



# Let's Talk about Grief

Let me start by saying, grief is a natural response to loss. It is the sadness you feel when something or someone you love is no longer there. The bigger the loss, the stronger your grief will feel. Many people think you only experience grief when someone dies, but there are other times that you can experience grief. Below are several scenarios that can contribute to your grief.

## Tips for coping with Grief

- Everyone grieves differently.
- Treat yourself kindly.
- Let go of the "shoulds".
- Talk to others about your loss.
- Pay attention to your needs. (rest, eat, exercise)
- Try not to isolate yourself.
- Be patient with yourself. Grief can hit you when you least expect it.
- Do one task at a time so you do not feel overwhelmed.
- Take breaks and relax.
- Try to maintain a routine as best you can.

1. Divorce or relationship breakup
2. Loss of health
3. Losing a job
4. Loss of financial stability
5. Retirement
6. Death of a pet
7. A loved one's serious illness
8. Loss of a friendship
9. Loss of safety after a trauma
10. Selling your family home

Any change in your life can cause grief. And when you add a death of a loved one to those changes it can feel insurmountable. Often times we don't talk about losses or are told to just move on. I want to be clear, there is no time frame for grief. Grief is like a snowflake, no two people experience it in the same way. That being said, there are some similarities. To give you an idea of what grief may feel like I have included some tips to help you cope as well as symptoms that you may experience. I hope you find them helpful as you make your way through your grief.

## Common Symptoms of Grief

Grief can change who we are. Below are some common symptoms of grief.

**Physical:** Fatigue, gastro-intestinal upset, sleep disruption, appetite changes, headaches, tightness in the chest, oversensitivity to noise and muscle weakness.

**Emotional:** Sadness, anxiety, anger, guilt, confusion, irritability, lack of motivation, sense of abandonment, loneliness, helplessness, shock and numbness.

**Cognitive:** Difficulty concentrating, memory problems, intrusive thoughts/images of the lost loved one, work or school difficulties, disbelief, and obsessive thoughts.

**Behavioral:** Crying, restlessness, lashing out at others, substance use to dull the pain, trouble with sleep, eating too much or not enough, withdrawing from others, or strongly treasuring things that remind you of the loved one.

**Interpersonal:** Social isolation, feeling like others do not understand, noticing that others interact with you differently

**Spiritual:** Questioning God or one's faith, difficulty feeling hopeful, questioning one's sense of meaning and purpose. Looking to a higher power for answers.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further please contact  
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