

# PATHWAYS CENTER *for* GRIEF & LOSS

## LOSING A LOVED ONE TO HOMICIDE

If you have lost a loved one to homicide, your reactions and emotions will be unlike anything you have ever experienced. Times of intense anger at the perpetrator are not uncommon, made worse by sensational and often times inaccurate media coverage. You may feel isolated and helpless; your view of the criminal justice system may have changed. It is important for you to know that the following responses are common. They are listed here to provide the reassurance that you are experiencing normal responses to an abnormal situation. Although this is how you are now feeling, know it will change in time and the intensity of these reactions will lessen.

- Frustration over lack of information as to what is going on
- Seeming indifference of the community, especially the police, to you or your perspective
- Feelings of guilt for not having protected your loved one
- Impatience with the criminal justice system
- Frustration if not allowed inside the courtroom at the time of trial
- Outrage about the leniency of the murderer's sentence
- The memory of your loved one's appearance at the morgue
- Dwelling on unanswered questions - about the crime and or the criminal justice system
- Struggling with the financial burden of medical or funeral expenses and perhaps for professional counseling to cope with all you have been through
- The feeling of injustice that the murderer, if he or she is found, gets all the help; that, as a survivor, you have no rights
- Struggling with the seemingly endless grief
- Loss of ability to function on the job as well as at home, work or in school
- Marital and/or family strain
- Bitterness and loss of faith in the American criminal justice system

(over)

## WEBSITE RESOURCES

[www.llost.org](http://www.llost.org)

The Llost Foundation (Loss of loved ones to sudden tragedy) was created to provide support to family members, friends and loved ones after a sudden death.

[www.pomc.org](http://www.pomc.org)

The National Organization of Murdered Children's mission is to provide support and assistance to all survivors of homicide victims while working to create a world free of murder.

[https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/Victims-Compensation-Assistance-Program-\(VCAP\).aspx](https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/Victims-Compensation-Assistance-Program-(VCAP).aspx)

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency provides information and support to victims of crime.

<https://victimconnect.org/learn/types-of-crime/homicide-and-grief/>

The Victim Connect Resource Center offers information on homicide and grief as well as suggestions about how to cope.

[www.svlp.org](http://www.svlp.org)

Survivors of Violent Loss Network is an online website for those who work with and live with the murder of a loved one and other violent deaths. They offer assistance and support to families who lost a loved one to violent death. Their website also offers book recommendations, articles and links to other sites.

<https://dojmt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/guidesurvival.pdf>

This is a handout that offers common grief reactions of yourself as well as others. It also offers guidance on coping with the criminal justice system.



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