



## TRAUMATIC LOSS AND AMBIGUOUS LOSS

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### **Description:**

Ambiguous Loss [missing person's loss] is one of the most stressful types of loss. It involves trauma and grief, but is also a very unique type of loss that involves high levels of uncertainty and unanswered questions. The goal is not to "fix" or "cure" because the response of most family's to this time of uncertainty is not abnormal. Instead the goal is to strengthen family unity, grow resiliency and teach the family to carry on and live in the present despite the uncertainty of not knowing if their loved one will ever return.

This workshop will examine the differences between traumatic loss and traumatic ambiguous loss. It will discuss the way ambiguous loss effects the body and brain of an individual and symptoms associated with the loss. The workshop will discuss therapeutic goals and while examining attachment theory and ambiguous grief. This workshop also examines the emotions felt by the families and helps professionals understand how to normalize these emotions for families.

### **Learning Outcomes**

On completion of the workshop participants will be able to:

- Define differences between trauma and ambiguous loss trauma.
- Understand effects ambiguous loss trauma has on the body and brain.
- Discuss the need to help the family grow resiliency and life in the present despite the uncertainty and unanswered questions they have.
- Work with individuals and families to normalize all the emotions associated with having a loved one missing.
- Understand therapeutic goals associated with working with a family who's loved one is missing.
- Understand therapeutic goals associated with working with a family who's loved one has been found alive [helping the reunification process].
- Understand therapeutic goals associated with working with a family who's loved one is missing.
- Understand therapeutic goals associated with working with a family who's loved one is found deceased.

### **Designed For**

All individuals and agencies that work in human services providing care to families of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls and other Missing Persons.