

Some Common, Normal Grief Reactions

FEELINGS

Sadness
Anger
Guilt and self-reproach
Anxiety
Loneliness
Fatigue
Helplessness
Shock
Yearning
Emancipation
Relief
Numbness

PHYSICAL

Sleep disturbances
Appetite disturbances
Hollowness in stomach
Tightness in chest
Tightness in throat
Oversensitivity to noise
Depersonalization
Feeling short of breath
Weakness in muscles
Lack of energy
Dry mouth

BEHAVIORS

Social withdrawal
Dreams of deceased
Avoiding reminders of deceased
Searching and calling out
Sighing
Restless overactivity
Crying
Visiting places or carrying objects
Treasuring objects

THINKING

Disbelief
Confusion
Preoccupation
Loss of memory
Absent-mindedness

SPIRITUAL

Disconnection
Questioning, unbelief
Searching for meaning
Revisiting faith tradition
Re-evaluating one's place in the world
Addressing one's own mortality
Worship as time of extreme feelings
Anger at God
Sense of deceased's presence

TASKS OF GRIEVING

1. To accept the reality of the loss.
2. To express grief's pain and emotion.
3. To adjust to an environment where the deceased is missing.
4. To redirect emotional energy to other meaningful outlets in our outer world.

These four tasks of mourning were identified by William Worden as one model for viewing the grief process. Looking at the grief process as tasks to be worked through can assist the grieving person with healing.

From the ideas of William Worden (Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy)