
Coping with Grief

It is important to take care of you physical health while you are experiencing emotional turmoil.

- Eat nutritionally
- Avoid caffeine, sugar, and alcohol
- Drink more water than usual
- Get 8 hours of sleep daily
- Avoid relaying on chemical aids
- Exercise 3 to 5 times per week
- Spend quality time with family or friends
- Practice breathing slowly
- Take time to relax every day
- Learn meditation / relaxation techniques
- Get support from others
- Exercise your sense of humor
- Increase positive thoughts
- Break large tasks into smaller increments
- Clearly establish your priorities
- Join a support group
- See a counselor
- Do at least one nice thing for yourself each day
- Do something nice for someone else
- Keep a journal to help clarify your feelings

Understanding Grief

Information Guide

**O-non-dowa-gah
Volunteer Fire Dept**



Someone that you have cared about has died. The pain that you feel may, at times, be unbearable. We hope that the information provided here will help you understand the grief process and reassure you that you can survive this loss.

Physical Reactions

Your physical reactions may include:

- uncontrollable crying
- weakness
- nausea
- loss of appetite
- sleep disturbances
- headaches
- changes in sexual drive
- greater susceptibility to illness

Emotional Reactions

At this time of great stress allow yourself to fully examine the emotions that you are feeling. Acknowledging these emotions will help you heal more quickly. Some emotions you may experience are:

- pain
- sadness
- pessimism
- anger
- anguish
- fear
- emptiness
- apathy
- depression
- guilt
- helplessness
- despair

Grief

Grief is a normal and health response to loss and can take many forms. You may experience powerful emotions. Not all people react in the same manner, for the same period of time, or with the same intensity. The following are some of the common reactions to loss. They are normal.

Shock and Numbness

When an unusual event happens, the body often responds with a feeling of numbness. This reaction keeps you from being overwhelmed. Numbness allows you to cope with immediate responsibilities such as make necessary arrangements and may help you through the funeral services. When you are ready, your mind will allow you to absorb the reality of what has happened.

Denial

You may respond to death with a feeling of disbelief. This denial manifests itself in expressions like, "This just cannot be true." "It's not happening."; "It must be a mistake."; "This is just a bad dream."

Confusion

You may find it difficult to concentrate or make decisions. It may appear to you that even with extreme effort you cannot think clearly. The effort alone may exhaust you.

Anger

Grief sometimes takes the form of anger—a protest against an unjust loss. Even when there is no one to blame, anger may be directed against the medical professions, friends or relatives, God or even against yourself.

Depression

You may experience feelings of sadness, hopelessness, irritability, worthlessness, or helplessness.

Unpredictable Emotions

At times you may feel fine and then, for no apparent reason, a wave of pain will wash over you. Often, a sight, smell, or sound will trigger this response.

You may feel that your thinking or actions are slowed down. The simplest tasks may seem very difficult.

You may have a desire to give up or feel that you don't care about anything.