COPING with GRIEF & LOSS

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES
University of Pennsylvania

215-898-7021
(branches/schools to reach CAPS counselor on duty)

3624 MARKET STREET, FIRST FLOOR WEST
Philadelphia, PA 19104

MON | TUE | WED | THURS | FRI | SAT | SUN
9 am - 5 pm | 9 am - 5 pm | 9 am - 5 pm | 9 am - 7 pm | 9 am - 5 pm | 9 am - 3 pm

www.upenn.edu/caps

ALL PEOPLE EXPERIENCE GRIEF DIFFERENTLY, BUT SOME OF THE TYPICAL FEELINGS INCLUDE:

- A sudden, unexpected death of someone you love can be an intense experience. You may feel puzzled, shocked, angry, sad. You might want to scream, and lose all friends, family, and social activities. Some outlines your sleep or when you feel when others can’t rest and have no appetite. Grief can reach a state of overwhelming emotions and crying can be slow and painful. People process grief in different ways. Some cry and talk, while others hold it. Grief must be worked through to get to a place of healthy acceptance, remembrance, and forgetting with your life.

DENIAL AND SHOCK
DEATH CAN BE DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT. YOU MAY REFUSE TO BELIEVE IT AND DON’T WANT TO DISCUSS WITH ANYONE.

ANGER
SOMETIMES GRIEF IS MIXED WITH RAGE. YOU MAY FEEL ANGRY AT THE UNFAIRNESS OF LIFE OR EVEN AT THE PERSON WHO DIED.

BARGAINING
SOME PEOPLE MAY BARGAIN SPIRITUALLY, OFFERING TO TRADE A POSSESSION OR PART OF THEIR LIFE TO BRING BACK A LOVED ONE.

GUILT
SOMETIMES PEOPLE FEEL GUILTY FOR SURVIVING, FOR MOVING ON, OR FOR MAKING NEW CONNECTIONS AND MEMORY AFTER A LOSS.

DEPRESSION
LOSS CAN LEAD TO MOOD FLUCTUATIONS, SADNESS, DESPAIR, AND DIFFICULTY FUNCTIONING AS USUAL.

LONELINESS
THE DEATH OF SOMEONE close CAN LEAVE YOU FEELING EMOTIONAL THROUGHOUT THE ROUTINE OF YOUR DAILY LIFE.

ACCEPTANCE
EVENTUALLY, THE REALITY OF LOSS LEADS TO ACCEPTANCE, SLOWLY REBUILDING CONNECTIONS, CREATING NEW GOALS AND RESUMING YOUR ROUTINES WILL HELP YOU GROW AND LEARN.

HOPE
WITH TIME, SUPPORT, AND RESILIENCE, MOST PEOPLE REACH A STAGE WHERE THEY CAN BALANCE PAINFUL MEMORIES OF THEIR LOSS WITH HOPE AND ANTICIPATION FOR THE FUTURE.

HELPING YOURSELF GET THROUGH THE GRIEF PROCESS

PRAYING, MEDITATION, SELF-REFLECTION, SPEAKING WITH SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE AND OTHER線上 CULTURAL RITUALS CAN HELP YOU ACKNOWLEDGE, ACCEP TION, AND GROW WITH GRIEF AND LOSS. YOU MAY WANT TO EXPLORE YOUR OWN RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OR FIND A SUPPORT GROUP. THESE GROUPS CAN PROVIDE A SPACE TO SHARE YOUR FEELINGS AND TOPICS WITH OTHERS VIA COUNSELING OR SUPPORT GROUPS.

PARTICIPATING IN SOCIAL/CULTURAL RITUALS

Denial, anger, and guilt are normal reactions to grief. However, these feelings can be overwhelming and can prevent you from moving forward. It is important to seek support from friends, family, or a professional counselor to help you navigate through these emotions.

SHARING YOUR FEELINGS
sharing your feelings with others can be helpful. Talking about your feelings can reduce the intensity of the pain. When you share your feelings, you may feel relieved and less alone.

STICKING TO A ROUTINE

M AINTAINING A SCHEDULE EVEN WHEN YOU DON’T FEEL LIKE IT CAN PROVIDE A ROUTINE, STRUCTURE, AND PREDICTABILITY IN YOUR LIFE.

EXpressing your Feelings

talking about your feelings can be extremely powerful. Writing, music, art, or any other activity that helps you express yourself and heal.

Remembering and Honoring your Loved One

COMMUNICATING the emotional journey of your loved one can be a difficult task, but it can be done through listening, empathy, and honesty.

RESOURCES

Penn

CAPS (Including nights/weekends to reach CAPS counselor at night)
215-898-7021

Office of the Chaplain
215-898-8456

Help Line
215-898-HELP (4357)

RAP Line
(Reach A Peer, 9PM – 1AM)
215-573-2691 (2727)

Special Services
215-898-6400

Student Health Service
215-746-3553

Office of the Vice President for University Life/Student Interventions Services
215-898-6081

Wendgarten Learning Resources Center
215-573-9235

Grief can disrupt your daily life, causing problems with sleep, appetite, motivation or concentration. You may be disengaged 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. Grief can be a long process, and it may be easier to share feelings with a professional than with friends or family. Counseling can provide a safe space to process your emotions and develop strategies to cope with grief.

People experiencing grief can sometimes feel sadder than others do. It is important to remember that grief can be a complex process, and it takes time to heal.

To learn more about grief counseling, please contact a mental health professional, such as CAPS (215-898-7021).