

Coping With Grief: How to Handle Your Emotions

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Traumatic events are a shock to the mind and body, and lead to a variety of emotions. Coping with grief takes time, help from others, and the knowledge that grieving isn't easy.

Grief is an emotion that takes time to deal with, but you can get through it and eventually move on. Grieving is a healthy response to tragedy, loss, and sadness, and it's important to allow yourself time to process your loss.

Coping With Grief: The Range of Emotions

Grief doesn't just happen after somebody has died. Any traumatic event, major life change, or significant loss --- a rape, a divorce, even major financial losses --- can cause grief. Throughout the grieving process, you may find yourself feeling: Guilty, in Disbelief or Denial, Sad, Depressed, Angry, Numb, Fearful

Coping With Grief: Accepting It

Don't try to run away from it; rather, face it head on. Acknowledge that something traumatic has happened and that it has had a profound effect on you. Give yourself time to grieve, but seek help when you need it.

Coping with Grief: Finding Help

You may want some time alone to process your thoughts and struggle with your grief, but it's important to recognize when you need help from others.

You might need more help if you find that, after some time, you are not able to get back to normal activities, you have trouble sleeping or eating, or have thoughts and feelings that interfere with everyday life.

A grief counselor or other therapist may be able to help you cope with grief, and finally start to move past it. Getting your grief out in the open is an important first step.

Talk about it with someone — a friend, family, a support group. Support groups can be wonderful. There, you can relate to other people who understand your situation, and you can get advice on what helped them through their grief. Of course, expressing your emotions doesn't have to be done out loud.....write about it. Rather than allowing thoughts to swirl in your head, put them down on paper. This is a great way of getting your feelings out, if you are shy or embarrassed about sharing them with another person.

Coping With Grief: Getting Closure

Closure is also an important part of coping with grief and may help you move through the grieving process.

Depending on the event, developing a ritual to say farewell may be helpful. We have funerals when someone dies and they are a healthy step on the road to acceptance. Rituals can be helpful for other traumas as well.

Coping With Grief: When Will I Feel Better?

There is no set timeline for grieving. And unfortunately, you may never completely get over your loss. But your loss shouldn't keep you from enjoying life, even with occasional periods of sadness.

Let yourself grieve as long as you need to. You do have to resume normal life, but know that it's going to take awhile.

Look for small signs that you're coping with grief and getting past it. Happy times signal that you're progressing. When you realize that you aren't always dwelling on the sadness or don't think about it as frequently as you once did, that means that you're finally moving on ... at your own pace.

Your mind and body need time to grieve after a traumatic event. If you deprive yourself of the grieving process, you may find that you have more difficulty accepting what has happened or that unresolved feelings and issues may flare up later on. Allow yourself to feel sad and even selfish; eventually you'll find yourself feeling better a little bit at a time.

Even though part of you may always feel sad about your loss, you'll find yourself happy and laughing again one day.