



Death by Homicide

You will most likely feel many of the emotions associated with grief following any loss. Refer to the sheet on Loss and Grief.

Survivors of Homicide may experience more intense trauma and more complicated grief which is longer lasting, more intense, and often includes PTSD, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Be assured that whatever emotions you are feeling or experiencing are normal. Feelings are not right or wrong. They are just part of who we are. You may experience some or all of the below following a homicide:

Confused/Numb	Inability to understand or believe what happened to your loved one. Feeling dazed and disconnected
Anger/Rage	Anger toward the perpetrator may include feelings of revenge or may be directed at law enforcement or the legal system
Fear/Distrust	Preoccupation with the with your own safety and the safety of surviving loved ones if the perpetrator is not apprehended, if they are not convicted, or when they are released from prison
Guilt	You may feel you should have been able to protect your loved one, especially if they witnessed or were involved in a crime.
Regret	You may regret what was not said or done, or not being able to say goodbye
Anxiety	The murder may be relived over and over again when court proceedings begin
Isolation	Survivor grief may be minimized or overlooked if circumstances occur in marginalized populations and includes drug or gang related activities.
Intimidation	You may be questioned as a possible assailant and feel embarrassed and intimidated

As with all grief, physical symptoms and cognitive symptoms may manifest-headaches, stomach aches, d difficulty eating and sleeping, and focusing.

Suggestions for coping with Homicide loss and grief

Stay Connected	Talking and sharing what you are going through is very healing. Try to allow trusted friends, family and those who are also grieving to support you, just as you support them. Seek out a support group or online community designed for those coping with the homicide death of a loved one
Create a Ritual	Create a religious or non-religious ritual during which you can safely say goodbye to your loved one. Do something that honors them-planting a memorial tree, enlarging a photo and framing it, or put photos in an interactive photo frame to remember them, giving back to your community.



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Maintain a routine	A routine helps to regain a sense of control over your life. Get enough rest, eat properly, and exercise. Make healthy choices regarding alcohol, drugs, or other addictions. Try something new like a class or hobby. Find ways to relax, maybe with music or reading or quiet time. Treat yourself in ways that make you feel cared for and are distracting. Selfcare is very important.
Write	Keep a journal or write a letter to your loved one
Release	Don't try to fight the pain. Give yourself permission to feel your feelings and, if necessary, consider grief counseling or seek out trusted understanding friends to release your pent-up anger
Set Boundaries	Set boundaries with law enforcement, news media, family, and friends about what you will discuss and when
Take Time	Grieve in your own way and take all the time you need regardless how long that may be or what others tell you it should be. Grief has no timetable. Allow yourself good days and smiles even if they come and go.
Postpone	Avoid making any major decisions while grieving
Seek Help	Don't hesitate to seek professional help if you are having suicidal thoughts or just cannot function on a daily basis

Resources: For more resources, contact Rich at hello@thechurchofstluke.org

Survivors of Violent Loss - Excellent information and support including courtroom survival

[Survivors of Violent Loss \(svlp.org\)](http://svlp.org)

Parents of Murdered Children

<https://pomc.org>

San Diego County DA Victim Assistance Program

<https://www.sdcda.org/helping/victims/victim-services>

<https://tipsandiego.org/pdfs/VictimServices.pdf>

California Victim Compensation Board

<http://victims.ca.gov>

After a Shooting; Helping Your Child Heal

https://www.wendtcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/helping_young_children_heal_shooting.pdf



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Parents Guidelines for Helping Teens after and Attack

https://www.wendtcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/parents_guidelines_for_helping_teens_after_the_recent_attacks.pdf

For more resources, support or Catholic therapists, contact Rich at hello@thechurchofstluke.org