



When grieving, or supporting someone who is grieving, it can be all too easy to neglect our own needs. Taking the time to look after yourself, however, can make a big difference in your ability to function on a day-to-day basis, especially in the longer term. Below are some suggestions about how to get through some of the difficult times.

- Try to delay major decisions that cannot be reversed for 6–12 months, e.g. disposing of belongings.
  - Keep a diary or journal.
  - Create a memorial – do or make something to honour your loved one.
  - Develop your own rituals, e.g. light a candle, listen to special music, make a special place to think.
  - Allow yourself to express your thoughts and feelings privately. Write a letter or a poem, draw, collect photos, cry etc.
  - Exercise – do something to use pent-up energy, e.g. walking, swimming, cycling, gardening.
  - Draw on your religious or spiritual beliefs and practices.
  - Explore other people's experiences through books, movies, articles, etc.
  - Do things that are relaxing and soothing.
  - Some holistic or self-care ideas that may assist include meditation, distractions, relaxation and massage.
  - To help with sleeplessness: exercise, limit alcohol and caffeine and try to maintain a routine, especially around bedtime.
- 
- Sharing with other people can reduce the sense of isolation and loneliness that comes with grief.
  - Allow people to help you; don't be embarrassed to accept their help. You will be able to help someone else at another time. It is your turn now.
  - Talk to family and friends; sharing memories and stories, thoughts and feelings can be comforting and strengthen your connection with your loved one.
  - Consider joining a support group to share with others who have had similar experiences.
  - Take opportunities to join in public ceremonies where you can be private, yet part of a larger group.
  - Use rituals and customs that are meaningful to you.
  - Talk with a counsellor to focus on your unique situation, to find support and comfort, and to find other ways to manage, especially when your life or your grief seems to be complicated and particularly difficult.

Although grief can be very painful, most people (85–90%) find that with the support of their family and friends and their own resources, they gradually find ways to learn to live with their loss and do not need to seek professional help.