

What Can I Do About My Grief?

Ideas for self-care activities and other tasks to help when you are grieving.

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with contributions from Agape Hospice

There is no right or wrong way to grieve, and no “one-size-fits-all” method, approach, activity or care. But identifying what you need, right now, and fulfilling that need, can be the best way to take good and gentle care during this time.

Mentally:

- Write a letter to the person who died, tell them exactly what you are going through.
 - This can help with the sense of "unfinished business".
- Tell other clearly what you want and need.
 - They won't always know to check in with you or how to support you, so try reaching out to them.
- Engage in informal and/or formal counseling.
 - Informal counseling would be talking with family members, friends, or a clergy person. Formal would be appointments with a professionally trained grief counselor. Relying on support is not a sign of weakness.
- Write lists of memories or qualities about the person who died. Write down things they said that you don't want to forget.
- Rest.

Emotionally:

- Keep a journal of your feelings and grief work
 - Looking back can help with a sense of progress and healing
- Don't avoid family days, but try to plan ahead of time how you will take care during time together
 - Consider what rituals or traditions you will do or would like to change, and how you will include the memory of the person who died.
- Be open and talk about your feelings.
- Allow yourself time and permission to cry.
 - Tears are a natural experience, and are as natural as laughter and just as healing. Tears can help release bottled up feelings such as sadness, anger, guilt, exhaustion, and loneliness.
- Attend a support group with other grieving individuals
- Meet yourself where you're at with your grief.

Physically:

- Eat healthy and get some exercise
 - To the extent that feels doable.
- Set small/doable goals at first, accomplish them.
 - With time, set bigger goals to accomplish.
- Get outside stimuli for a cathartic experience
 - For example a movie, play, music or books.
- Create a safe place and go there
 - Whether physically in person or in your mind through meditation
- Take care of someone or something outside of you, like a plant or a pet
- Do activities that you enjoy
 - If you feel stuck, try something new!
- Take a long shower or bath.
- Take care of yourself.
- Memorialize your loved one, whether in your home or somewhere else
- Visit nature

Spiritually:

- Visit a place of worship that feels safe and comforting to you
 - Visit at the frequency that makes sense for you and your needs - this could be daily, weekly, monthly... You can visit more than one place of worship
- Concentrate on breathing deep breaths
- Use prayer or meditation
- Try a guided meditation or visualization activity
- Talk out loud to the person who died
 - It has been scientifically proven to be helpful
- Visit with a spiritual healer/coach
- Read something that feels inspirational to you
- Listen to music that you find soothing or comforting
 - Or try to create music of your own!
- Do a random act of kindness

This isn't an all-inclusive list of the things that you can do to take care of you and honor your grief and the connection you have with the person you are grieving, but it can certainly help to give you some ideas.

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