



FUNERAL CHAPEL

Dedicated To Those We Serve

Grief & Bereavement

Grief

Grief is how one reacts to a loss. Grief reactions may be experienced in response to physical losses, such as a death or in the response to symbolic or social losses such as divorce or loss of a job. All loss involves the absence of someone loved or something that fulfills a significant need in one's life.

Grief may be experienced in the combination of mental/emotional, physical, or social reaction. Mental/emotional reactions can include anger, guilt, anxiety, sadness, and despair. Physical reactions can include sleeping problems, changes in appetite, physical problems, or illness. Social reactions can include feelings about taking care of others in the family, returning to work, or differences in social situations.

There is no right or wrong way to grieve after a significant loss. Most discover how to eventually move on with life, even though the grief experience is a difficult and trying time.

Coping styles depend on one's personality and their relationship with the person who has died. This experience can also be affected by one's cultural and religious background, coping skills, mental history, and their support system. Taking care of yourself, accessing the support of friends and family can help a person get through difficult times.

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Bereavement

Bereavement is the period after a loss during which grief is experienced. The time spent in a period of bereavement depends on how attached the person was to the person who died and how much time was spent anticipating the loss. Some view the process of bereavement as having four phases:

(1) Shock and numbness: Usually occurring soon after a death, this is evident when the person finds it difficult to believe the death has occurred; is feeling stunned and numb;

(2) Yearning and searching: As shock and numbness recede, there remains the tendency to “forget” the person has died. Perhaps one catches a glimpse of somebody who reminds them of the deceased, or you expect them to be there when you first arrive home;

(3) Disorganization and despair: As the reality of the absence of the person who died settles in, it is common to feel depressed and find it difficult to think about the future. You may be easily distracted, or have difficulty concentrating and focusing on any one task;

(4) Reorganization: As one slowly makes the adjustment to all the ways in his or her life that have changed as a result of the loss, a sense of reorganization and renewal begins to evolve. Life is forever changed after a significant loss, but you slowly learn how the different aspects of your life become re-prioritized as you “pick up the pieces” and begin to move on. It is not that you forget about the person who died, but you have begun to learn how to live with this knowledge.