

COMMON NORMAL REACTIONS TO GRIEF AND LOSS



BALLARAT
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CARE INC.

Home Based Palliative Care

The impact of grief can cause tremendous chaos to all aspects of our life. We all respond differently to grief but the most important thing to remember is that most reactions are normal. Sometimes we find these responses overwhelming but knowing they are normal helps us to come to terms with the changes. It is also important to note that there is no fixed timetable for these reactions. Of course if general functioning is inhibited by any or some of these responses, you should seek medical advice.

Physical:

- change in appetite
- tightness in chest
- headaches
- Fatigue and lack of energy
- Nausea, diarrhea, indigestion
- General aches

Behavioural:

- Sleeplessness
- Lack of motivation
- Crying (often unexpectedly)
- Social withdrawal
- Hyperactivity
- Reckless behaviour (e.g. drinking)

Emotional:

- Shock, numbness, disbelief
- Self-blame, guilt
- Depression
- Anger
- Anxiety, panic
- Loneliness
- Relief or Indifference
- Fear

Cognitive:

- Confusion
- Poor concentration
- Pre-occupation with the loss
- Seeing or hearing the person
- Dreams of the person who died

Spiritual:

- Anger toward God
- Consolation by belief in God
- Seeking meaning of loss
- Examining meaning of life
- Strengthening in belief

AIPC. (2017). <http://www.aipc.net.au/articles/coping-with-the-death-of-a-loved-one/>. (AIPC, Ed.) Retrieved from Australian Institute Of Professional Counsellors: <http://www.aipc.net.au/articles/coping-with-the-death-of-a-loved-one/>