

Grief Responses

Grief Responses	Description of Response	Things to Do
Shock/denial/disbelief	Dazed/intense emotional outbursts and physical reactions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk with someone you trust 2. Rest 3. Give yourself some slack
Searching/yearning	Emotional ups and downs/difficulty completing task and concentrating/restlessness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reschedule tasks if possible 2. Exercise 3. Talk to someone who understands
Anxiety/panic	Feeling out of control/being aware of own mortality/life is unpredictable	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoid impulsive decisions 2. Spend time with loved ones 3. Spend time in nature
Anger/rage	Can be directed toward the deceased, circumstances, agency, God, feeling abandoned/bouts of crying	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exercise/physical activity 2. Journal writing 3. Art 4. "Would deceased want you to hold onto this anger?"
Guilt/regret	Blaming/guilt at surviving/unfinished business/"If I had only..."	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be forgiving 2. What would deceased tell you 3. Talk to someone
Emptiness/numbness	Deep sadness/trying to find ways to say goodbye	Do something concrete to remember the good times; i.e. photo album, story, poem, tape a story, do a special activity
Return to routine/focus on life	Acknowledging loss/planning for future/learning to live with the loss	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remember special things about deceased 2. Get back involved in activities 3. Pass on important things about deceased to others 4. Find ways to keep the legacy of deceased alive

Remember, there are many reactions to a significant loss. Each person grieves in his or her own way. Grief responses may appear and disappear and vary in intensity. They can occur in any order and often occur when we least expect them. The grief response is one of the most natural, yet painful, human life experiences to go through. Please seek professional help if these symptoms become significantly disruptive to your daily life or you need additional support or information.