

NORMAL GRIEF RESPONSES

Because grief can be so painful and seem overwhelming, it frightens us. Many people worry if they are grieving in the “right” way, and wonder if the feelings they have are normal. Most people who suffer a loss experience one or more of the following:

1. Feel tightness in the throat or heaviness in the chest.
2. Have an empty feeling in their stomach and lose their appetite.
3. Feel guilty at times, and angry at others.
4. Feel restless and look for activity, but find it difficult to concentrate.
5. Feel as though the loss isn't real, that it didn't actually happen.
6. Sense the loved one's presence, like finding themselves expecting the person to walk in the door at the usual time, hearing their voice, or seeing their face.
7. Wander aimlessly and forget and don't finish things they have started to do around the house.
8. Have difficulty sleeping, and dream of their loved one frequently.
9. Experience an intense preoccupation with the life of the deceased.
10. Assume mannerisms or traits of their loved one.
11. Feel guilty or angry over things that happened or didn't happen in the relationship with the deceased.
12. Feel intensely angry at the loved one for leaving them.
13. Feel as though they need to take care of other people who seem uncomfortable around them by politely not talking about the feelings of loss.
14. Need to tell and retell and remember things about the loved one and experience of their death.
15. Feel their mood changes over the slightest things.
16. Cry at unexpected times.

Prepared by Riverside Hospital Hospice Unit