

Advice for working through grief
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Dr. Mark D. Miller, board president of the Good Grief Center for Bereavement Support, has compiled "20 Tips for Good Grieving":

1. Talk about your loss with friends, family or a professional.
2. Grief is work, requiring time and energy.
3. Let yourself enter the motions of grief. Losing someone close means you deserve to allow yourself to feel all your emotions: sadness, anger, intense longing, guilt and others.
4. Write your loved one a letter. Say what you would tell him or her as if it were your last chance.
5. Resume your life but leave time and space for grieving.
6. Take care of yourself. Give yourself time and space to begin healing.
7. Resist the temptation to use alcohol or drugs to numb your pain.
8. If you have a religious inclination, contact your place of worship. All religions recognize that grievers need special help.
9. Consider seeking out other grievers. Someone who has also been through grief can empathize with you and vice versa.
10. Don't feel obligated to join groups if they are not for you. Do what feels right.
11. Don't neglect your own health. Grieving puts a heavy burden of stress on your body. If you suffer from disabling insomnia or anxiety, see your doctor.
12. Get help for severe or persistent depression. Consider getting professional help if you feel overwhelmed, hopeless or helpless. Seek help if you have suicidal thoughts.
13. Mixed emotions, unresolved emotional turmoil and losing someone after an argument can complicate the grieving process. Sharing these feelings with a professional therapist can help.
14. Anger is common in normal grieving and certainly justified when a loved one dies due to the malevolence of others. Try venting your anger in a letter or into constructive action. Volunteer to

work for causes that seek justice and prevention. Helping someone else can help you in the process.

15. Allow time to grieve. One to two years is not a long time to allow yourself to work through grief. The healing process cannot be rushed.

16. Be patient. The grieving process often includes setbacks. Often, grieving resumes after a time, sometimes even months or years. Reminders can trigger a flood of emotions. Don't be surprised if this happens, and don't consider it a sign of weakness.

17. At some point those who have lost a partner or love companion will face the decision of whether to be open to a new relationship. Imagine if the situation were reversed: What would you want him or her to do?

18. If you feel stuck in your grief, try a new approach. Avoiding painful situations may hinder working through the grief. Review memorabilia, photos, home movies or videos. Talk about your loved one at holidays. This is the perfect time to check in with other family members about how they're doing with grief work and share mutual support.

19. Create your own memorial service. Celebrate lifetime accomplishments, values and principles. Pick up a cause your loved one believed in as a memorial to him or her.

20. The grieving process has run its course when you feel weary of rehashing events and memories and finally accept the fact that your loved one can remain with you only in spirit. For some, the process never really ends; it just gets easier over time.

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