

What to Do for Emotional Relief and Healing

- ❖ Be gentle with yourself. Although you may often feel overwhelmed, remind yourself that what you are going through is normal.
- ❖ Reach out to others. It is important to find friends with whom you can talk. Sharing with someone who's "been there" can be especially helpful.
- ❖ Tell and re-tell what happened, remembering things about the loved one and the experience of their death. Good memories are also very important.
- ❖ Be aware that people grieve in different ways. Don't measure your progress in handling grief against others.
- ❖ You may or may not cry often, but when you do, realize it is therapeutic. Don't fight the tears. As the author Jean G. Jones says: "Cry when you have to -- and laugh when you can.
- ❖ Confront guilt by realizing you did the best you could.
- ❖ Become familiar with the normal experiences of grieving and be willing to engage in your own grief work.
- ❖ Remember that grieving takes time, and that experiences and emotions can recur. Be patient with yourself, and allow yourself to heal at your own pace.
- ❖ Beware of being critical of yourself, either consciously or unconsciously, due to unrealistic expectations.
- ❖ Other events in your life may also be grief situations (trouble with spouse, children, work, or friends). Realize this happens to many grieving people, and these situations can complicate the grieving process.
- ❖ Find support from both inside and outside your family. But don't expect your family to meet all your needs. Remember that they, too, have their hands full of grief.
- ❖ Many of us have been brought up to be independent: "I'm going to handle this on my own." We find it difficult to ask for help. Yet, we all need support. Take the risk of joining a support group. Asking for help from "caring people" can make a big difference in your working through your grief.

It may be time to struggle with new life patterns. In the past, you may have handled grief by over activity. If your previous style of grieving has not been helpful, be willing to try new approaches, such as: become active in a support group; find telephone friends; read and learn about grief; develop new coping skills; reach out and help others; hold on to HOPE.

The Hosparus Health Grief Counseling Center offers the area's most comprehensive programs and services for children, adolescents, adults and families who are grieving the death of someone in their lives. Services include individual, group and family counseling, as well as education, support and special events designed to help people through their grief journeys. **For an appointment or to speak with a grief counselor, please call the Hosparus Health Grief Counseling Center at 502-456-5451 or 888-345-8197.**