

The Grieving Process

The grieving process is a complex cycle of emotions. Experts have divided it into several stages.

Denial. The initial sense of shock may cause you to doubt - or refuse to believe - your loved one is gone. You may feel numb and may even have physical side effects, such as insomnia, loss of appetite, and a racing heartbeat.

Anger. You may feel cheated or abandoned and take out your anger on friends, family or those who cared for your loved one.

Depression. Often the longest and most difficult stage, you may experience despair, disorientation, and a host of other psychological and physical problems.

Acceptance. You come to grips with the death and begin to move forward with your life.

People do not necessarily move from one stage to another and directly on to a perfect resolution. You may go back and forth or be in more than one stage at a time and experience a wide range of emotions - guilt, fear, and/or sadness. The healing process is different for everyone, and there is no timetable.

And, don't be surprised if grief revisits you. Your love doesn't end when a loved one dies. That's why concentrating on the good times can be comforting. It's also helpful to take extra good care of yourself - get enough sleep, eat properly, and exercise regularly.

But, if you're having suicidal thoughts, are relying on alcohol or drugs to numb your pain or are having problems working through your grief, share your thoughts and feelings with another person - it will help. You may even want to join a support group or seek professional help. Remember, at some time or another, everyone experiences similar feelings. There is nothing wrong with asking for help.

Some local sources of help include:

- Your friends; your church; your family
- School Counselors
- Crisis Call Center – (775) 784-8090
- The Solace Tree - (775) 324-7723