

## In the First 24-48 Hours

### Managing the stress of loss:

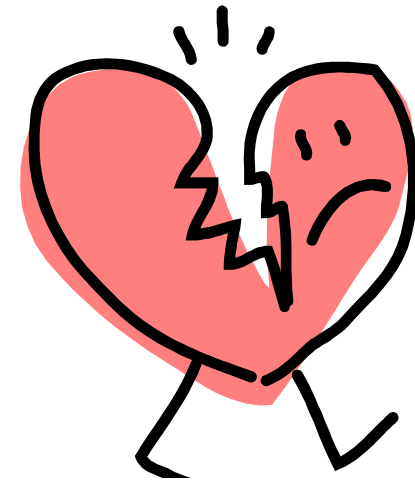
- Alter periods of exercise with periods of relaxation
- Structure your time, keep busy.
- Reassure yourself that you are normal and having normal reactions. Don't label yourself crazy.
- Talk with others. Talking about it is healing.
- Reach out. People do care. Spend time with others.
- Maintain as normal a schedule as possible.
- Avoid the use of drugs and alcohol. Don't complicate the problem with substance abuse.
- Give yourself permission to feel rotten. It's normal.
- Keep a journal, write through those sleepless hours.
- Do things that feel good to you.
- Realize that those around you are also under stress.
- Don't make any big life changes.
- Do make routine daily decisions. Regain control.
- Eat regular meals, even if you don't feel like it.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Flashbacks are normal, don't fight them, they'll decrease in time and become less painful.

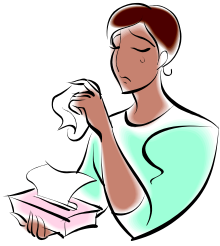
## GRIEF TRUTHS

- ⇒ Everyone grieves differently.
- ⇒ There are no rules for grieving.
- ⇒ Give yourself permission to feel.
- ⇒ "Being strong" is not necessarily healthy.
- ⇒ Your life will be different now.
- ⇒ You will always miss your loved one.
- ⇒ No one else will fully understand your pain.
- ⇒ Challenges of change will be common.
- ⇒ You relationship will continue with your loved one.
- ⇒ Ride the rollercoaster of grief, there will be good & bad moments.
- ⇒ You do not "get over it" or recover, you learn how to "get through it" and transition to a different life without them.
- ⇒ Live for today.
- ⇒ Discover who you are.
- ⇒ Re-define joy.

## COPING WITH LOSS

### A Quick Glance





## The Grieving Process

This process usually consists of the following emotions: You may move in and out of these emotions.

1. **Denial and Shock-** This will result as you deny the reality of the death, however, this will diminish as you share your feelings.
2. **Anger-** You may ask, “Why me?” You may be angry at the unfairness of the death.
3. **Guilt-** You may find yourself feeling guilty for things you did or didn’t do prior to the loss. Forgive yourself and accept your humanness.
4. **Depression-** Mood fluctuations and feelings of isolation and withdrawal may follow. It takes time for you, to gradually return to your old self and become socially involved in what’s going on around you.
5. **Loneliness-** The more you are able to reach out to others and make new friends, the more this feeling lessens.
6. **Acceptance-** Acceptance does not mean happiness. Instead, you accept and deal with the reality of the situation.
7. **Hope-** Eventually you will reach a point where remembering will be less painful and you can begin to look ahead to the future and more good times.



## OTHER EFFECTS YOU MAY EXPERIENCE AFTER LOSS

**PHYSICAL:** headaches, feeling tired, achy muscles AND NAUSEA

**MENTAL:** forgetfulness, lack of concentration, confusion and poor memory.

**BEHAVIORAL:** sleeping changes, dreams or nightmares, changes in appetite, not wanting to be around too many people, being extra emotional about things.

**SOCIAL:** some friends may avoid you because they don’t know what to say.



## Easing the Pain

### Talk About the Loss

Talk about the pain, the loneliness, the anger, the depression—all the feelings that arise—with a good friend, a counselor, or member of the clergy who will listen openly without feeling obligated to “fix things.”

### You Can Be Alone Without Being Lonely

Loneliness is a self-inflicted condition; it can come on you when you’re alone or with a group of people. It is possible to spend enjoyable time by yourself; however, it does require filling that time creatively and deciding who you are, what you need and what you want now.

### It is Possible to Feel Opposing Emotions Simultaneously (Mixed Emotions)

The fact is that we can feel both sad and relieved, loving and angry, as we try to make sense out of what has happened. The bereaved should allow all their emotions to emerge and then sort them out by talking with a trusted friend or undertaking some creative expression, such as keeping a journal

### Releasing Pain is Not Erasing Memory

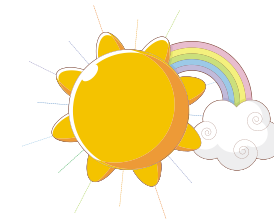
Gradually letting go of pain allows time and space for more vivid and pleasant memories to surface and become a part of daily living.

### Laughing is NOT Disrespectful

Even though someone has died, funny things will happen at work, at home, to others and, believe it or not, to you. It is okay to laugh at these things without feeling guilty about not spending twenty-four hours a day grieving. Humor has always been a great stress reducer.

### Life is Too Short Not To . . .

This phrase is a helpful one to remember when you are faced with spontaneous, difficult, or even fun situations. When the opportunity to do something new arises, don’t turn it down just because you wouldn’t have done it when your loved one was alive. More often than not, these situations will actually prove to be enjoyable.



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