

SYMPTOMOLOGY OF GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT

- Shock/Denial
- Confusion
- Inability to problem solve
- Restlessness, inability to concentrate
- Loss of memory
- Inability to perform simple tasks
- Forgetfulness; leaving routine chores undone
- Apathy
- Fatigue
- Depression
 - Changes in sleeping habits
 - Changes in appetite
 - Loss of affect
- Symptoms of the illness of the deceased

Note: A bereaved person is at an extremely high risk of contracting a serious and or life threatening illness within the first year of bereavement. Be sure that person is checked out medically.

- Anger/Hostility
- Looking for someone to blame
- Adopting traits of behavior of the deceased
- Searching phenomenon
- Loss of sense of identity
- Increased/decreased libido
- Suicidal ideation

Interventions

- Encourage person to tell story – over and over and over again
- Affirm the person's experience
- Allow person to own their own guilt
- Reassure person that what they feel is normal. People often feel they are going crazy
- Pay attention to anniversaries: of the death, the day of diagnosis, birthdays, Christmas, and other memorable days

Adapted from an article published by St. Francis Center, Washington DC