

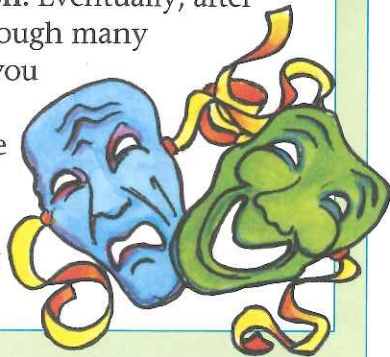
What Is Grief?

Grief is an emotional response that is triggered by loss or change. Grief usually occurs after a major life change or loss, such as the break up of a relationship or the death of a family member. Even positive life changes such as getting married, starting a new job, or retirement can evoke grief.

The Stages of Grief

Grief often occurs in stages. Learning about the stages may help you through the healing process.

- 1. Shock and Denial:** Feelings of denial or disbelief are common reactions to tragedy or loss.
- 2. Anger and Guilt:** Sometimes when people feel pain from loss, they blame others (anger) or themselves (guilt).
- 3. Sadness and Depression:** The pain of loss can cause sadness. Feeling sad or depressed is a normal part of grieving.
- 4. Resolution:** Eventually, after going through many feelings, you begin to accept the loss and move on with your life.



- ✓ Has a family member or close friend recently died?
- ✓ Have you moved, changed jobs or gone through another major life change?

Although grieving is a normal response to loss, it can be a difficult time to get through. There are steps you can take to move through grief and begin the healing process.

This pamphlet is not a substitute for professional medical care. If you have questions or concerns, please talk with a health care provider.

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Special thanks to all of our reviewers.

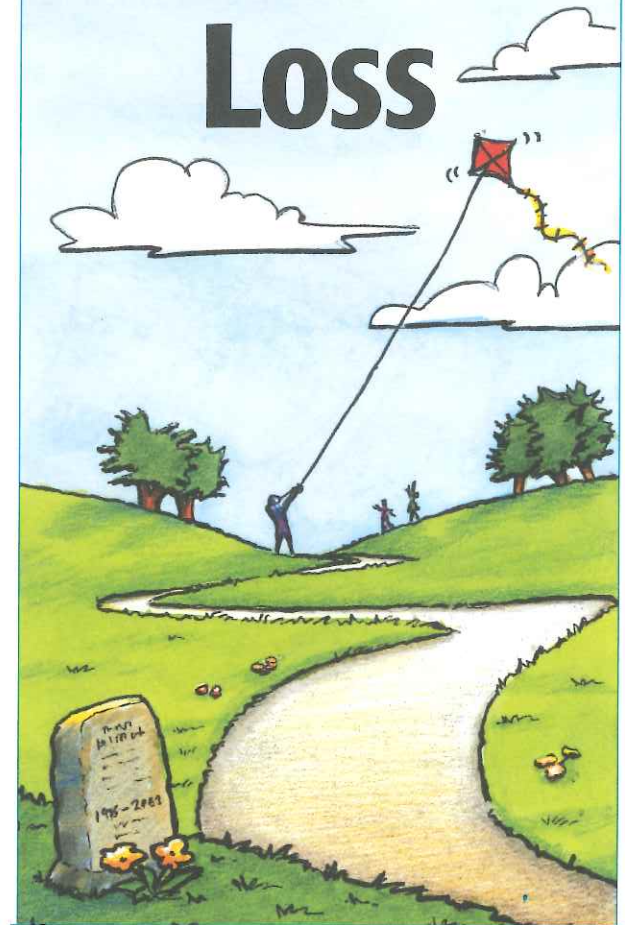
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STEPS TO FEELING BETTER

Moving Through Grief and Loss



HELPING YOURSELF

Moving Through Grief

Check In with Yourself

- ✓ Are you having trouble believing what has happened? Do you feel angry or guilty? Do you find yourself crying all the time?
- ✓ You may move through feelings of shock, anger, guilt or sadness at different times and more than once.
- ✓ Keep in mind that grief can come and go. One day you may feel OK and the next day may be hard.



Take Time

- ✓ Grieving can take days, months or even years. If you can, take some time away from work or other responsibilities while you grieve.
- ✓ Remember, we all grieve differently. You may need more or less time to go through your grief than someone else.
- ✓ When you feel able, return to your normal activities.

Express Your Feelings

- ✓ Cry when you need to. Crying is a normal and essential part of grieving.
- ✓ Acknowledge when you feel angry.
- ✓ If you have a hard time expressing your emotions to other people, try writing your feelings in a journal or diary.



Share Your Grief

- ✓ Join a support group or talk with others who have gone through a similar experience.
- ✓ For some people, talking with a professional is easier than talking with friends. Consider contacting a counselor or therapist.
- ✓ Don't isolate yourself. Reach out to others and accept help when others reach out to you.

Be Prepared

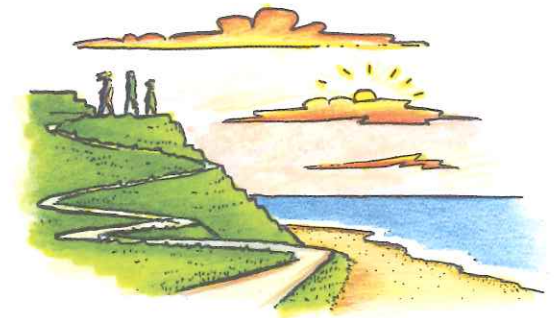
- ✓ Feelings may come up at unexpected times and may seem to come out of nowhere.
- ✓ Something as small as an ad on TV can trigger feelings of anger or sadness. This is a normal part of grieving.

Take Care of Yourself

- ✓ Remember to eat regular meals, get some exercise and get plenty of rest.
- ✓ Realize that physical symptoms, such as sleeplessness, nausea, anxiety, restlessness and forgetfulness often accompany grief.
- ✓ If physical problems continue for more than a week, see your doctor.

Look for Faith

- ✓ Grieving and loss often shatter our faith in life. Look for things that may help restore your faith.
- ✓ For inspiration, look towards nature, religion, or even the smile on a child's face. We all find faith in different ways.
- ✓ If you are having trouble with faith, talk to someone you trust – a therapist, clergy member or close friend.



Get Professional Help

- ✓ If you feel stuck in your grief or believe that you will never be able to get on with the rest of your life, seek professional help.