

Strategies for Coping with Grief

1. Acknowledge your emotions

- **Embrace the process**

Grief is a journey, not a destination. Allow yourself to feel a range of emotions, including sadness, anger, guilt, and numbness. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Don't let anyone tell you how to feel, and don't tell yourself how to feel either. It can be a long process, so be patient with yourself.

- **Don't suppress emotions**

Suppressing grief can hinder the healing process.

- **Find healthy outlets for your emotions**

Finding ways to express your feelings of loss can be helpful. If you feel the need to cry, do it. Some people express their grief through talking. Others find it helpful to spend time alone. Some prefer to engage in creative activities like writing or painting. Some find it helpful to schedule a regular time to grieve so that grief is not pushed into the background where it can remain unresolved.

- **Self-compassion**

Be kind to yourself during this difficult time.

2. Take care of yourself

- **Grief is a process**

Everyone is different. Allow yourself the time and space you need to heal. It's normal to have good days and bad days. Don't beat yourself up for feeling a certain way or for not being able to cope as you expect.

- **Practice self-care**

Take care of your physical and emotional well-being. This can include healthy eating, getting enough sleep, and engaging in activities that bring you joy and help you stay connected to the world. Avoid excessive intake of alcohol or drugs as these can worsen grief symptoms.

- **Maintain a routine**

A daily routine that includes familiar activities and habits can provide comfort and structure and a sense of control during difficult times.

- **Recognize your triggers**

Be aware that particular locations, activities, anniversaries, holidays, and other events may evoke strong emotions. Plan ahead for these triggers and take steps to support yourself.

3. Seek support

- **Reach out to loved ones**

Don't be afraid to ask for help. Stay connected. Talking to family and friends about your feelings, especially those who are good listeners, can be incredibly helpful.

- **Join a grief support group**

Sharing experiences with others who have gone through similar losses can be comforting.

- **Online support forums**

Connect with others online for peer support.

4. Seek professional help if required

- **If grief is interfering with your daily life**

Consider professional help from a therapist or grief counsellor.

- **If your symptoms haven't improved after six months**

Reach out to a mental health professional.

- **If you feel suicidal or have thoughts of harming yourself or others**

LIFELINE: 13 11 14

GRIEFLINE: 1300 845 745

BEYOND BLUE: 1300 22 4636

5. Remember the one you have lost

- **Share memories**

Talking about happy memories can help preserve the connection with the person you lost.

- **Create memorials**

This can be a way to honour the person and acknowledge their impact on your life.

- **Engage in activities that were meaningful to them**

This can help you feel connected to their legacy.