

GRIEF & GRIEVING ✓CHECKLIST

This list of suggestions is not intended to diagnose, but to bring public awareness to a widespread & important issue affecting our society. As a society, we are not skilled at dealing with strong emotions, such as grief. The mentality of 'pull yourself up by the boot straps', or avoiding the 'three human needs after a loss' are both counterproductive. Many try to avoid pain by going around their grief. It is natural to want to avoid pain, but by avoiding mourning & healing, the effects of griefs are prolonged.

Symptoms:

People who are grieving may have:

- Inability to Sleep, or anxiety attacks
- Crying Spells, Grief Bursts
- Lack of productivity at work.
- Deep Sadness, Loss of appetite,
- Depressed mood & emotional outbursts
- Loss of Interest in once loved activities
- Less common symptoms: Vivid Dreams of mimicking behavior/mannerisms of, or hearing/seeing of deceased. If feeling overwhelmed by these experiences, talk to a doctor, mental health or trusted professional experienced in grief counseling.

When to seek professional advice:

You should see a doctor or mental health professional when:

- You become very depressed
- You can't deal with or feel overwhelmed by grief
- You have thoughts of suicide, hurting yourself or others.
- You are using drugs, prescriptions, or alcohol-excessively
- You have long-term depression that interferes with daily life
- You experience prolonged loss of sleep or anxiety

Prevention & Treatment

Grief should not be prevented because it is a healthy response to loss. Instead, it should be respected. Family and friends can offer emotional support during the grieving process. Joining a support group where members share common experiences and problems and help relieve the stress from grieving, especially if you have lost a child, spouse, prolonged illness, or loss due to suicide.

Three human needs after a loss

One, a gathering, where all who love the deceased can express their grief. This Gathering does not need to be formal, but it does need structure and focus. 'When words are inadequate, we use ceremony', a celebration of life express that which cannot be spoken, but is deeply felt.

Two, visitation. Visit your departed loved one in a state of rest & peace, where a positive memory picture is created. 'You have to say hello, before you can say goodbye'. Meeting the reality of a loss face to face, doesn't increase pain, it begins mourning. Mourning is how we reconcile our grief.

Three, memorialization. All cultures & people see value in honoring those who are important, many do this in stone. How many colleges, libraries, parks, or world heritage sites, are in remembrance of someone who effected society? You may not see your impact, but are you a mother, father, brother, or sister? These are 'titles of love', honoring this love in stone is only natural. These three psychologically felt needs promote healing & mourning, and if circumvented, may extend intense grief.

The only way to avoid grief, is to have never loved; grief is love, come full circle.

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