

Helping the Hurting

Caring for those who are grieving
the loss of a loved one



Transitions®
GriefCare

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Understanding Grief

Grief:

- Natural and necessary

“. . . the only cure for grief is to grieve”

“Death ends a life, not a relationship.”

- Grief is the process of internalizing that relationship

*“. . . from a primary, painful awareness of what has been lost
to a primary, sustaining awareness of what endures”*

Grief:

- Shorthand for a complex mixture of thoughts/feelings
- Invisible, and thus, isolating
- Individual - *as unique as the relationship*
- Related to attachment, not only affection

Grief is not...

- A disease to cure
- A problem to solve
- Linear

How we **want**
grief to work



How grief
actually works



Common Grief Responses

Physical

- Profound fatigue
- Body aches/muscle pain
- Heart palpitations
- Shortness of breath
- Exacerbation of existing health issues

Common Grief Responses

Mental

- Disorientation
- Forgetfulness (“grief brain”)
- Decreased ability to concentrate; brain fog
- Wishing for death
- Dreams of deceased
- Hauntings
- Rumination

Common Grief Responses

Behavioral

- Increase/decrease in sleep and/or appetite
- Increase/decrease in social activity
- Increase/decrease in substance use
- Increase/decrease in self-care
- Restlessness
- Irritable, “on edge”
- Talking to deceased
- Crying/screaming
- Accidents

Common Grief Responses

Emotional

- Sadness
- Anger
- Regret
- Guilt
- Relief
- Shock
- Anxiety,
- Insecurity
- Fear
- Apathy
- Loneliness
- Decreased confidence

Common Grief Responses

Spiritual

- Loss of identity
- Lack of purpose
- Existential questioning
- Search for meaning
- Increase/decrease in religious practice
- Anger at faith/at God
- Gratitude
- Shift in priorities
- Peace

disorientation
relieved
breathlessness
fatigue lonely disorientation apathetic crying
drained relieved insecure
forgetfulness irritable crying irritable afraid
stomping ruminating insecure
hauntings sad ruminating guilty
forgetfulness
busyness angry crying
hauntings aches isolation
fatty shocked
restless
lonely apathetic
sad
aches
dreams
anxious screaming
questioning aches apathetic drained
restless questioning
forgetfulness
purposelessness
alcohol
irritable
stomping
fatigue
alcohol
lonely
sad
aches
dreams
anxious screaming
questioning aches apathetic drained
restless questioning
forgetfulness
disorientation
questioning
sleeplessness
fatigue
foggy
stomping busyness
shocked
anxious screaming
regretful ruminating
angry ruminating
lonely yearning
guilty dreams
hauntings
afraid sleeplessness
yearning
purposelessness
isolation
yearning



Supporting Grievors

What I've learned

A griever's pain can be approached, but not apprehended.

A community of grieving strangers is often more helpful than support from family/friends.

It's often much worse later . . . just when friends and family are ready for the bereaved to be "over" it.

It's not about me.

Grievors lie. They are NOT fine. They are falling apart, bleeding out, wondering if they'll survive.

“You just don’t understand”

How my perspective on mortality has shifted

How trivial everything has become

The severity of my loneliness

The depth of my fears

How frustrated I am (“this is not me!”)

How black my black days are

How disoriented I am

How hard I’m trying

How nothing is the same

How long this takes

How hard this is

How much I want to be happy again

“What I need from you”

Listen. JUST listen.

Visit, but don't overstay

Text, email . . .

Touch/hug me

Help me with specific tasks

Food

Invite me out/distract me

Leave me alone

Helpful things to say:

- The deceased's name.
- "I know this is so difficult."
- "I'm sorry."
- "Take your time."
- "Tell me more."

Not Helpful to Hear:

- “You are so strong.”
- “Your family needs you to be strong.”
- “S/he would want you to be happy.”
- “God doesn’t put more on us than we can bear.”
- “Focus on what you have to be grateful for.”
- “It will get a little better each day.”
- “You just need to...”



Bnn Brd

- Prht ovr t 350 dgrs. Spry lf pn wth nn-stck ckng spry r grs wth bttr nd st sd.
- dd th stck f bttr t lrg bwl nd mcrwv fr 1 mnt, r ntl mltd.
- dd th bnns t th sm bwl nd msh wth frk.
- dd th vnll xtrct nd gg t th bwl nd s th sm frk t msh nd str ntl n yllw strks f gg rmn.
- n scnd lrg bwl whsk tgthr th flr, sgr, bkng sd, slt, nd cnmnm.
- dd th dr ngrdnts t th wt ingrnts nd mx tgthr wth sptl jst ntl cmbnd.
- Pr t bttr nt prprd lf pn nd bk fr 45-55 mnts ntl tthpck nsrtd n th cntr f th brd cms t cln.

a e i o u

(I) acknowledge

(You) express

I

“O”

You



Services available to anyone in the community at no charge
(donations welcome)

Adult and Child Services

Individual and Family Counseling
Support Groups
Workshops, including Holiday Grief
Remembrance Services
Lending Library
Education and Consultation

250 Hospice Circle, Raleigh, NC 27607