

STAGES AND TASKS OF SUCCESSFUL GRIEVING

I. Accepting the Fact of the Loss

Initial Reactions – Numbness, shock, unreality, or being over-controlled

II. Experiencing the Pain

A. Physical Pain

Tenseness, aching muscles

Tightness in throat

Nervousness or ultra-calm

Headaches

Sleep too much or hardly at all

Fatigue or over-activity

Appetite changes – some don't eat, others eat too much

Sick feeling in pit of stomach

Drained of all life forces

Emergence of medical problems – consult doctor if persist

B. Emotional Pain

Emotional release

Emptiness

Loneliness

Super-controlled

Anger

Fear

Depression

Guilt

Powerlessness

Crazy feelings – waves of intense grief or over-emotional reactions which appear not to be related to the death.

Delayed grief hits many.

III. Adjustment To Living Without Your Loved One Begins

A. Practical matters start getting settled

B. Decisions and adjustments are made

C. Surviving the "special" times – seasons, activities, anniversary of death

IV. Reinvesting In Your Life (getting involved outside yourself)

A. Gradual recovery

B. Feeling better physically

C. Good days outbalance bad ones

D. Making new friends and getting involved in old and new meaningful relationships and activities

E. Become a resource to others to give back the love and support you received

F. Unexpected feelings of grief will hit, but coping will be much easier