

Coping With the Loss of Someone or Something Important



Losses are an unavoidable part of life for everyone. Losses can range from the loss of a set of keys; loss of homes and jobs; to the ultimate loss of a loved one either by death, divorce or separation.

Grieving is the normal process we all go through after a loss. The four predictable stages of grieving are as follows:

- 1) Initial shock/ denial that the loss has happened.
- 2) An intrusion of thoughts and painful feelings about the loss.
- 3) Gradual dealing with the thoughts and feelings as we learn to adjust to our lives without what was lost.
- 4) The ability to carry on again and have a fulfilling life.

Although not viewed as a positive at the time, grieving is a process that often leaves people stronger, deeper and better able to relate to others who experience losses.

Suggestions for helping others that are experiencing the loss of a loved one:

- Do not try to shorten the grieving process for the person. Listen to them carefully and let them know that you care.
- Be there for the person. Offer genuine help as certain needs arise such as taking care of children, making meals and cleaning the house.
- Do not end your support at the time of the funeral. The grieving process does not end then – your support is still needed.
- If you notice the person experiencing feelings of guilt and/ or depression and it isn't getting any better then consult a professional counselor.