In addition to dying, we need to normalize the impact of grief

- Emotionally
- Physically
- Cognitively
- Spiritually

The cognitive impact (no, you're not “crazy”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confusion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor decision making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easily frustrated</td>
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“Cotton batting brain” – hard to process, it just feels odd

Memory issues – appointments, stuff to do, bills, mail, work

Loss of concentration

Low energy for empathy toward others (which is the opposite of what the caregiver believes they should experience, and the opposite of what those around them expect of them).

Missed appointments, bills unpaid, important days missed
### The emotional impact They have no patience. They aren’t supposed to

- **Hyperreactivity**
- Grief attacks
- Distancing/withdrawal
- Anger *(do not assume this one, or what the anger may be about)*
- Low frustration tolerance

- Loss of old friendships - ignored during illness, inappropriate expectations, criticism, and politics and Covid arguments
- GUILT: feeling relieved; acknowledging being tired; wanting to smile again.
- Sadness *(do not assume depression, but watch for it)*
- Focusing on others and their grief *(sometimes without intent)*

### The physical impact always a surprise!

- Exhaustion - *more* than “tired” - real fatigue in the clinical sense
- Sleep disruption - “hello, 2am!”
- Frequently sick, and with COVID possibly very sick
- Slow response time/poor coordination - tickets/accidents
- Appetite changes - “I love carbs!”
- Residual effects of long-term caregiving - no self-care, medical needs ignored, back/neck injuries
- Inflammatory process
Most griever at least question their faith

- Survivors who are questioning their faith following the death of a loved one are not best served by a faith-based group or provider - it's just not a good fit in that moment.
- There are specific concerns about who runs faith-based support groups, and their content and expectations.
- Grievers even with firm faith need space to question, and still be given room to return to it.
- Be cautious with an emphasis on it - even in a program that includes faith for recovery.