

Living with Loss and Grief: Information and Resources

BC Counseling Center - Free and Confidential Counseling Services for Students

- **Physical Location:** 3000 Landerholm Circle SE – U 201, Bellevue, WA 98007
- **Schedule an Appointment:**
 - [Submit an Online Appointment Request](#)
 - Phone: 425-564-5747 (mainline)
 - Email: counseling@bellevuecollege.edu
- **Website:** <https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/counseling/>

Normal Reactions to Loss

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

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)
- 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

- [WebMD – Grief & Depression](#)
- [Greater Good – What Grief Feels like During COVID-19](#)
- [Help Guide – Coping with Grief and Loss](#)
- [CDC – Grief and Loss](#)
- [Mayo Clinic – Grief: Coping with Reminders After a Loss](#)
- [Grief Support & Resources](#)

Off Campus Mental Health Resources

- Psychology Today Find a Therapist Search:
 - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists>
 - Search by:
 - Location, insurance type, issues or concerns, language(s) spoken by the counselor, etc.
- The Washington Counselors of Color Network:
 - <https://www.multiculturalcounselors.org/>
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – for BC employees:
 - Free and confidential counseling and resources
 - <http://eap.wa.gov> or 877-313-4455

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
- ***Grieving Mindfully: A Compassionate and Spiritual Guide to Coping with Loss*** - Sameet M. Kumar

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 "It's 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**

“Grief is the experience of loss in love. Simply put, it is only without love that there is no grief. Love is the fuel that drives grief. Rather than point to a deficit or weakness, grief only serves to highlight the depth of our capacity to love and be loved.” - **Sameet M. Kumar, *Grieving Mindfully: A Compassionate and Spiritual Guide to Coping with Loss***

References

Attig, T. (2004). Disenfranchised grief revisited: Discounting hope and love. *Omega: Journal of Death & Dying, 49*, 197-215.

Frankl, V. E. (1959). *Man's search for meaning*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Giles, J. & Neimeyer, R. (2006). Loss, grief, and the search for significance: Toward a model of meaning reconstruction in bereavement. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 19*, 31-65.

Kübler-Ross, E. (1969). *On death and dying*. New York: Collier. Rappaport, Fossler, Bross, & Gilden

(1993). Future time, death anxiety, and life purpose among adults. *Death Studies, 17*, 369-379.

Lynn, Cendra (2011). Griefnet.org: Where Grace Happens. Retrieved from www.griefnet.org.

Stroebe, M. & Schut, H. (1999). The dual process model of coping with bereavement: Rationale and description. *Death Studies, 23*, 197-224.

Whiting, P. & Bradley, L. J. (2007). Artful witnessing of the story. *Adultspan Journal, 6*, 119-128.

Created by Beth Luzzi, MA Ed., LMHCA; Adapted from *Living with Loss and Grief* (See Reference page for full list of resources)