

## Grief – Living with Loss

Grief is so powerful that people sometimes look for ways to go around it rather than experience it. This will not be helpful. It is important to work through grief and express your feelings. Here are some suggestions:

- Try to eat regular, healthy meals. Have nourishing food available for snacks rather than candy and chips.
- Get enough rest. Try to develop regular bedtime routines. Use appropriate sleep hygiene to ensure adequate rest.
- Continue with a regular exercise program and develop a manageable routine for work, family, play, and friends.
- Meditation can help.
- Make sure your doctor is aware so that he or she can adequately manage your health.
- Join a support group.
- Continue attending any groups you have previously attended, especially if these groups are supportive of you.
- Communicate your physical and emotional needs to family and friends.
- Read books or articles about the process of grief so you can identify what you are feelings and have some ideas how to be emotionally supportive of yourself.
- Allow feelings to be expressed appropriately.
- Crying is good. Consider sharing your tears with other loved ones.
- Find family and friends who will support your process.
- Be careful of alcohol, drugs, and tranquilizers. These may mask the pain and lead to further problems.
- Keeping a journal is a good way to identify feelings and see progress.
- Holidays and anniversaries will need special planning. They are impossible to ignore.
- Take as much alone time as you need.
- Give yourself rewards along the way in order to have something to look forward to.
- Look for small ways to pamper yourself.
- A short trip may be a good break from the grieving process. Be aware that upon your return, the pain of grief may be waiting for you. However, the trip will give you a rest and remind you that you can enjoy some things about life.
- Look for a new interest or hobby. You might also consider resuming an old hobby.
- Carry a special letter, poem, or quote to read during rough times.
- Try to enjoy the good days and don't feel guilt for doing so.
- Reach out to help someone else.
- Have patience. Remember, grief takes time.
- Know that you will get better and there will be a time when you can look forward to getting up in the morning.
- Remember to communicate. People cannot read your mind. They may not know that this particular day is difficult or they may not know how to help you.
- Talk about what is helpful to you and what is not helpful.
- Seek professional guidance.

“You will lose someone you can't live without, and your heart will be badly broken, and the bad news is that you never completely get over the loss of your beloved. But this is also the good news. They live forever in your broken heart that doesn't seal back up. And you come through. It's like having a broken leg that never heals perfectly—that still hurts when the weather gets cold, but you learn to dance with the limp— Anne Lamott