

REMINDERS FOR DEALING WITH YOUR LOSS

1. Recognize it.
For a while you may be numb. A death has happened. Don't try and avoid it.
2. You are not alone.
Loss is part of life—everyone experiences it.
3. Give yourself time to heal.
The greater the loss, the more time it may take. In many ways you are like a convalescent right now. Don't jump into new things too quickly.
4. Healing has its ups and downs.
Healing is not a smooth progression but has both leaps and backslides.
5. Take good care of you.
Get plenty of rest. Eat right. Stick to a schedule. Activity may give you a sense of order. You have experienced a significant loss. Treat yourself with care.
6. Seek comfort.
Accept support from others, in fact, seek it. It is human and courageous.
7. Reaffirm your beliefs.
Use your faith right now. Explore it. Lean on it. Grow.
8. Surround yourself with living things.
A new plant, a pet, a bowl of fresh fruit.
9. Keep decision making to a minimum.
Your judgment may be clouded for a while. You are going through change which requires most of your strength. Don't add to your load.
10. Weekends and holidays may be the worst.
Schedule activities you particularly enjoy during these times.
11. Allow yourself to be with the pain and mourn now.
Postponed grief can return later. Grief feelings will be expressed one way or another.
12. Mementos.
If these are helpful to you, use them. But if they bind you negatively to the past, get rid of them. Before you say hello, you must say good-bye.
13. It is okay to feel depressed and/or angry.

Everyone gets angry with loss and crying can be a cleansing release. Be with these feelings for a while; channel them appropriately and they will heal. Hit a pillow, run, scream when you are alone; play hard.

14. Suicide thoughts.

These may arise because they are symptoms of pain. They will pass. If you feel they are getting out of control, GET HELP AT ONCE.

15. You may feel vulnerable.

Your resistance may be low. Invite help only from those people you know to be trustworthy.

16. Beware of the rebound.

There is a hole left by your loss. Be careful about rushing in to fill it.

17. Beware of addictive activities.

Alcohol, drugs, food, and diversions can momentarily seem to help us escape our pain. We can become addicted and these never help us to heal.

18. Keep a journal.

Putting your thoughts and feelings on papers is a good way to express them. Journaling allows you to look back and see just how far you have come.

19. Heal at your own pace.

Comparing yourself to another grieving person may not be helpful. Each of us has our own time clock.

20. You WILL survive.

Begin to believe that you WILL heal.

21. Tomorrow will come.

Your life has had positive experiences. They will return.

22. Anticipate a positive outcome.

Pain is acceptable. It tells us we are hurting, but it is not a welcome long-term visitor.

23. Set a time limit on mourning.

Remaining distraught for a long time is not proof that you really love. Real love is life-supporting.

24. Growth is possible.

As you work through your sadness, you will learn that you can survive. The pain eventually lessens, healing does occur.

25. Be open to the past and begin to look to the future.

Give yourself opportunities to meet new people, places, ideas, and experiences. Experiment with new ways of filling the days, but don't throw out those which have been worthwhile to you. Small changes are the best at first.

26. Relapses occur.

There may be certain things that trigger sadness again. This is normal.

27. Begin to give of yourself.

Giving can bring you the greatest joy. It is healing.

28. Alone does not mean lonely.

Solitude can be creative, restful, and even fun. You can learn to enjoy it.

29. Celebrate your survival!

*Make the most of your choices. You can learn to take risks. Remember;
Loss=Pain=Growing*