

EXPERIENCING GRIEF

"normal reactions to pain & suffering"

Thoughts

- disbelief
- confusion
- preoccupation with the death & the deceased
- sense of presence
- lack of concentration
- lack of ability to organize & process intellectually
- trouble remembering
- difficulty making decisions

Feelings

- shock, numbness
- denial, disbelief
- anxiety, fear, panic
- loss, emptiness
- loneliness
- sadness, depression
- loss of pleasure
- hurt, frustration
- helplessness
- hopelessness
- guilt, regret
- disorganization
- confusion
- relief, emancipation
- reconciliation
- re-establishment
- feeling crazy
- explosive emotions:
anger, hate, resentment,
jealousy

Behaviors

- absent-minded behavior
- crying and sobbing
- restlessness
- inability to sit still
- trying to "stay busy"
- visiting places or carrying
- treasuring objects
- avoiding reminders
- experiencing "grief bursts"
- dreams of the deceased



Relational Changes

- ___ social withdrawal
- ___ fear of being alone
- ___ dependent, clingy
- ___ busyness as a distraction
- ___ irritable, moody
- ___ argumentative
- ___ trying to replace the loss
- ___ changes in role, status, family system, identity
- ___ avoiding people to avoid conversation about the loss

Physical Factors

- ___ fatigue, lack of energy
- ___ hollowness in the stomach
- ___ stomachache, other gastrointestinal disturbances
- ___ sleep difficulties (too much/little, interrupted sleep)
- ___ feelings of emptiness and heaviness
- ___ heart palpitations, trembling, shaking
- ___ hot flashes, indications of anxiety
- ___ nervousness, tension
- ___ agitation, irritability
- ___ shortness of breath, headache, muscle aches & pains
- ___ chest pain, pressure, or discomfort

Spiritual Concerns

- ___ searching for meaning
- ___ asking the "why" questions
- ___ mystical experiences
- ___ reassessing values, beliefs, and priorities
- ___ feeling anger at God
- ___ feeling abandoned by God
- ___ experiencing comfort from God and faith community
- ___ exploring new dimensions of faith
- ___ using rituals like prayer and meditation to help the healing process

