



DEFINING 'NORMAL' GRIEF

Everyone's grief journey is unique. However, there are natural responses that can happen in anybody. The following can happen in the grief process.

PHYSICAL SENSATIONS

- Tightness in the throat
- Heaviness in the chest
- Empty feeling in the stomach
- Lack of appetite
- Difficulty sleeping
- Dry mouth
- Shortness of breath, sighing
- Lack of energy, fatigue
- Nervous energy, restlessness
- Feelings of weakness
- Pounding heart
- Hypersensitivity to noise

THOUGHT PATTERNS

- Difficulty believing the loss is real
- Inability to concentrate
- Preoccupation with the deceased
- Difficulty with decision-making
- Loss of time perception
- Confusion

FEELINGS

- Sense of numbness
- Sadness and crying
- Anger, irritability
- Guilt, self-reproach
- Loneliness
- Fear, anxiety
- Helplessness
- Vulnerability
- Depression
- Relief
- Mood swings
- Intensity of all feelings

BEHAVIORS

- Wandering aimlessly, looking for the loved one
- Withdrawing from others
- Increased dependence
- Assuming mannerisms or traits of the loved one

One's grief journey may have just a few of the responses or many. There is no single path to follow. Someone may experience other responses not listed. If there is concern about a response contact a doctor.

If at any time there are suicide or suicidal thoughts If you or someone you know may act on suicidal feelings call 911 or local emergency number immediately
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)
to reach a trained counselor.