WHAT NOT TO DO

- Don’t make huge life changes impulsively
- Don’t numb yourself with alcohol or drugs
- Don’t isolate yourself from others
- Don’t expect difficult feelings to disappear quickly
- Don’t be hard on yourself, we all cope in different ways

How Counseling Can Help

Grief can disrupt your daily life, causing problems with sleep, appetite, motivation or concentration. You may be despondent and have no interest in work or socializing.

Counseling can help you make sense of thoughts and reactions to grief and develop a coping strategy. Some worry that sharing these thoughts may be a burden on friends and family. If so, it may be easier to share feelings of anger, guilt, and sadness with a professional. Grief is difficult to process, but it can be overcome.

People experiencing loss can sometimes feel such despair that they contemplate suicide. If you have any such thoughts, please contact a mental health professional, such as CAPS (215-898-7021).

RESOURCES

CAPS
(including nights/weekends to reach CAPS counselor on call)
215-898-7021

OFFICE OF THE CHAPLAIN
215-898-8456

HELP LINE
215-898-HELP (4357)

RAP LINE
(Reach A Peer, 9 PM - 1AM)
215-573-2RAP (2727)

SPECIAL SERVICES
215-898-6600

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE
215-746-3535

OFFICE OF THE VICE PROVOST FOR UNIVERSITY LIFE/
STUDENT INTERVENTION SERVICES
215-898-6081

WEINGARTEN LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER
215-573-9235

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

University of Pennsylvania

215-898-7021
(including nights/weekends to reach CAPS counselor on call)

3624 Market Street, First Floor West
Philadelphia, PA 19104

www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps
ALL PEOPLE EXPERIENCE GRIEF DIFFERENTLY, BUT SOME OF THE TYPICAL FEELINGS INCLUDE:

A sudden, unexpected death of someone you know can be an intense experience. You may feel puzzled, shocked, angry, sad. You might want to retreat, and/or avoid class, friends, family, and social activities. Some students sleep or eat when distressed, others can’t rest and have no appetite.

Grief can result in a wave of overwhelming emotions and coping can be slow and painful. People process grief in different ways. Some cry and talk, others hold it in. Grief must be worked through to get to a place of healthy acceptance, remembrance, and progressing with your life.

GRIEF PROCESS

PRAYER, MEMORIAL SERVICES, FAMILY TRADITIONS, SPEAKING WITH RESPECTED COMMUNITY LEADERS AND OTHER CULTURAL RITUALS CAN HELP YOU ACKNOWLEDGE, EXPRESS, AND COPE WITH GRIEF AND LOSS. YOU MAY FIND COMFORT IN SHARING YOUR SORROW AND FEEL LESS ALONE WHILE RECEIVING OTHERS’ COMFORT AND SUPPORT. PARTICIPATING IN THESE RITUALS CAN HELP YOU FIND MEANING IN LIFE AND DEATH AND ACCEPT YOUR LOSS.

SHARING YOUR LOSS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS MAY BRING A NEW SENSE OF CONNECTION AND GRADUAL DIMINISHING OF THE PAIN. TALKING, SHARING, CRYING, AND REMEMBERING ARE ALL IMPORTANT WAYS OF RECOVERING FROM GRIEF.

MAINTAINING A SCHEDULE EVEN WHEN YOU DO NOT FEEL LIKE IT CAN PROVIDE NECESSARY STRUCTURE AND NORMALCY AS YOU PROCESS YOUR GRIEF.

TALKING ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS CAN BE EXTREMELY POWERFUL. WRITING, MUSIC, AND ART MAY ALSO HELP YOU EXPRESS YOURSELF AND HEAL.

COMMEMORATING BIRTHDAYS OR ANNIVERSARIES ARE AN IMPORTANT WAY TO HONOR AND REMAIN CONNECTED WITH THOSE YOU LOVED AND LOST. RITUALS CAN CREATE TOGETHERNESS IN A GROUP WITH SHARED PAIN AND MEMORIES.