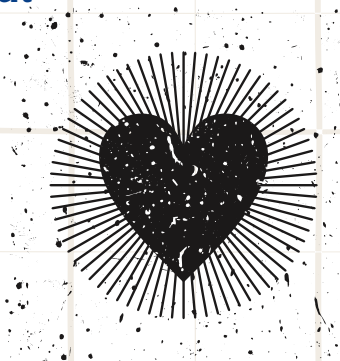


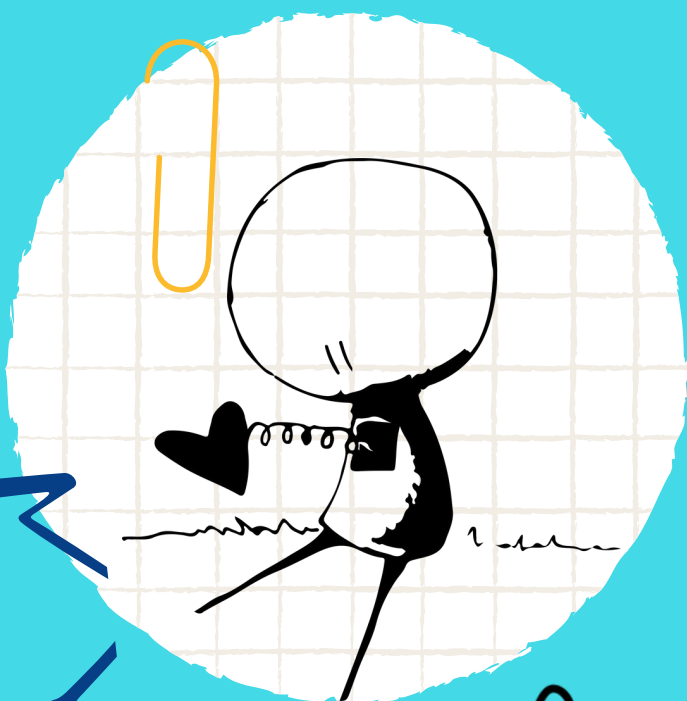
understanding grief & loss

Grief is a natural response to loss. It does not progress in a predictable or linear way. Everyone grieves in their own way at their own pace.

How you grieve depends on many factors including the circumstances of the loss (e.g. sudden death, chronic illness, death by suicide), past experiences of loss, your personality and coping style, your faith, and how significant the loss was to you.



There is no time limit on grief - some people get back to their usual routine fairly quickly, others may take longer. Whatever your grief experience, it's important to be patient and accepting toward yourself and allow the process to naturally unfold.



“ there is not a typical response to loss, as there is no typical loss. Our grieving is as individual as our lives. ”
Kübler-Ross.

emotional symptoms

- Shock, disbelief, denial
- Numbness
- Sadness
- Guilt, remorse, regret
- Fear/anxiety (e.g. about one's own mortality)
- Anger

common

range of

grief

reactions

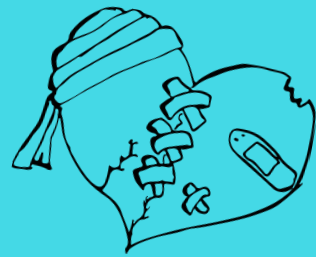


physical symptoms

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Loss of appetite
- Lowered immunity
- Weight loss/gain
- Aches and pains
- Poor sleep



about grief



1 the pain will go away faster if you ignore it

Ignoring your pain will only make it worse in the long run. In order to heal, it is necessary to face your grief and learn to cope with it.

2 it's important to "be strong" in the face of loss

Loss can trigger many strong emotions. Crying or voicing these feelings doesn't make you weak - it just means that you're sad, angry, frightened, lonely... In fact, being honest about what you're feeling often requires great strength! You don't need to "protect" your family or friends by putting on a brave front, either.

3 if you don't cry, it means you aren't sorry about the loss

Crying is a normal response to loss, but it's not the only one. There's no one right way to feel, and no single right way to express what you're feeling either. Those who don't cry may feel the pain just as deeply as others. They may simply have other ways of showing it. Let yourself feel what you feel, and turn to those who can accept you as you are.

4 grief should last about a year

Your grief will move on its own timetable. However, the loss will be part of your life from now on. Your active grieving may lessen over the course of a few weeks or months. Sometimes it can take longer. You may also find that you are suddenly hit with intense feelings of grief again after a long period where you haven't been as focused on the loss. All of this is normal.



5 moving on with your life means forgetting about your loss

Moving on means you've accepted your loss - but that's not the same as forgetting. You can move on with your life and keep the memory of someone or something you lost as an important part of you. Moving on can also mean finding a new way to feel connected to the person who died, and this may mean different things to different people and in different cultures.

6 you can't be happy when you're grieving

It's perfectly normal and even healthy to have moments when you aren't thinking about the loss and instead enjoy hanging out with your friends and doing fun things. Many people feel guilty for these moments, but please recognize that they are just another part of the grief journey. They in absolutely no way mean that the person you lost wasn't important to you or that you have forgotten them.

