

## ***WHAT DO WE NEED DURING GRIEF?***

### **TIME**

Time alone and time with others. Spend time with trusted friends who will listen when you need to talk. Months and years of time to feel and to understand the feelings that go along with loss.

### **REST, RELAXATION, EXERCISE, NOURISHMENT, DIVERSION**

You may need extra amounts of things you needed before. Hot baths, afternoon naps, trips, a “cause” to work for, to help others – any of these may give you a lift. Grief is a tiring process emotionally. You need to replenish yourself. Follow what feels healing to you and what connects you to the people and things you love. Indulge yourself without guilt.

### **FORGIVENESS**

Forgive yourself for all the things you believe you should have said or done as well as for those things you wish you had not said or done. At times it may be good to share these difficult feelings with a trusted friend and confidant who can verbalize forgiveness to you. If it would help you, write a letter to your deceased love one expressing these regrets and share the letter with someone you trust.

### **HOPE**

You may receive comfort from those who have experienced a similar loss. Just knowing some things that helped them, and realizing that they have adjusted and that time does help, may give you hope that some time in the future your grief will be less raw and painful.

### **CARING**

Try to allow yourself to accept the expressions of caring from others even when they may be uneasy and awkward. Helping a friend or relative also suffering from a loss may bring a feeling of closeness with that person. Sometimes we need to reach out to others and other times we need to accept the reaching out to us.

### **GOALS**

For a while, it will seem that much of life is without meaning. At times like these, small goals are helpful. Something to look forward to – playing tennis with a friend next week, a movie tomorrow night, a trip next month – helps get you through the immediate future. Living one day at a time is the best policy for now. At first, don’t be surprised if your enjoyment of these things isn’t the same. This is normal. Put off big decisions and life changes for now, there will be time for this a little later.

### **SMALL PLEASURES**

Do not underestimate the healing effects of small pleasures. Sunsets, a walk in the park, a favorite food – all are small steps toward regaining your pleasure in life itself. Enjoy what you can without guilt.

### **PERMISSION TO FEEL THE PAIN OVER AND OVER AGAIN**

Grieving is a cyclical process and just as we feel like we’re doing better, we go back to hurting deeply again. So sometimes after a period of feeling good, we find ourselves back in the old feelings of extreme sadness, despair, or anger. This will probably happen over and over. It happens because, as humans, we cannot take in all of the pain and the meaning of everything at once. So, we let it in a little at a time.

### **BE CAREFUL WITH DRUGS**

Even medication used to help people get through the initial periods of shock may prolong and delay the necessary process of grieving. We cannot prevent or cure grief. The only way OUT is THROUGH.