



Surviving, Coping & Healing After a Tragic Loss



GRIEF IS A NORMAL AND NATURAL PROCESS

- It takes work to get through
- Not easy to let go
- Grieving process is both physically and emotionally demanding
- People grieve in different ways
- No right or wrong way to grieve
- Each person comes up with their own method of grieving that fits them and their particular loss



Conditions That Make It Harder to Make it Through the Grieving Process

- Sudden losses are harder to deal with than anticipated loss
- Loss of spouse, lover, child, parent or best friend usually more deeply felt than distant relations or friends
- Support is critical
- The fairness of the loss



Kubler-Ross's Stages of Grief

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance



Understanding the Emotional and Physical Effects of Grief

- Exhaustion
- Days of Distraction
- Denying New Reality
- Anger
- Grief Knows No Schedule
- Physical Symptoms
- Emotional Ambushes



Top 5 Myths About Grief

- ***Everyone grieves the same.***
Grief is unique to the individual
- ***Ignore grief and it will go away.***
One must experience the grief journey in order to heal
- ***If someone is not showing emotion, they are handling their grief.***
Expressing emotions leads to healing and results in a strengthened and enriched life
- ***The goal of grief is to get over it.***
One does not get over the death of a loved one. People can learn to live with the reality of a loved one's death.
- ***Time heals***
Time provides you the opportunity to do something about your grief



Ways to Deal with Grief

- Journaling
- Talking With Someone
- Getting Professional Help
- Medication
- Support Groups

CJD Foundation Family Conference

Bereavement Session

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“Caregiver Burnout”

- Multifaceted: Emotional, mental, physical and financial exhaustion
- PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)
 - Anxiety
 - Physical Symptoms
 - Detachment / Antisocial - withdrawal from family and friends
- Lack of support

MYTHS

- Don't feel bad
- Grieve alone
- Takes time / Time heals all wounds
- Be strong for self & others
- Keep busy

S.T.E.R.B

- **S**hort
- **T**erm
- **E**nergy
- **R**elieving
- **B**ehaviors

Activities you use to distract yourself from painful feelings that follow a major loss

(Grief Recovery Institute)

Unique to CJD

“We were just given a diagnosis and sent on our way.”

“Why don’t the doctors know anything?”

“I lost a part of me when ____ died”

“Everyday is a constant struggle”

“Why did this have to happen?”

“I was robbed!!!!!!”

“I feel like I’m drowning.....I can’t breath!”

“What do I do now?”

“No one understands what I went through.”

Later....

“Hey, how are you doing?”

Feelings

Inside

Not

Expressed

Acceptance

- Rediscover the ability within yourself to transform the quality of “your life” so you can complete your relationship with a loved one who has passed away
 - Accepting the change in the relationship
- Take actions to deal with grief to become emotionally complete
- Recovery comes by learning to make a series of small positive changes in our attitudes and then our behaviors

Seek Out a “Heart with Ears”

