

WHAT IS GRIEF?

Grief is a natural reaction to death and other losses. However, grieving does not feel natural because it may be difficult to control the emotions, thoughts, or physical feelings associated with a death. The sense of being out of control that is often a part of grief may overwhelm or frighten some teens and children.

GRIEVING IS NORMAL AND HEALTHY!

Note: Grieving is a different experience for each person.

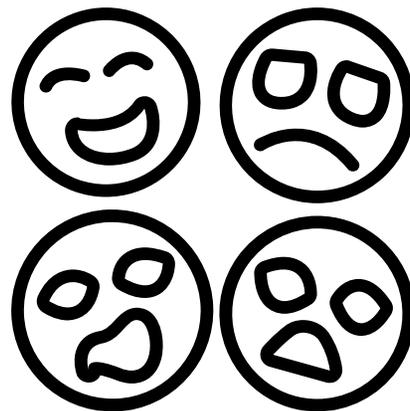
Grieving is a highly individual experience. There's no right or wrong way to grieve. How you grieve depends on many factors, including your personality and coping style, your life experience, your faith, and how significant the loss was to you.

Grieving takes time! Healing happens gradually; it can't be forced. There is no "normal" timetable for grieving. Some people start to feel better in weeks or months. For others, the grieving process is measured in years.

ELISABETH KÜBLER-ROSS "FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF"

1. Denial: "This can't be happening to me."
2. Anger: "Why is this happening? Who is to blame?"
3. Bargaining: "Make this not happen, and in return I will____."
4. Depression: "I'm too sad to do anything."
5. Acceptance: "I'm at peace with what happened."

Note: You do not have to go through each stage in order to heal!



HOW SHOULD I GRIEVE?

Grief is different for everyone! Your feelings may change from day to day.

WAYS TO COPE WITH GRIEF AND LOSS

Common ways that teens tend to grieve:

- Crying: Tears are healthy.
- Talking about it: Confide in an adult or someone you know.
- Writing about it: Write about death, your experience with death, and how it has made you feel. Keep a journal or a notebook.
- Express yourself: Express your feelings in creative ways, such as drawing, painting, building, and scrapbooking.

GRIEF SUPPORT SYSTEM (WHO CAN HELP)

- Family support: Talk to a parent, sibling, cousin, or anyone else you are comfortable with to help you cope.
- School support: Seek support through your school counselor, teacher, school mental health therapist, school psychologist, or friends.
- Community resources in the County: Contact warm-line at (209) 468-8686 for support. For additional information or support, call 211 anytime.