

Suggestions for Dealing with a Loss

The death of a spouse/partner is the most stressful event in a person's life. The death of a family member or friend or even a pet is the second most stressful event.

It is suggested that you be very careful during these times and consider the following list of suggestions:

1. Often people who have lost a loved one feel they need to rush everything, which puts them under undue pressure. It is suggested that the less rushed and pressured grievers are, the more successful their recovery rate is.
2. Once death of a relative occurs, those closest to that individual should not drive an automobile for several days. Your mind is just not allowing you to perform those normal, logical actions that permit you to operate an automobile properly.
3. Try to maintain your usual schedule during these trying times. Eat three meals a day, even if it means only small amounts. During these times most people tend to avoid eating. This can lead to under nourishment and maybe even problems more uncomfortable. Eating healthy foods on a scheduled basis should help you regain your sense of well-being and help you back to your usual way of life.
4. If sleep becomes difficult, which is not uncommon during these times, there are a few exercises to consider. Take many deep breaths concentrating on relaxing your total body. If you are in bed and awaken, get up, sit in a chair, and maybe read a book. This will allow you to relax and not worry that you are not sleeping. Once you become drowsy and feel you want to go to sleep, go back to bed and try to sleep again. Reading a book is recommended as opposed to watching television. Television tends to mesmerize you, encouraging a state of pseudo consciousness.
5. We caution you on the use of many different forms of drugs and a few of the problems that can arise because of their use. Whether it be alcohol, pills, or mind numbing substances, they tend only to delay the pain of loss and grief. Dealing with that pain through normal circumstances usually results in a quicker recovery. Delaying tactics only put into neutral that which you will have to deal with later. Often the longer you delay the pain, the more difficult the task of healing becomes. If the pain of your loss is to the degree that you fear a reaction, then a physician must be consulted immediately.
6. Addressing a death in the family with children is very important. Unfortunately, a child's needs and feelings are sometimes overlooked when decisions are being made. Research shows that children as young as three years old are aware of the circumstances and are very attentive to their parents' reaction and mood. It is recommended that children be told as soon as possible of a death. This gives them a sense of belonging. It should also be explained what is going to occur and suggest that they could participate and be involved.

It is important that you consider your children's feelings and help them to understand. Under no circumstances should a child be forced to do anything involving the funeral process.

On the other hand, if a child wishes to view the deceased and you do not wish to view, then that child should be allowed to view with an adult friend or other family member. All questions asked by all young people about death and/or the processes should be taken seriously and answered at your comfort level but ALWAYS with total honesty. Research also shows that when explained, young people have less anxiety about death than adults might assume. When children are permitted to participate, it helps them accept death as part of life and validates the feelings associated with loss. It can also enable a child to experience care from their family and friends, which can finally prove a sense of reassurance and belonging, even though a significant relationship may have ended.

Usually the best time to bring a young child to a funeral home is when that child requests to go to the funeral home. Many times they like to draw a picture or write a note to the deceased that may be placed on display or in the casket, thus allowing that child to express their sentiment at their own level. Feel free to ask the funeral home staff to assist you in answering any question your children might have.

In conclusion, a funeral service should be an accurate portrait of the deceased's life. This will allow family and friends to properly participate in a service that will honor the deceased and assist in the beginning of the road to recovery and the completion of a relationship. The funeral home will strive to help you successfully accomplish that goal, and help you get back to a more normal way of life.

**REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR TIME
AND REFLECT ON THE PAST
PLUS
AVOID MAKING ANY MAJOR DECISIONS
THAT MAY AFFECT YOUR FUTURE.**