

Steps That Can Help With the Grieving Process

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1. Try to identify what it is that doesn't make sense to you about your loss.
2. Identify the emotions you feel during each day.
3. State the steps or actions you are taking to help you move ahead and overcome your loss.
4. Be sure you are sharing your loss and grief with others who can listen to you and support you during this time.
5. It may help to find a person who has experienced a similar loss.
6. Identify the positive characteristics and strengths of your life that have helped you before.
7. Spend time reading in the Psalms and when you pray, share your confusion, your feelings and your hopes with God.
8. Think about where you want to be in your life two years from now.
9. Become familiar with the stages of grief.
10. Remember that understanding your grief intellectually is not sufficient
11. Identify secondary losses and resolve any "unfinished business" with the lost person or thing.
12. Recognize that in addition to grieving for the lost person, the grief will need to be experienced for any dreams, expectations, or fantasies for the person.
13. When doing something unhealthy in the grieving process such as avoidance, alcohol, overmedication, and in general, lacking in coping skills, help give them other alternatives.
14. Provide helpful information about what they are now experiencing such as trying to help them understand the duration and process of grieving.
15. Help them understand that they will want to avoid the intensity of the pain and that their grief will effect all areas of life.
16. Help them find ways to replenish themselves spiritually, socially, and physically.
17. Help them with the practical problems following the loss such as helping to arrange for meals, transportation, financial consultation, and even retraining that may be needed for survival.
18. Finally, decide what you are willing and able to do for the person, realizing that you cannot do it all, nor should you.

APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS (REFLECTIVE STYLE)

1. Reflect on one of the earliest significant losses in your life. When did it happen? How old were you? Where was it? Who were the people involved? What actually happened?
2. What were your feelings at the time?
3. Which were positive and which were negative?
4. Did anyone give you suggestions or advice on how to handle the loss?
5. Can you remember any statements that have stayed with you through the years?
6. What did you learn then that may be hindering the way you cope with your loss today?
7. What did you learn about loss as a result of your early experiences?
8. List healthy things you will do to respond to losses in the future in reference to past losses and what you are coping with today.

The following is an example of a letter that you might write in response to sharing your grief and loss with friends: