



REACTIONS TO DEATH AND LOSS

Grief is a normal reaction to loss or the death of someone we love. Everyone grieves a bit differently, but there are common symptoms or reactions that many people experience. These include physical symptoms, feelings, behaviors and thoughts. Grief is an individual experience: even family members may find that they grieve differently. Understanding this range of responses may help to validate your own grief experience, and increase your empathy and support for others.

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Headaches	Dry Mouth	Stomach Pain
Constipation	Urinary Frequency	Shaking
Shortness of Breath	Blurred Vision	Weight Gain/Weight Loss
Body Pain	Lack of Energy	Tightness in Chest or Throat
Weakness/Fatigue	Feel Outside of Self	Menstruation Changes
Previous Conditions May Flare-Up (Hypertension, Asthma, Arthritis, Back Pain, etc.)		

FEELINGS

Sadness	Loneliness	Emptiness	Shock	Helplessness
Anxiety	Yearning	Guilt	Hurt	Resentment
Phobias	Disbelief	Anger	Self-Blame	Irritability
Embarrassment	Confusion	Envy	Bitterness	Despair
Relief	Missing	Panic	Numbness	Depression
Frustration	Lack of Control	Lowered Self-Esteem		

BEHAVIORS

Avoidance of Things	Sleep Disturbances	Dreams
Social Withdrawal	Difficulty Concentrating	Crying
Chemical Use/Abuse	Absent-Minded	Changes in Eating Habits
Decreased Work Productivity	Treasuring Objects	Hostility or Aggression
Loss of Interest in World Events		Loss of Interest in Social Activities

THOUGHTS

Preoccupation with Person/Thing	Personal Death Awareness
Sense of Presence	Thoughts of Suicide
Hallucinations	"It's Not Real"
"I Feel Numb"	"Why?"
"I Should Have Done More"	"What's Going to Happen to Me?"
"I Think I'm Going Crazy"	"I Can't Concentrate"
"I'll Never Get Over It"	"I Wish It Would Have Been Me"
"I Feel So Scared and Lonely"	"I Can't Handle Things"