

When You Mourn

At first, you may feel shock, numbness, and disbelief.

- Be gentle with yourself.
- These feelings and needs may last for weeks, or even months (each person is different).
- Ask your family and friends to help you with chores that need to get done.

As you grieve, you may feel sad, anxious, disorganized, relieved, empty, guilty, fearful, or relaxed.

- Be patient with your emotional and physical ups and downs.
- These feelings and needs may last for many months (each person is different).
- Ask your family and friends to let you talk about your grief and loss. Tell the story of your loved one's life and death. Talk about the changes you are facing.

As you begin to heal, you may notice you are again organized, able to talk of the future, and open to other changes in your life.

- You may think of your loved one often, and remember mostly the good times.
- You might be realizing your new identity or new skills.
- You might be more accepting of other losses in your life.
- These feelings might surface over many years (each person is different).
- Thank your family and friends for their support.
- Forgive yourself for any emotional or physical struggles you may go through. This is common and expected during the grief process.
- Keep being gentle with yourself.





What to Expect from Grief

Feelings

Shock, numbness, sense that things are not real, anger, feeling irritable, guilt, self-reproach, feeling sad or depressed, anxiety, fear, hysteria, feeling helpless, feeling vulnerable, feeling lonely, relief, mood swings, feelings of being crazy

Physical Symptoms

Tightness in your chest and throat, dry mouth, very sensitive to noise, dizziness, headaches, being short of breath, weakness, lack of energy, being very tired, upset stomach, heart pounding, hot or cold flashes, heavy or empty feeling in your arms, legs, or body,

Behaviors

Appetite and sleep changes, being forgetful, withdrawing from people, avoiding reminders of loss, dreams of loss, calling out to the deceased, restlessness, sighing, crying, feeling more sensitive around people, having symptoms of your loved one's illness

Social Changes

Need for support from friends, withdrawing from friends, depending more on friends, pulling away from friends, being self-absorbed (no energy for others), problems in your relationships, role changes, more sensitive to stories of loss (such as airplane crashes or accidents)

Spiritual Concerns

Search for meaning, express and review personal view of life, explore personal philosophy of life, question priorities, question values, connect with friends, family, and community, adapt to sorrow as a part of life

Thought Patterns

Disbelief, sense that things are not real, worry, confusion, cannot focus, problems making decisions, thoughts of deep sorrow, seeing, hearing, or feeling the presence of the deceased

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

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