



APPROPRIATE EXPECTATIONS YOU CAN HAVE FOR YOURSELF IN GRIEF

Evaluate yourself on each one of the following and see if you are maintaining realistic expectations for yourself. You can expect that:

Your grief will take longer than most people think.

Your grief will take more energy than you would have ever imagined.

Your grief will show itself in all spheres of your life: psychological, social, and physical.

Your grief will depend on how you perceive the loss.

You will grieve for many things both symbolic and tangible, not just the death alone.

You will grieve for what you have lost already and for what you have lost for the future.

Your grief will entail mourning, not only for the actual person you lost but, also, for all the hopes, dreams, unfulfilled expectations you have for and with that person, and for the needs that will go unmet because of the death.

The loss will resurrect old issues, feelings, and unresolved conflicts from the past.

You will have some identity confusion as a result of this major loss, and the fact that you are experiencing reactions that may be quite different for you.

You may have a combination of anger and depression, such as irritability, frustration, annoyance, or intolerance.

You will feel some anger and guilt, or at least some manifestation of these emotions.

You may have a lack of self-concern.

You may experience grief spasms, acute upsurges of grief that occur suddenly with no warning.

You will have trouble thinking (memory, organization and intellectual processing) and making decisions.

You may feel like you are going crazy.

You may be obsessed with the death and preoccupied with the deceased.

You may begin a search for meaning and may question your religion and/or philosophy of life.

You may find yourself acting socially in ways that are different from before.

You may find yourself having a number of physical reactions.

Society will have unrealistic expectations about your mourning and respond inappropriately to you.

You may find that there are certain dates, events, and stimuli that bring upsurges in grief.

Certain experiences later in life may resurrect intense grief for you temporarily.