



# Coping with Grief

No matter the circumstance, it's hard to move forward after losing someone important to you. Whether you have lost a friend, family member or colleague, allowing yourself to grieve can help you deal with the loss in a healthy way.

Everyone grieves in different ways. Some common reactions you may experience include:

- Disbelief
- Sadness
- Guilt
- Fear
- Memories of a past loss
- Difficulty focusing
- Not wanting to be around others
- Overeating or not wanting to eat
- Throwing yourself into work
- Feeling physically ill

When faced with grief, you may want to sleep more, increase your use of alcohol or drugs, or numb your pain in some other way. These behaviors can harm your health both directly and indirectly by interfering with chemicals in your brain that help you heal emotionally. Instead, coping with the loss in a healthy way can help you heal.

Remember, just as a physical wound needs time to heal, recovering emotionally from loss can take time. Grieving is not a tidy process,

and sometimes it can feel like you're taking one step forward, two steps back. Some days, you may crave the company of your friends and family. Other days, you may want to be alone. In one day, you may find yourself laughing with friends and then crying when you hear a song that reminds you of your loss.

During a hard time, these tips may help:

- Expect a range of reactions. This is normal.
- Feel free to express your emotions. Try not to push your grief away or be afraid of feeling vulnerable.
- Talking with a friend or family member about your feelings may comfort you. Joining a support group may also help. Having someone to talk to can be especially helpful during special occasions or when something unexpected reminds you of your loss.
- Acknowledge the person's life in a way that feels meaningful for you. For example, you may want to donate time or money to a special cause or grow a small garden to honor your friend or family member.

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- Allow yourself to feel positive emotions. Remind yourself of people and things in your life that you appreciate.
- When you're feeling strong emotions, exercise may help. Try going for a walk, a run or a swim.
- Channel your emotions into a hobby or special project. Gardening, painting or other activities can be calming and help you work through your grief.

### *Call your EAP*

Remember, your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is here for you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you need help, call your EAP using your company's toll-free access number (listed to the right). We'll connect or refer you to a professional who can help. If you have thoughts of hurting yourself or others, call your EAP or go to the hospital immediately.

### *Online member services*

Online resources are also available anytime. Visit MHN's member website for articles, tips and tools that can help you cope. Use the company code on this page to register.

### *Need help?*

**Call toll-free, 24 hours a day,  
seven days a week:**

**1-866-EAP-4SOC | 1-866-327-4762**

TTY/TDD callers, please dial 1-800-327-0801.

**Or visit us at: [eap4soc.mhn.com](http://eap4soc.mhn.com)  
and register with the company  
code: soc**