

Coping With Grief

Grief

Grief is a natural response to loss. Grief can be like a roller coaster with ups and downs. It can be worse in the beginning and less intense over time.

Grieving takes time. As much as you may want the grief to be over now, it takes time. Be patient. Focus on doing what feels best to you in the present time.

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There are some things you can do to help you cope with grief. Read through the following options and consider which may be most helpful. Try one at a time, pausing to reflect on how you feel after each. Continue until you find the option(s) that work best for you.

1. Think about your dreams, hopes and plans for your future. Then send each off with a blessing by blowing on a feathery dandelion or spraying a mist of water into the air.
2. Visualize your pain as rope burns on your hands. Allow cool water to run through your palms or gently massage lotion into your hands. Be still and trust the sting will lessen over time.
3. Place something inside your pillowcase that will help you feel close to the one you are missing. Consider a scarf, embroidered towel or another soft item that reminds you of him or her.
4. Share a message through a letter. Write what your heart wants to say, pause to read it a few times to yourself, then put it away or shred it if you wish. It is not a document to save but rather, a way to express your true feelings.
5. Cry. It's OK to allow tears of anger or sadness to pour out as an expression of the impact left by the one you are missing. Consider it a tribute, and an action of great strength and courage to show your grief in this way.
6. Call someone for support. Talk about how you are feeling and be open to receive encouragement.
7. Place a small item such as a rock, cross or coin in your pocket to remind you that you can carry the one you miss with you always.
8. Set something out that reminds you of a treasured memory you shared with the person you miss. Maybe it is a gift you received from him or her, a photo taken together or a book you both loved. Whatever it is, allow the spirit of the person to live through it each time you see it.
9. Keep the person's phone number in your contacts list and his or her address in your address book. It can serve as a gentle reminder of the connection you shared.

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10. Write a list of things — memories, recipes, activities you both enjoyed, gifts given or received — of which you will never let go. Share your list with someone close to you.
11. Do what feels right. There are no “right” or “wrong” ways to grieve. If you enjoy traveling, take a trip and write a postcard to the one you miss. Address it as if you were to send it, then put it in a special box. Continue adding to the box as you travel to new and exciting places.
12. Create a “lost and found box.” Use notecards to write about your loss and place them in the box along with anything special you find that reminds you of the person.
13. Post a photo of the person you miss on the side of your mirror. Feel his or her presence in your day.
14. Take time to pause during your day and think about a special memory you have of the person. Close your eyes. Relive it. Allow feelings of gratefulness to shower over your memory.
15. Keep your memories fresh in your mind. Continue to tell your stories. Write about them and read what you wrote anytime you miss the person. Listen to soft music to help you connect with your memories and delight in the legacy left with you.