

TYPICAL GRIEF REACTIONS

Grief is a holistic process; it can affect every dimension of the individual's life: physical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual. The period immediately after the loss is when symptoms are likely to be most intense.

Physical

- Decreased energy and increased fatigue
- Eating Problems (changes in appetite, nausea, general digestive upset)
- Increased physical aches and pains
- Sleep problems

Cognitive

- Confusion
- Difficulty making decisions
- Dreams about the deceased person or traumatic events
- Feelings of numbness or apathy
- Increased anxiety and worry about the safety or death of loved ones
- Poor concentration

Social

- Feeling alienated and withdrawn from others,
- Lack of interest in formerly pleasurable activities
- Loneliness

Emotional

- Anger/Irritability
- Despair
- Feeling empty and sad; crying
- Guilt or feelings of responsibility
- Hopelessness
- Nervousness or feeling on edge

Spiritual/Existential

- Anger Towards God
- Crisis of Meaning
- Doubt Or Loss Of Spiritual Beliefs Including Belief In God
- Existential Despair And Hopelessness (“Dark Night Of The Soul”)
- Re-examination of Priorities and Values



COPING STRATEGIES FOR GRIEF

- Lower expectations of yourself. Accept that your functioning will not be up to par.
- Take one day at a time.
- Be gentle with yourself. Nurture yourself and get as much support as you need.
- Don't try to hold back or judge your feelings. Give yourself permission to experience them and recognize that all your feelings are part of the process of grief.
- Get some exercise and eat even if you don't feel like it.
- Slowly begin to return to some pleasant activities and spend time with other people.
- Some things that may help are keeping a journal, prayer, meditation, being touched, joining a support group.

