

Expectations You May Have for Yourself in Grief

Everyone's grief experience is unique and influenced by how you perceive the loss...

Your Grief May:

- Take longer than most people think.
- Take more energy than you would have ever imagined.
- Involve many changes and be continually developing.
- Show itself in all spheres of your life: psychological, social, physical and spiritual.
- Entail mourning not only for the actual person you lost, but also for all the hopes, dreams, and unfulfilled expectations you held for and with that person, and for the needs that will go unmet because of the death.
- Involve a wide variety of feelings and reactions, not solely those that you generally think of as grief.
- Resurrect old issues, feelings and unresolved conflicts from the past.

You May Grieve:

- For many things both symbolic and tangible, not just the physical presence of your loved one.
- For what you have lost already and for what you have lost for the future.

You May Feel:

- A range of emotions such as anger and sadness, irritability, frustration, annoyance, or intolerance.
- A lack of self-concern.
- Strong feelings of loss that occur suddenly with no warning.
- Preoccupied with the death experience.

You May Find:

- Yourself acting socially in ways that are different from before.
- Yourself having a number of physical reactions.
- That there are certain dates, events, and stimuli that bring up strong feelings of loss.
- Society will have unrealistic expectations about your mourning and may respond inappropriately to you.
- That you may have trouble thinking (memory, organization and intellectual processing) and making decisions.
- Yourself searching for meaning and questioning your religion, spirituality, and/or philosophy of life.