



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

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Confusion

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Poor decision making

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Easily frustrated

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"Cotton batting brain" – hard to process, it just feels odd

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

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Loss of concentration

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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).

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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 grievors 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
- Grievors 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

