

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FOR YOURSELF DURING THE GRIEF PROCESS

1. Your grief may take longer than most people think.
2. Your grief will probably take more energy than you would have ever imagined.
3. Your grief may involve many changes and be continually developing.
4. Your grief may show itself in all spheres of your life – psychological, social and physical. Response to a major loss is more global than we are usually prepared for.
5. Your grief may depend on how you perceive the loss.
6. You may grieve for many things both symbolic and tangible, not just the death alone.
7. You will probably grieve for what you have lost already and for what you have lost for the future.
8. Your grief may entail mourning not only for the actual person you lost but also for all of the hopes, dreams, and unfulfilled expectations you held for and with that person, and for the needs that will go unmet because of the loss.
9. Your grief will probably involve a wide variety of feelings and reactions, not solely those that are generally thought of as grief, such as depression and sadness.
10. The loss may resurrect old issues, feelings and unresolved conflicts from the past.
11. You may have some identity confusion as a result of this major loss and will probably experience reactions that may be quite different for you.
12. You may have a combination of anger and depression, such as irritability, frustration, annoyance or intolerance.
13. You may have a lack of self-concern.
14. You may experience grief spasms, acute upsurges of grief that occur suddenly with no warning.
15. You may have trouble thinking (memory, organization and intellectual processing) and making decisions.
16. You may feel like you are going crazy.
17. You may be obsessed with the death and preoccupied with the deceased.
18. You may begin a search for meaning and may question your religion and/or philosophy of life.
19. You may find yourself acting socially in ways that are different from before.
20. You may find yourself having a number of physical reactions.
21. Society will have unreal expectations about your mourning and may respond inappropriately to you.
22. You may find there are certain dates, events and stimuli (e.g. special song, locations, etc.) that bring upsurges of grief.
23. Certain experiences or events later in life may resurrect intense grief for you temporarily.