

Coping with Grief and Loss

Grief is the natural process of mourning a loss and there is no “right way” to grieve. Grief can occur in response to many kinds of losses, not just the death of a loved one. Despite the common assumption that grief follows a path through predictable stages, there is no “right way” to grieve. People grieve in their own individualized way. You may experience a wide range of emotions or you may experience very few emotions. Here are some thoughts about what may be helpful to you in this process:



Time

Grief takes time, so be patient with yourself. Do your best to take things one day at a time.



Support

Rely on supportive people in your life. Sometimes it's helpful to discuss your thoughts and feelings. Sometimes it's comforting to just be in the presence of another person. If you need additional support, it can be useful to meet with a mental health professional who has specialized training in grief and loss.



Adjust expectations

Grief can lead to difficulty concentrating, feelings of confusion, and changes in productivity. You may not be at your best for a while. Be kind to yourself if you discover you can't do everything you usually do. If possible, delay significant decisions to ensure you approach them in the best frame of mind.



Routine

It may be helpful to follow a daily routine. If that feels overwhelming, start small, scheduling just the basics to get through the day. As time passes, you can add additional structure and begin to set longer-term goals.



Relaxation

It may be helpful to engage in regular relaxing activities, like taking walks, drinking tea, or playing games or sports. Nourish yourself in whatever way you can.



Self-care

Limit your use of alcohol and other substances while you are grieving. As much as possible, try to eat well, exercise, and keep a regular sleep schedule. Doing so may help you maintain a more stable mood.