



Appropriate Grief Expectations

- Your grief will take longer than most people think.
- Your grief will take more energy than you would have ever imagined.
- Your grief will involve many changes and be continually developing.
- Your grief will show itself in all spheres of your life: psychological, social, spiritual, and physical.
- You will grieve for many things both symbolic and tangible, not just death alone.
- Your grief will depend upon how you perceive the loss.
- You will grieve for what you have lost already and for what you have lost for the future.
- Your grief will involve a wide variety of feelings and reactions, not solely those that are generally thought of as grief, such as depression and sadness.
- The loss will resurrect old issues, feelings, and unresolved conflicts from the past.
- You will have some identity confusion as a result of this major loss and the fact that you are experiencing reactions that may be quite different for you.
- You may have a combination of anger and depression, such as irritability, frustration, annoyance, or tolerance.
- You will feel some anger and guilt, or at least some manifestation of these emotions.
- You may have a lack of self-concern.
- You may experience grief spasms, acute upsurges of grief that occur suddenly with no warning.
- You will have trouble thinking (memory, organization and intellectual processing) and making decisions.
- You may feel like you are going crazy.
- You may be obsessed with the death and preoccupied with the deceased.
- You may begin a search for meaning and may question your religion and/or philosophy of life.
- You may find yourself acting socially in ways that are different from before.
- You may find yourself having a number of physical reactions.

- Society will have unrealistic expectations about your mourning and may respond inappropriately to you.
- You may find that there are certain dates, events, and stimuli that bring upsurges of grief.
- Certain experiences later in life may resurrect intense grief for you temporarily.

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