

## Support Through the Grief Process

### **Rest**

Grief is an exhausting process, both emotionally and physically. Try to do what feels comfortable and healing to you and connect with people and things you love and enjoy. Avoid negative and critical people.

### **Time**

It is important to have some time to be alone with your thoughts and some time to be with others whom you can trust and who will listen when you need to talk.

### **Planning**

For a while, it might seem that much of life is without meaning. It might be useful to make plans on a day-by-day basis. Do not underestimate the healing effects of small enjoyments. Give yourself something to look forward to such as going to a movie, going out to eat with a friend or just taking a walk. In the beginning don't be surprised if enjoyment of these things is not the same as before. Those feelings are normal and will change over time. As time passes you will be able to work on some long-range plans that will give you some direction to your life.

### **Expression**

Try to allow yourself to accept expressions of love, caring and thoughtfulness from others. Allow others the pleasure of doing for you.

### **Hope**

You might find comfort and support from those who have experienced a similar loss. Knowing that they are recovering may give you hope that your grief will also be less painful as time goes on.

### **Sense of Humor**

Gradually regaining your ability to smile and laugh is not a betrayal of your love for your dear one. Laughter, like tears, provides some needed relief from the suffering you are experiencing. Laughter is healthy and restoring.

### **Be Patient and Gentle With Yourself**

Sometimes, after a period of feeling better, you might find yourself backsliding into the old feelings of sadness, despair, and loneliness. It is normal for your feelings to be up and down for a long time. This happens because we cannot take in all the pain and the meaning of death at once, we can allow it into our consciousness only a little at a time.

### **Write out Your Feelings**

Sometimes you might find that you are feeling too anxious or upset to speak aloud your feelings of sadness, despair, anger and frustration. This is a time that writing out your feelings may help to clarify your thoughts and provide a needed outlet of expression.

Reference – Tattelbaum, Judy. *THE COURAGE TO GRIEVE*, Lippincott & Crowell, Publishers, New York

## Grief Journey Checkup

Complete each statement with your own feelings. Examples are given, but your progress may be expressed in a different way.

1. I am beginning to see some progress in my grief journey because I can now:

(Examples: speak my loved one's name and acknowledge his/her death with a little less pain or without bursting into tears; wake up less frequently during the night; talk about the death experience with selected persons; acknowledge that the person is not going to be coming back, etc.)

2. An aspect of the grief journey I feel I now understand better is:

(Examples: my feelings are normal, and I am not "going crazy"; the pain of losing my loved one will probably never go away, but the intensity will decrease)

3. I can now set at least one goal for myself, and it will be:

(Examples: continuing with grief support by attending one of the monthly support groups offered by Hospice of the Golden Isles; participating in a small group with a meaningful purpose such as a Sunday School class, garden club; developing at least one new friendship; going back to church; sitting in a different place in church with friends; finding a few friends who will become periodic lunch or dinner companions at favorite restaurants; making plans to volunteer at a worthwhile organization, etc.)

Note: Your grief journey is intensely personal. There is no generalized timetable. Don't be concerned if you are not at the same place in your grief journey as others. You will progress at your own speed.



For additional support contact the  
Hospice of the Golden Isles Bereavement Office  
Phone: (912)267-5462 or email: [bereavement@Hospice.me](mailto:bereavement@Hospice.me)  
More resources are available at [www.Hospice.me](http://www.Hospice.me)