

*“Do something today that your future self will thank you for.” ~Anonymous*

As you are actively, intentionally mourning in small doses each day, it is also nonnegotiable that you simultaneously focus on your self-care. Self-care and grief is about “attitude” as much or more than it is about a “to-do list.” If you simply move through your days with the attitude that you need and deserve good care, you are more likely to make small choices that serve you well. When it comes to self-care, it's little things that are the big things.

**Practice Self-Compassion.** I hope you will remind yourself each and every day to be self-compassionate. You have experienced misfortune. You are suffering. You need and deserve understanding and tender, loving care--from others and from yourself. You need lots of rest, comfort, and kindness. Self-compassion acknowledges that life has its challenges for almost all of us. It brings perspective. It reminds us of our connections to and similarities with many. And it builds empathy for ourselves as well as others.

**Cultivate Patience.** Healing complicated grief is hard work. If and when you're feeling impatient, I'm asking you to trust the process you are now engaged in. You probably won't start feeling better right away. If you feel worse for a while, that's not unusual. As long as you're actively mourning and getting reliable support from other people, you are doing what you need to do. Meditation and other mindfulness practices can help you with this.

**Take Good Care of Yourself.** You take good care of yourself with small, effective daily habits. It's really that simple. If your current habits aren't helping you feel comforted, rested, stronger, mindful, and well supported, don't despair. Research shows that incorporating better habits isn't about willpower and big goals--instead, it's about starting really small and building from there.

**Foster Hope.** Hope is an expectation of a good thing that is yet to be. It's a future looking for knowledge felt in the present moment. In grief, hope is a belief that healing can and will unfold, and that despite the loss and current pain, there will surely be many opportunities for meaning and purpose in the years to come. Active learning is the most important way to build hope. You will be reconciling your complicated grief while also, at the same time, revising your self-identity, finding meaning and moving forward, and strengthening relationships with others.

Yes, you will still and always grieve because you will still and always love the person who died. But your ongoing love and grief will become an integrated, manageable part of today, tomorrow, and all the precious tomorrow's you have yet to come.

*Excerpt source: [Complicated Grief: How to Understand, Express, and Reconcile Your Especially Difficult Grief](#) by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. [www.centerforloss.com](http://www.centerforloss.com). Reprinted with permission.*