



Coping with Unexpected Loss

WHAT TO EXPECT

There's no right or wrong way to grieve. Everyone grieves differently, and every day might be a little different. Learning common experiences of grief can help you notice patterns in your grieving and identify where/when you could use support.

Common Grief Experiences

Body	Mind	Feelings
• Fatigue/exhaustion • Changes in sleep patterns • Appetite changes • Headaches • Muscle tension	• Difficulty concentrating • Difficulty solving problems • Low motivation • Forgetfulness • Intrusive thoughts • Memories of other losses • Angry/violent fantasies • Indecisiveness	• Sadness • Anxiety • Mood swings • Irritability • Feeling numb • Anger • Guilt • Moments of feeling "okay"

COPING WITH GRIEF & LOSS

While there are no coping strategies that will take away the pain of this loss, there are steps you can take to make the grieving process easier to move through.

- **Accept that your emotional response is valid.** It's easy to fall into the trap of the shoulds: "I shouldn't be this sad" or "I should feel more sad." When you notice this, remind yourself that there is no "right way" to feel.
- **Take care of yourself.** Now is not the time to stay up late to meet a deadline, skip meals, or over-extend yourself. Grief can lower your immune system and affect your cognitive functioning, so it is important to prioritize your physical and emotional health to give yourself the capacity to keep going.
- **Create a compassionate space for your grief.** Avoiding your feelings by jumping back into the daily grind is tempting, but isn't a sustainable solution and can actually end up intensifying your emotional response later. Find ways to allow yourself to feel your feelings. If this is difficult for you to do on your own, counselors can help guide you through the process.

- **Connect with others.** Sharing stories and memories of the one you've lost with others is a powerful form of healing. Don't try to carry this on your own, allow others to help you.
- **Do things that bring you joy.** People often feel guilty when they experience joy, happiness, or even just being "okay" following a loss. But remember, your feelings are valid and it is okay (it's even good!) that you are still able to find enjoyable moments in life. It's a safe guess that the person you have lost would want you to find joy again.

Helpful Resources

CRISIS

- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: Call or text 988 or visit 988lifeline.org
- Community-Wide 24/7 Crisis Line: Call 520-622-6000 or 1 (866) 495-6735

CAPS

- Student Supporter Resource Hub: caps.arizona.edu/student-supporter
- On-Demand Mental Health Tools for Students: caps.arizona.edu/on-demand
- CAPS Student Hub: caps.arizona.edu/student-hub

GRIEF & LOSS

- Tu Nidito: Bereavement support for children, teens, young adults, and families. Visit tunidito.org or call 520-322-9155 to learn more.
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) Resources for Loss Survivors: afsp.org/ive-lost-someone/
- Prevent Suicide Survivor Support Resources: preventsuicide.arizona.edu/ive-lost-someone-suicide



Scan to learn more campus, community,
and online resources or visit
caps.arizona.edu/resource-hub.