

GRIEF AND HEALING

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Grief is something that **everyone** experiences

It is the **normal** process of reacting to a loss.

The loss may be physical (such as a death), social (such as divorce), or occupational (such as a job).

RECOVERY

A return to a normal state of health, mind, or strength.

The action or process of regaining possession or control of something stolen or lost.

HEALING

- The process of becoming sound or healthy
- To restore (a person) spiritual wholeness

GRIEF

- The more significant the loss, the more intense the grief will be. You may associate grief with the death of a loved one—which is often the cause of the most intense type of grief

ANY LOSS CAN CAUSE GRIEF, INCLUDING:

- Divorce or relationship breakup
- Loss of health
- Losing a job
- Loss of financial stability
- A miscarriage
- Retirement
- Death of a pet
- Loss of a cherished dream
- A loved one's serious illness
- Loss of a friendship
- Loss of safety after a trauma
- Selling the family home

EVERYONE GRIEVES DIFFERENTLY

- Grieving is a personal and highly individual experience. How you grieve depends on:
 - Your personality and coping style
 - your life experience
 - your faith
 - the nature of the loss.

OTHER FACTS ABOUT GIREF

- The grieving process takes time.
- Healing happens gradually; it can't be forced or hurried
- **There is no “normal” timetable for grieving.** Some people start to feel better in weeks or months. For others, the grieving process is measured in years.
- Whatever your grief experience, it's important to be patient with yourself and allow the process to naturally unfold.

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT GRIEF

- **MYTH:** The pain will go away faster if you ignore it.
- **Fact:** It will only make it worse in the long run. For real healing it is necessary to face your grief and actively deal with it.
- **MYTH:** It's important to be “be strong” in the face of loss.
- **Fact:** Feeling sad, frightened, or lonely is a normal reaction to loss. Crying doesn't mean you are weak. You don't need to “protect” your family or friends by putting on a brave front. Showing your true feelings can help them and you.

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT GRIEF (CONTINUED)

- **MYTH:** If you don't cry, it means you aren't sorry about the loss.
- **Fact:** Crying is a normal response to sadness, but it's not the only one. Those who don't cry may feel the pain just as deeply as others. They may simply have other ways of showing it.
- **MYTH:** Grief should last about a year.
- **Fact:** There is no right or wrong time frame for grieving. How long it takes can differ from person to person.

GRIEF CAN BE A ROLLER COASTER

- full of ups and downs, highs and lows.
- The ride tends to be rougher in the beginning, the lows may be deeper and longer.
- The difficult periods should become less intense and shorter as time goes by, but it takes time to work through a loss.
- Even years after a loss, especially at special events such as a family wedding or the birth of a child, we may still experience a strong sense of grief.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF GRIEF

- **Shock and disbelief**
- **Sadness**
- **Guilt**
- **Anger**
- **Fear**
- **Physical symptoms**

COPING WITH GRIEF AND LOSS GET SUPPORT

- **Turn to friends and family members**
- **Draw comfort from your faith**
- **Join a support group**
- **Talk to a therapist or grief counselor**

COPING WITH GRIEF AND LOSS: TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

- **Face your feelings.**
- **Express your feelings in a tangible or creative way.**
- **Look after your physical health.**
- **Don't let anyone tell you how to feel, and don't tell yourself how to feel either.**
- **Plan ahead for grief "triggers."**

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GRIEF AND DEPRESSION

- Grief can be a roller coaster. It involves a wide variety of emotions and a mix of good and bad days. Even when you're in the middle of the grieving process, you will have moments of pleasure or happiness.
- Depression, the feelings of emptiness and despair are constant.

OTHER SYMPTOMS THAT SUGGEST DEPRESSION, NOT JUST GRIEF:

- Intense, pervasive sense of guilt
- Thoughts of suicide or a preoccupation with dying
- Slow speech and body movements
- Inability to function at work, home, and/or school
- Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Seeing or hearing things that aren't there