



If You're Grieving

The grieving process is one of the most difficult journeys you could ever navigate and can take a huge emotional and physical toll on you as you experience profound loss. Helping Hands honors your loss and the impact it has on your life. We are available to help support you. During the grieving process, we encourage you to reach out to us as needed and know that we are keeping you in our hearts.

Keep in Mind

- **Emotional Impact**

It's okay to hurt. Someone is missing. Their absence is extremely painful. Grief can bring a wide range of emotions such as sadness, anger, guilt, anxiety, and numbness, which can all come and go. It can be overwhelmingly difficult to manage the emotional impact of grief.

- **Physical Symptoms**

Alongside emotional distress, grief can manifest physically through symptoms such as fatigue, appetite changes, sleep disturbances, headaches, muscle tension, and digestive issues.

- **Individual Variations**

Everyone experiences grief differently, depending on the nature of the loss, their personality, cultural background, etc. There isn't a "proper" way to grieve. The symptoms, severity, and duration of grief can vary greatly, as grief is a highly personal and individual experience.

- **Importance of Support**

Seeking support from loved ones, grief counseling, or support groups can be crucial in navigating the grieving process and coping with its challenges. Helping Hands offers a monthly grief support group that can help assist you during this very painful time.

What to Do

- **Be gentle with yourself.** You've lost someone very special. You're going through one of the toughest experiences in your life and you deserve lots of self-compassion and kindness.
- **Take care of yourself.** Do your best to get enough sleep, eat well, and exercise regularly. Avoid habits that numb your feelings short-term but could have adverse long-term consequences.
- **Talk to others.** Let friends and family know how you're feeling and that you need to talk. Spend time with people who accept you where you are and who empathize and listen well. Don't be afraid to join a support group or talk to a religious leader or therapist.
- **Express your feelings.** Journal, cry, beat pillows, speak aloud to your deceased loved one, tell stories, or sing to a song that reminds you of your loved one.
- **Be patient.** It's normal to feel a mix of emotions and it takes time to grieve.
- **Consider professional help.** If your grief is making it hard to live your life or hasn't improved after six months, be sure to talk to a therapist or grief counselor.
- **Cherish your memories.** You can make an online photo book, go through your loved one's belongings, ask their favorite people to write down their memories and send them to you, or convert home movies to DVDs.
- **Honor your loved one.** Continue important traditions. Plant a tree in their honor. Share stories about them. Make a donation to their favorite cause. Do whatever feels right to you.
- **Make plans.** Volunteer, go to a movie, invite a friend to lunch, take a walk.
- **Avoid major life changes.** It's best to wait before making big decisions, like moving or changing jobs.
- **Be brave.** Don't be afraid to reach out for help. You deserve it!

Resources That Can Make a Difference

Podcasts

- What's Your Grief? <https://whatsyourgrief.com/grief-podcast/>
- Megan Devine, LPC – It's Okay that You're Not Okay
<https://refugeingrief.com/grief-podcasts/>
- Greif Out Loud – Apple Podcast Series
- All There Is with Anderson Cooper – Apple Podcast Series
- The Widow Podcast – Apple Podcast Series

Support Groups

- Elements Helping Hands Grief Support Group
- GriefShare www.griefshare.org
- There are many Facebook grief groups.

Documentaries

- “Speaking Grief”
- “Surviving Death” Netflix Series

Grief Retreats

www.FaithandGrief.org
www.WidowRetreats.com

Books

- “It's OK that You're Not OK” by Megan Devine
- “I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye” by Brook Noel and Dr. Pamela Blair
- “7 Lessons from Heaven” by Dr. Mary Neal
- “Glimpses of Heaven” by Trudy Harris, RN
- “Finding Meaning – The 6th Stage of Grief” by David Kessler
- “Rising Strong” by Dr. Brene Brown
- “On Grief and Grieving” by Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

- “The Body Keeps the Score” by Dr. Van der Kolk
- Guided journal “How to Carry What Cannot be Fixed” by Megan Devine
- Guided journal “Progressing Through Grief” by Stephanie Jose

Other Things That Can Be Helpful

- Meditation
- GriefYoga.com
- Counseling
- Massage
- Weighted blanket
- Guided grief meditations found on apps such as Headspace and Insight Timer
- Journaling
- Honoring your loved one through scholarships, memorial bench, random acts of kindness

Life is full of grief, to exactly the degree we allow ourselves to love other people.

- Orson Scott

*When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth
you are weeping for that which has been your delight. Some of you say,
“Joy is greater than sorrow,” and others say, “Nay, sorrow is the greater.”
But I say unto you, they are inseparable.*

- Kahlil Gibran