



**Promoting
Positive
Emotions**



COPING WITH GRIEF AND LOSS DURING COVID-19

Coping with death and loss is vital to your mental health. It is only natural to experience grief when a loved one dies. The best thing you can do is allow yourself to grieve. There are many ways to cope effectively with the pain of loss.

Seek out caring people. Find relatives and friends who can understand your feelings of loss. Join support groups with others who are experiencing similar losses. (Many of these are available online.)

Express your feelings. Tell others how you are feeling; it will help you to work through the grieving process.

Take care of your health. Maintain regular contact with your primary care physician, eat well, and get plenty of rest. Be aware of the danger of developing a dependence on medication or alcohol to deal with your grief.

Accept that life is for the living. It takes effort to begin to live again in the present and not dwell on the past.

Postpone major life changes. Try to hold off on making any significant changes, such as moving, remarrying, changing jobs, or having another child. You should give yourself time to adjust to your loss.

Be patient. It can take months or even years to absorb a loss and accept your changed life.

Seek outside help when necessary. If your grief seems too much to bear, seek professional assistance to help work through your grief. It's a sign of strength, not weakness, to seek help.

If someone you know is experiencing anxiety, stress, depression, or other emotional changes due to COVID-19, immediate help is available from our

24-hour Crisis Support Line at 1-833-993-2382.

Learn more online at www.staypositivearkansas.com.

HELPING OTHERS GRIEVE

If someone you care about has lost a loved one, you can help them through the grieving process.

- * **Share the sorrow.** Allow and encourage those experiencing grief to talk about their feelings of loss and share memories of the deceased.
- * **Don't offer false comfort.** It doesn't help the grieving person when you say "it was for the best" or "you'll get over it in time." Instead, offer a simple expression of sorrow and take time to listen.
- * **Offer practical help.** Baby-sitting, cooking, and running errands are all ways to help someone who is grieving.
- * **Be patient.** Remember that it can take a long time to recover from a major loss. Make yourself available to talk and listen.
- * **Encourage professional help when necessary.** Don't hesitate to gently recommend professional help when you feel someone is experiencing too much pain to cope alone.

Helping Children Grieve

- * **Children who experience loss may grieve differently than adults.** A parent's death can be particularly difficult for small children, affecting their sense of security or survival. Often, they are confused about the changes they see taking place around them, especially if well-meaning adults try to protect them from the truth or their surviving parent's display of grief.
- * **A limited understanding and an inability to express feelings puts very young children at a unique disadvantage.** Young children may revert to earlier behaviors (such as bed-wetting), ask questions about the deceased that seem insensitive, invent games about dying, or pretend that the death never happened.
- * **Coping with a child's grief puts added strain on a bereaved parent.** However, angry outbursts or criticism only deepen a child's anxiety and delays recovery. Instead, talk honestly with children in terms they can understand. Take some extra time to speak with them about death and the person who has died. Help them work through their feelings and remember that they are looking to adults for appropriate behavior cues.
- * **Looking To The Future—** Remember, with support, patience, and effort, people survive grief.
- * This handout was adapted from [information](#) shared by [Mental Health America](#) on bereavement and grief.

