

Dealing with Grief



Be with caring people. Spend time with family, friends, neighbours, co-workers & people who have experienced loss & grief.

Take enough time. Everyone reacts differently so it's hard to estimate a "normal" grieving period; it will probably take longer than you expect.

Express your feelings. Let yourself feel sadness, anger & other feelings. Find a way to express feelings through talking, crying, etc.

Accept a changed life. Recognize that you may be less attentive to your work & personal relationships for some time. Your routines may need to change – this is a natural response.

Reach out for help. Don't always rely on others to make the first move; they may be concerned about allowing you privacy. Let people know when you need companionship & support.

Take care of your physical health. Be aware of any physical signs of stress or illness you may develop. Speak with your doctor if you feel your grief is affecting your health.

Support others in their grief. Offer support to other family members & friends who are also grieving, including children. Be honest with children about what happened & how you feel. Encourage them to talk about their feelings.

Come to terms with your loss. Move towards acceptance of the death of your loved one. Work through feelings of bitterness & blame which may get in the way of moving forward in your life.

The Stages of Grief



Some people will jump back & forth between stages.

The length of time it takes to go through the stages will vary.

Stage I – Numbness or Shock

Immediately after news of a loss, you may experience a period of numbness or a sense of unreality. It may feel like you are "sleepwalking".

Stage II – Disorganization

Eventually, the shock begins to wear off & feelings come alive again. You may have some symptoms such as:

- Tightness in the throat
- Shortness of breath & extreme fatigue
- Feelings of anger & guilt
- Feeling you should have done something different before the loss
- Feeling a loss of emotional control

This is a painful period, but a *normal & necessary* part of grieving.

Stage III – Re-organization

Eventually, there will be periods when you do not dwell on your loss & you can focus on daily tasks. Hurt is never completely forgotten, but hurt takes its place among other immediate life demands. Deeper friendships may be formed through the process of sharing. You may have a new awareness of life & of the value of people & experiences

Information Adapted from the Canadian Mental Health Association



Friends can help by...

Being a supporter. Help with things such as meals.

Being a listener. Accept your need to vent emotions & to tell repeated stories about the life & death of your loved one.

Encouraging your involvement in social activities, groups, hobbies, etc. Friends can also help by encouraging you to seek professional help if needed.

LIFE AFTER LOSS



Do you need more help? Contact your local **Mental Health & Addiction Services Office.**

Mental Health Crisis Line 1-888-737-4668

NL Health Line 1-888-709-2929