

## Living with Loss and Grief: Information and Resources

### Helping Yourself through Grief

- Accept your grief: Remember it is a natural healing process.
- Learn about grief: Understanding grief can help you know that what you are going through is normal. The counseling center is here to help and can also refer you to other grief specialists
- Write about your loss: Keeping a journal is not for everyone, but it can be powerful in helping people to heal.
- Accept your feelings: Grief has many feelings, some very strong. Accept them, and they will help you learn about yourself and the meaning of your loss.
- Pace yourself: *grief takes energy.*
- Cry about your loss.
- Involve yourself in work or meaningful activities.
- Think about your loss. Relive experiences in your thoughts.
- Talk about your loss.
- Do not be afraid to have fun. Laughter is a good medicine.
- Take care of your health after your loss.

### How to Help or Support Someone Through Loss

- Allow negative feelings (Negative feelings are common and normal)
- Know individual – Be aware of red flags (Use of alcohol or drugs, denial of feelings, social isolation, avoidance of painful reminders, obsessive rumination)
- Allow aloneness
- Don't fake it! (People know when you aren't being authentic)
- Assist in daily living
- Know anniversaries
- Don't compare tragedies (Avoid: "I know what you are going through because I had the same thing happen...")
- Don't rush
- Be available
- Hug? – Be sure the person is welcoming of hugs or other affection
- Own feelings
- Know normal grief (It's normal for people to have ups and downs—don't be concerned)

## Loss and Grief Resources--Websites

- [www.griefnet.org](http://www.griefnet.org) - Internet community of persons dealing with grief, death, and major loss
- <http://www.compassionatefriends.org/home.aspx> provides information to help others be supportive
- [www.allkidsgrieve.org](http://www.allkidsgrieve.org)
- [www.depression.about.com/cs/griefteen/](http://www.depression.about.com/cs/griefteen/)

## Recommended Referral Source

Bereavement Resources  
Western Washington Bereavement Specialists  
12305 15th Ave. NE  
Seattle, WA 98125  
206-362-9094

**\*\*\*Please contact the BC Counseling Center for more information at 425. 564. 2212\*\*\***

## Loss and Grief Resources--Books

- **Tear Soup** – covers all of the emotions involved in the grieving process in simple terms. Emphasizes that people grieve differently and at different times and in different ways.
- ***When Bad Things Happen to Good People*** - Harold Kushner
- ***Who Dies*** - Steven Levine
- ***Man's Search for Meaning*** – Victor Frankl
- ***Necessary Losses*** - Judith Viorst
- ***Children and Grief*** - J. William Worden
- ***The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying***
- ***Marriage after Mourning: The secrets of Surviving Couples*** -Judy C. Peterson

## Normal Reactions to Loss

<u>Thought Patterns</u>	<u>Spiritual</u>	<u>Physical</u>	<u>Behavioral</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denial (difficulty believing the loss is real)</li> <li>• Poor concentration</li> <li>• Disorganization</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Preoccupation with the loss</li> <li>• Seeing or hearing the person who died</li> <li>• Dreams (e.g., of the person who died)</li> <li>• Repetition (thinking about or retelling the events surrounding the loss over and over)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faith shaken by a significant loss.</li> <li>• Anger directed toward God, clergy, or religion</li> <li>• Consolation provided by belief or scripture</li> <li>• Examining the meaning of life</li> <li>• Seeking meaning in the loss itself</li> <li>• Doubts</li> <li>• Strengthening of beliefs</li> <li>• Wavering of faith</li> <li>• Searching for evidence of afterlife</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knot in the stomach</li> <li>• Changes in appetite</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Tightness in chest</li> <li>• Fatigue and lack of energy, unrelieved by sleep</li> <li>• Muscle weakness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being immobilized, unable to act</li> <li>• Restless (unable to sit still or stay with a task)</li> <li>• Sleeplessness or oversleeping</li> <li>• Forgetfulness</li> <li>• Unable to begin and maintain daily activity</li> <li>• Lack of motivation/energy</li> <li>• Crying, sobbing (often at unexpected times)</li> <li>• Talking to the person who has died</li> <li>• Social withdrawal</li> </ul>

## Quotes and Poems

### **BUT IT HURTS . . . DIFFERENTLY**

*There is no way to predict how you will feel.*

*The reactions of grief are not like recipes, with certain ingredients, and certain results.*

*Each person mourns in a different way.*

*You may cry hysterically, or you may remain outwardly controlled, showing little emotion.*

*You may lash out in anger against your family and friends, or you may express your gratitude for their concern and dedication.*

*You may be calm one moment--in turmoil the next.*

*Reactions are varied and contradictory.*

*Grief is universal. At the same time it is extremely personal.*

*Heal in your own way. --Earl A. Grollman **Living When A Loved One Has Died***

“Endings are experiences of dying. They are ordeals and sometimes challenge so basically our sense of who we are that we believe they will be the end of us . . .” (**William Bridges - Transitions**)

“When I protect myself against the danger of loss by teaching myself not to care, not to let anyone get too close to me, I lose part of my soul. When I try to avoid pain by skipping the articles about famine and torture in the papers and turning to the sports page, saying to myself "Its too bad but that is the way the world is" I let myself become less human, less alive. When I protect myself from disappointment by not wanting to be happy, by telling myself that happiness is a mirage and an illusion, I diminish my soul. To be alive is to feel pain and to hide from pain is to make yourself less alive”-**Harold Kushner**

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