GRACE Check-In Model™; Compassionate Witness; 30-Day Commitment

THE SEVEN SIGNATURE TOOLS

The GRACE Method includes seven proprietary Signature Tools that form the practical application layer of the program. These tools translate the framework into exercises and instruments participants use in the training room — and continue to apply in their professional lives beyond it.

Tool	Purpose	Module
Grief Capacity Map™	A self-assessment across five domains that helps employees see how grief is currently affecting their functioning. Establishes a personal baseline.	Module 1
Invisible Load Audit™	Maps the full range of loads an employee is currently carrying across six categories. Reveals the cumulative weight that explains performance impact.	Module 2
GRACE Check-In Model™	A five-step conversational framework for managers and colleagues initiating a compassionate conversation. Mirrors the GRACE acronym as a memorable sequence.	Module 6
Return-to-Work Compass™	A structured planning tool for employees returning after loss or significant absence. Maps four navigational dimensions: Capacity, Priority, Support, and Boundary.	Module 5
Support Circle Map™	A relationship-mapping tool that helps employees understand their current support architecture and identify gaps.	Module 3
Resilience Integration Path™	A non-linear journey map from loss toward integration, with five named waypoints. Reframes resilience as integration rather than recovery.	Module 5
Emotional Load Gauge™	A brief daily self-monitoring tool using a traffic-light model across four domains. Builds the habit of early self-recognition before depletion escalates.	Module 4

SAMPLE EXERCISE: THE GRACE CHECK-IN MODEL™

The following is drawn from Module 6 — Supporting Colleagues. The GRACE Check-In Model™ is one of the programme’s seven proprietary Signature Tools. It gives managers and colleagues a practical, memorable conversational structure for initiating a compassionate conversation with someone who is grieving.

MODULE 6 — SIGNATURE TOOL

The GRACE Check-In Model™

A five-step conversational framework for managers and colleagues

The GRACE Check-In Model mirrors the GRACE acronym as a memorable conversational sequence. It is designed to be used in welfare conversations — not as a rigid script, but as a structure that ensures the most important elements are covered.

G	Greet and acknowledge	Begin by naming what you’ve noticed, without interpretation. ‘I’ve noticed you’ve seemed quieter than usual this week. I wanted to check in.’ Acknowledgement before questions.
R	Request permission	Ask before assuming. ‘Would it be okay to talk for a few minutes?’ or ‘Is this a good moment?’. Giving the person agency signals respect.
A	Ask and listen	Ask one open question and then stop talking. ‘How are you doing — honestly?’ or ‘What would be most helpful right now?’. Resist the pull to fill silence.
C	Confirm practical support	Ask what is needed, not what you assume would help. ‘What would make the biggest difference to you right now?’ Then do what you say you will.
E	End with a commitment to return	Close the conversation by naming a follow-up. ‘I’ll check in again next week — but if anything comes up before then, please come and find me.’

Facilitator Note

After introducing the model, invite participants to practise in pairs using a low-stakes scenario provided on the exercise card. One person plays the manager, one plays the colleague. Debrief as a group: which step felt most natural? Which felt most difficult? The most common response is that ‘Ask and listen’ is the hardest — because the instinct to reassure or problem-solve is very strong. Naming this is itself a key learning moment.

WHAT MAKES THIS PROGRAMME DISTINCTIVE

Not therapy. Not policy. Not generic wellbeing.

Most corporate wellbeing programmes sit at one of two extremes: clinical mental health content that HR departments are nervous to deliver, or light-touch positivity content that doesn't acknowledge the real weight of what employees carry. The GRACE Method occupies the space between these two extremes with precision.

It is professionally framed, practically structured, and psychologically informed — without requiring facilitators to be therapists or participants to be vulnerable beyond their comfort. It is the only programme of its kind designed specifically for delivery by workplace facilitators inside organisations.

This is a tiny extract from just one program.

Licensed WCI Facilitators receive the complete suite — all 11 programmes, every manual, workbook, and slide deck.

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