



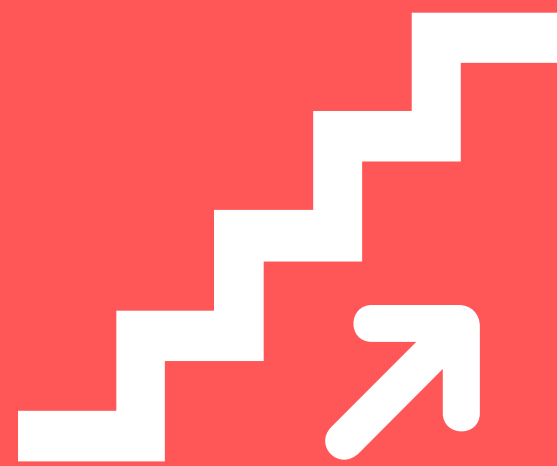
# WHAT IS GRIEF?

## WHY DO WE EXPERIENCE?



### WHAT IS GRIEF?

Grief is the natural response to loss of any form, more commonly associated with the loss of a loved one. In its simplest form it's an emotional suffering you experience when something or someone you love is taken away.



### THE PROCESS OF GRIEF

The process of grief is often seen in stages. There are five stages: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance.

**Denial:** the stage where you are still in shock, or disbelief, of what happened. **Anger:** the stage where you impulsively express intense emotions towards the world, stemming from your loss. **Bargaining:** the stage where you try to make a trade of something else, usually similar in value, to bring back the loss.

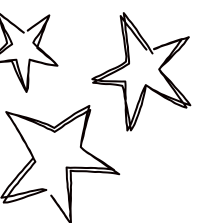
**Depression:** the stage where you feel strong intense feelings of sadness and lack of interest. **Acceptance:** the stage where you finally make peace with your loss and fully accept what happened

### COMMON SYMPTOMS OF GRIEF

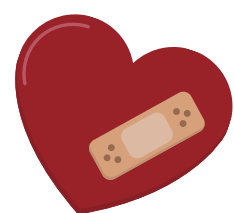
**Difficulty concentrating**, lack of interest make it hard for grieving people to concentrate. **Apathy**, a lack of interest, enthusiasm, or concern. **Anger**, this can be aimed at anyone or to themselves. **Guilt**, feeling like they could've done something to prevent an event or aid in something. **Sleep Disturbances**, difficulty sleeping due to other symptoms listed. **Loss of appetite**, the simple tasks can often take lots of energy to complete. **Withdrawals from other**, separating themselves from the family and friends. **Irritability**, expression intense emotion from small inconveniences. **Depression**, certain memories or places can trigger this. **Numbness**, total shut down of emotions. **Loneness**, results from separating themselves from the others. **Loss of Life's meaning**, they can feel like they lost a piece of their life or soul.

### WHAT CAN CAUSE GRIEF?

1. Death of a loved one
2. Death of a pet
3. A miscarriage
4. Divorce or relationship breakup
5. Loss of health
6. Loss of a friendship
7. Loss of a Cherished dream
8. Loss of Financial Stability
9. Loss of safety after a Trauma
10. Losing a Job
11. Retirement
12. A loved one's serious illness
13. Selling the family home



### WHY DO WE EXPERIENCE GRIEF?



Grief is an essential part of life and allows us to grow and develop as people. It will enable us to redirect the energy we spent loving someone, something, or some experience to something different and it opens our eyes to unforeseen change. If you do not grieve properly, you will find a hard time adjusting to life in the future. When we grieve, we do not forget the past, the past will always stay tied to us, whether we like it or not. That's the beauty of grief.



### WHY IS GRIEF SPECIAL?

The beauty of grief is that many people will experience it differently because we are all so different mentally, culturally, religiously, etc. There's no right way to grief or the right process for grief. In the section "The Process of Grief", many grieving people find themselves not going through the stages that are talked about. Grief is a personal process and sometimes the stages are a good helper and sometimes they aren't.

# GRIEF SUPPORT

## (1) Types of Greif

### 3 DIFFERENT TYPES

The grieving process usually starts after the loss of something important. However, these types of grief fall outside the expected symptoms and reactions as stereotypical grief.

#### Anticipatory Grief:

This is a form of grief that occurs before, what we call, conventional grief happens. This grief happens before a significant loss rather than after. Some examples are, a loved one being terminally ill, an aging pet, and nearing retirement. In this grief, a mixture of confusing emotions gets intertwined, particularly anger. This grief is often seen as a state of giving up and refusing to allow the griever to grieve the loss of something that has yet to occur. This type of grief is good to allow people to prepare for conventional grief and allows them to prepare.

#### Disenfranchised Grief:

This is a form of grief that occurs when your loss is devalued, stigmatized, or cannot be openly mourned. This type of grief forces people to suffer in silence and is one of the "don'ts" when it comes to aiding in grief. The people that go through this type of grief are invalidated and are left belittled because of their loss. Their loss will be deemed as "something that's not worth grieving over". If you suffer a miscarriage or lost someone to suicide, these deaths are often stigmatized. This form of grief is pretty open-ended because of its normality in our society. This often separates you from the blood relatives and denies you the same sympathy and understanding that they receive. This type of grief can make coming to terms with the loss more difficult as the navigation of the grieving process.

#### Complicated Grief:

This is a form of grief is an intense form of conventional grief. If a grieving person's grief is unable to ease over time, stays persistent, and keeps them from resuming their normal life and relationships, this is an indicator that it might have evolved into complicated grief. This usually happens after the death of a loved one, one of twelve conventional grief causes. This loss usually leaves the person in a state of bereavement. This may lead you to be unable to accept their loss, searching for them, intense longing, and feeling that life is not worth living. If this happens, seek help through your family and/or professional help.

Q: Why are these types of grief being mentioned?

A: It is always important to make people who are experiencing different types of anything feel represented. Normalizing unconventional things can help people feel heard, especially when it comes to a big issue like grief.

Next  
Issue:  
How to  
prepare  
for grief



# GRIEF SUPPORT

(2) The Do's and Don't with helping family and friends deal with grief

## Do: Be There for Them

Sometimes the simplest acts of kindness will help a grieving person. Just being there, next to them, allowing them to speak to you, and listening to what they have to say without a time limit is the best support you can give to a person. Letting them express themselves in a judgment-free zone and not care about what and how they are expressing themselves. Also checking up on them, gaining a mental check-up. With no expectations or pressure on their response, just making sure that they feel heard and cared for. Validate their feelings and make sure that they don't feel misheard. Allow them to process their grief, no matter what type is it, and allow them to heal at their own pace.

## Don't: Pressure people to talk

Talking is essential when it comes to the healing process of grief because it allows grieving people to process and allow them to hear their problems. But sometimes grieving people do not want to or cannot say anything and just want to sit in silence with their support group. Silence can be a good remedy for grieving people, it helps them process their thoughts in a quiet place. Supporting your loved ones with your company and allowing them to take it at their pace is the greatest help.

## Do: Hold your Tongue

We often want to say something very trite, but often we need to hold our tongue and not pressure them to feel a certain way. These phrases could irritate the grieving person because the impulsive tendencies that grief holds on a person are high. Say something more original or a simple "I'm so sorry" and allow them to cry.

## Don't: say Trite Reassurances

There is the urge to say things like "They are in a better place" are times, not the best idea. They mean well but often they are better left unsaid.

## Do: Always listen to their Story

Every grieving person has a story that goes along with their grief. Some are the story of the loved one that passed, some are the memory of the past, etc. Allowing them to repeat their story and asking for more details about it is simple but a profound help. This is a common method of healing for many grieving people and taking the time to listen is supporting their healing process.

## Don't: Talk about your own Experiences

It may seem like the best idea to do, showing that you understand their pain but oftentimes grieving people do not want to hear it. They could feel like their feelings or experiences are being undermined by you sharing your experiences. This may be good for some grievers. Understanding the griever is important before you share your own experiences.

## Final Thoughts...

After completing so much research on grief, I will say that my opinions on grief have changed so much. I never knew the complexities of grief and also didn't know that other things can cause grief beside the loss of a loved one. Grief has taken on many forms and can cause many changes in a person. The beauty of it is that it's always different among people and supporting your family and friends will always change on a need basis. We live in a world where expressing your emotion is a sign of weakness, but when it comes to grief, it's a sign of great strength.