

GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT

Symptoms & Feelings You May Be Experiencing

Extreme fatigue

Loss of appetite or overeating

Sleeplessness

Heavy sighing (or an attempt to get more air in the lungs)

Empty, hollow, feeling in the stomach

Heart aches, as if “broken”

Difficulty in concentrating

Forgetfulness

Sensitivity to noise

Sense of confusion

Dry mouth, throat and skin

Feeling of distance from others

Feeling that life has lost its interest and meaning

Grieving may surface at unexpected times

Having regret is a normal stage of grief

STAGES OF GRIEF

There are many different stages of grieving. The three stages outlined below are ones which most people will experience. However people do not usually flow from the first stage to the next. You may jump back and forth. The length of time on one stage may vary as well.

Stage 1: Numbness or shock. Immediately after the news of death, you will likely experience a period when you feel very little except a sense of unreality.

Stage 2: Disorganization. Eventually, nature’s protective shock begins to wear off, and feelings begin to come alive again. You may have physical symptoms such as tightness in the throat, shortness of breath, the need to sigh frequently and extreme fatigue. You may feel anger at the loved one for dying and the accompanying guilt may be overwhelming. Most frightening of all can be the feeling of losing emotional control. This is a painful period of emotional upheaval but a normal and necessary part of grieving. Most people will recover but it can take weeks, months and sometimes even years.

Stage 3: Re-organization: Eventually, there will be periods when you don’t dwell on your loss, and you can focus on daily tasks. A great hurt is never completely forgotten, rather, it takes its place among life’s other, more immediate demands. Deeper friendships may be formed through the process of sharing.

The increased stress you are under may lead to illness. Your system is vulnerable. Some ways to help you deal with this

may be:

Write down your thoughts and feelings

Take a brisk walk

Surround yourself with supportive friends and family
Remember to eat

Try to stay away from alcohol and drugs

Try to keep regular sleep patterns

Perhaps a general physical check-up with your doctor may be helpful

Learn to become an advocate for yourself

Postpone major life changes

REFERRALS

<i>Victim Services of Huron County</i>	<i>524-4108</i>
<i>Bereaved Families of Ontario</i>	<i>519-686-1573</i>
<i>Grief Recovery Program-Huron Hospice</i>	<i>527-0655</i>
<i>Huron Perth Crisis Intervention Program; Crisis Line</i>	<i>1-888-829-7484</i>
<i>Canadian Mental Health</i>	<i>1-888-875-2944</i>
<i>Kim Winbow-VON Palliative Care</i>	<i>519-235-2510</i>
<i>Rainbows-support group (not counselling) for children and youth</i>	<i>527-0655 or 357-2720</i>