

EASY READING BROCHURE

Grieving After a Loss

**An information brochure for adults
with low English literacy**



EASY READING



Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research is a leading-edge, registered not-for-profit charitable research and service organization that has been building the capacity of persons with disabilities and enriching communities through leadership, innovation and collaboration since 1969. Affiliated with the University of Calgary we are recognized as a leader in the field of disability services and research.

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What is an Easy Reading Brochure?

Plain language is a way of writing so that more people can understand the information. There are some things we do with plain language that you would not see out-side of plain language.

For example, words like understand and outside, used in the first paragraph, have a - in the middle. This helps to make a longer word that is made of more words, easier to read.

We also use things like square brackets and definitions:

Square Brackets []

Some-times you will see square brackets, like these [], beside a word. The letters between the brackets are there to help people learn how to say the word.

Definition Box

Some words you see will have a box around the word like "Definition Box" to the left. Beside each box, there will be a paragraph that has an line around it, like this one. This is to help people learn what the word means.

In 2009, the life expectancy of men was 79 years old and women 83 years old.

- Statistics Canada

You will learn about:

- **1** **What is Grief or Grieving?**
 - **2** **What Can Happen When You Grieve?**
 - **3** **Things that Affect How Much You Grieve**
 - **4** **How do People Deal with Grief and Loss?**
 - **R** **Resources**
-

**Grieving can help us heal
and find ways to have a
continued connection
with the deceased.**

Dr. Ann Laverty, Alberta Health Services

1**What is Grief or Grieving?**

▶ **Grieving is natural**

▶ **People can grieve over many things like the death of a loved one or the loss of a pet**

▶ **Every-one grieves in their own way**

Grief

How you get used to the change in your life after a loss.

Grief can happen when you lose some-one or some-thing that means a lot to you.

This can be hard to do.

You may have strong or mild feelings.

Grief is different for every-one.

There is no right or wrong way to grieve.

Each person will do different things to help themself.

Grief is normal and natural.



What Do Some People Grieve Over?

A person can grieve over a loss of any-thing that is important to them.

This means they may grieve:

- A death of some-one they care about
 - This can be a friend, family member, spouse [spow-ss], girl-friend or boy-friend, or any-one else they may know
- The death of a pet
- The end of a relationship with a friend, family member, spouse, girl-friend or boy-friend
- The loss of a job
- The loss of property
 - This can be a home or some-thing else that means a lot to them
- The loss of an ability or skill because you were hurt or sick

For the rest of this brochure, we will talk about the loss of a person. This can be:

- A death
- The end of a relationship

But remember that how you deal with any loss will be like how you deal with the loss of a person.



② What Can Happen When You Grieve?

Every-one grieves in different ways.

There are 3 common ways people grieve.

Some-one might feel these things at different times when they grieve.

▶ There are 3 common ways people grieve:

- Numbness and shock
- A loss of control
- Acceptance over your loss

1. Numbness [num-ness] and Shock

This is when you do not feel a lot of feelings.

You do not feel sad or happy.

It might feel like you are in a dream.

You may feel alone and cut off from other people.

When you feel like this you are in shock.

Shock

You can not believe that you have had a loss.

Some people feel this way after they hear about a loss.

Some-one else may not show their feelings.

2. Out of Control and Out of Order

You may have a lot of feelings all at once. Some-times you may feel:

- Like there is no hope
- Guilt [gill-tt]
- Sad
- Mad

You may also feel like there is too much for you to do. And you do not know where to start.

Soon, it may seem like you have lost control over how you feel.

This may be because you feel so much.

You may:

- Start to think of how things were before you lost your loved one
- Wonder if you could have stopped the loss

This is a very hard part of grief.

Your feelings will not be as strong as time goes on.

You will start to feel more in control.

You may not think of your loss as often.



3. Acceptance

There will come a time when you accept that the loss has happened.

You will start to change your life to adapt to this loss.

But you will never forget how hurt you were.

You will never forget the person.

There will be times that some-thing will remind you of that person.

This could be any-thing:

- A picture
- A song
- A place
- A life event like a birthday or wedding
- Some-thing the person owned like a ring

When this happens, you may feel sad again.

This is normal.



③ Things that Affect How Much You Grieve

Different things can change how strong your grief is.

Here are some things that may affect how you grieve.

▶ Different things affect how you grieve

▶ How well you knew the person can affect how much you grieve

1. How Did You Lose This Person?

If it was a surprise, it may be harder for you to accept the loss.

If you knew it was going to happen, your grief may not be as hard.

2. How Close Were You to This Person?

If this person was a big part of your life, you may grieve more.

If this person was not a big part of your life, you may grieve less.

3. How Do You Usually Deal with Problems?

If you normally recover fast from problems, you may do the same with this.

If it is hard for you to deal with some problems, it may be hard for you to deal with a loss.

Every one is different.

Every one will do different things.

4. What Has Happened to You in the Past?

If you have had a similar loss, it will help you to know how you will react to this loss.

You will find you have the same feelings as before.

This may help you deal with your loss now.

5. Do You Have Support from Other People?

You may want support from other people. But you may not want support now.

Your friends, family, and other people you trust can help you through your grief.

Let them know when it is ok to talk about your loss and when it is not ok.



④ **How do People Deal with Grief and Loss?**

People can deal with their grief in different ways. Here are some-things that some people do.

1. Funerals

A funeral is some-thing people often do when a loved-one has died.

It helps people to deal with a loss. A funeral:

- May help you accept that the loss has happened
- Lets you say good-bye to the person

2. Express Yourself

Do not hide how you feel. This only makes things harder.

- It is good to let yourself cry
- It is good to talk about how you feel
- You can do other things, like art, to show how you feel



3. Social Support

Talk with your friends and family if you think you need to.

This is healthy and good for you.

If you do not want to talk to your friends or family about your loss, you can go to group meetings.

Group meeting

A group of people meet to talk about their grief.



Group meetings can help you grieve. In this case, it would be for people who have lost someone.

4. Take Care of Your Body

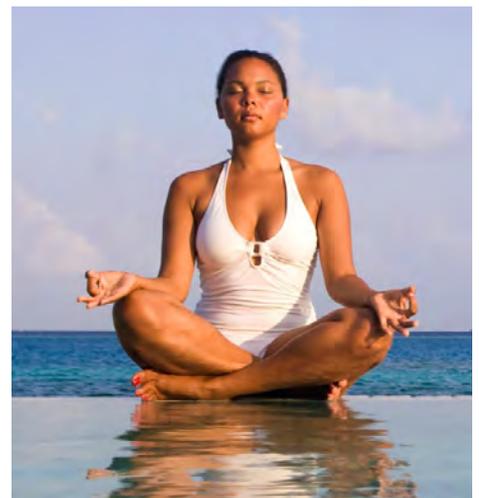
Some-times when people grieve, they forget to take care of their bodies.

This means they may not:

- Eat
- Exercise
- Bathe
- Brush their teeth or hair

It is important to take care of your body.

You may not want to, but you need to stay healthy.



5. Take Your Time

Grief is hard for every-one.

- One person may grieve for 1 month
- Another person may grieve for 1 year

There is nothing wrong with how much time you take to grieve. Do not rush through your grief.

Do not let others rush you.

Take your time and work through it in your own way.

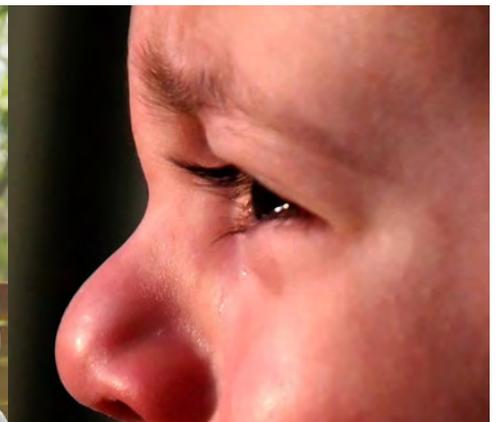
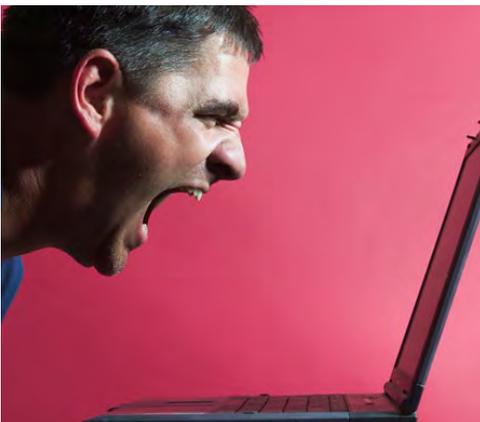
Other people may tell you that you should not feel angry or sad.

Do not tell yourself how you should feel.

No one can tell you how to feel.

- It is ok to be angry
- It is ok to be sad
- It is ok to cry

There is no normal way to grieve.



Back to Your Changed Life

When your grief is not as bad, you will start to do things you like again.

You may want to try some-thing new.

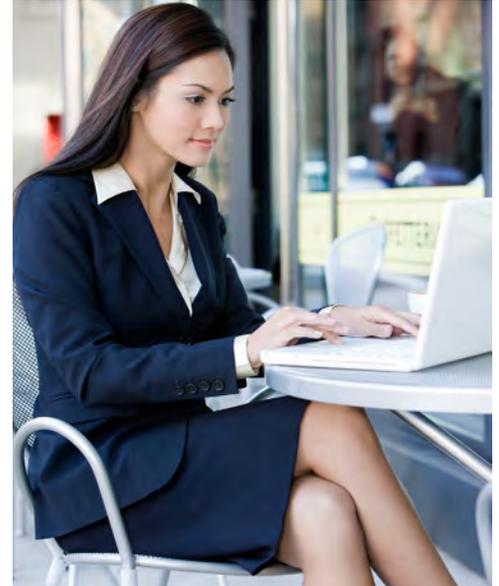
This is a good thing.

When you start to do things you like again, you will start to move on with your life.

Remember, you will never forget your loved one.

You will never forget how you feel now.

But how you feel now will not last forever.

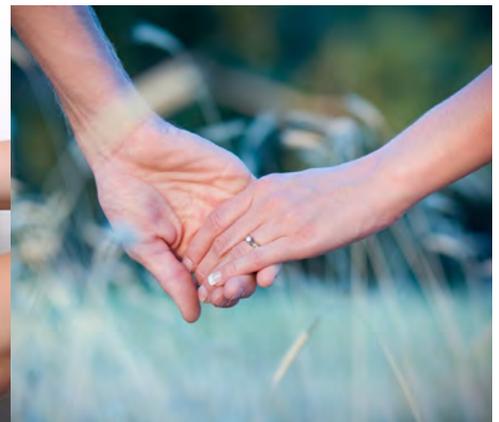


Where Can I Go if I Need Help?

You may feel like your grief is too much for you to deal with.

It is ok to look for help from different places.

It is ok to need help.



**You don't go around
grieving all the time, but
the grief is still there and
always will be.**

- Nigella Lawson

Resources



Support

Here is a list of some places you can go in Calgary to get help if you are experiencing grief.

Alberta Health Services: Grief Support Program

- Phone: 403-955-8011
- Web-site: www.albertahealthservices.ca/4072.asp

The Grief Support Program has group meetings and private counseling [kown-sell-ing].

They can help you through the grieving process.

Canadian Mental Health Association

- Address: Suite 400 — 105, 12 Avenue SE
- Phone: 403-297-1700
- Web-site: www.calgary.cmha.ca/

This place can help you deal with:

- Your grief
- Many other problems

Hospice Calgary

There are 2 centres in Calgary:

- Hospice Calgary Outreach and Education Centre
 - Address: 1245, 70 Avenue SE
 - Phone: 403-263-4525
 - Web-site: www.hospicecalgary.com/home
- Hospice Calgary Rosedale Hospice
 - Address: 920, 7A Street NW
 - Phone: 403-284-5195
 - Web-site: www.hospicecalgary.com/home

This place can help:

- People who know some-one close to them who has cancer or who has died of cancer
- You learn about what has happened and how this death has affected you



Psychologist

Psychologist
[sigh-call-o-gist]

A person who helps people with their mental health

There is a website with a list of psychologists.

- Web-site: www.psychologysbest.ca/GriefAndLoss.html

Psychologists can help people:

- Deal with grief
- With some of their problems in life

**Grief is the price we pay
for love.**

- Queen Elizabeth II

Please think of the environment when printing this brochure.

Please print double sided.

Grieving After a Loss is an information brochure developed for adults with low English literacy created by Vecova, located in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

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