

Common Responses to Loss

Listed below, in no set order, are some common responses to loss.
Perhaps you will identify with some of these.

Shock, Numbness and Disbelief:

There is a sense of unreality about it. You hope it's just a bad dream. The numbness can be a way of "cushioning" you until you can face the emotions of grief.

Anger: It can be directed at yourself, others, God, the one who died, of the persons who provided care. You may look for somebody to blame and ask yourself "It's unfair, why him?"

Relief: This is a common emotion after the death of someone who has endured a long-term illness. You may feel relief for yourself as well as for your loved one. Sometimes feeling relieved is accompanied by guilt.

Guilt/Regret: You may blame yourself for not doing or for something you said or did. You might be saying "if only I would've or could've." In time this emotion will likely pass. If you continue to believe you did something wrong and are unable to forgive yourself, seek help from someone who can listen non-judgmentally.

Loneliness: Visitors have left, and the house may seem so quiet and empty. You wonder how you can go on like this. Reaching out to others for support is crucial so as not to isolate yourself more.

Anxiety/Panic: C.S. Lewis once said,
"No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear."

Emotions of grief can feel foreign and scary. You may feel as though you're losing your mind and won't be able to function. You may also fear the future and worry something else might happen. Try to calm down with a brisk walk or an activity that distracts you. Contact your doctor if symptoms become too intense to handle on your own.

Sadness: You may feel that you don't enjoy activities or people anymore, life feels like the pits. You may not care whether you wake up tomorrow. There are days when the sadness is overwhelming and other days it doesn't feel as intense. If you feel immobilized by your sadness or have thoughts of harming yourself, seek professional help.

Confused/Disoriented: You could feel disoriented and find it difficult to concentrate. You forget where you put things and have trouble following conversations. Be patient with yourself, make lists, and do tasks for 15 minutes at a time. Ask others to remind you of appointments. Know that this too shall pass.



Hospice Bereavement Services: 845-561-6111
www.Hospiceoforange.com