

# PATHWAYS CENTER

*for* **GRIEF & LOSS**

## UNDERSTANDING GRIEF – COMMON REACTIONS

<i>PHYSICAL</i>	<i>EMOTIONAL</i>	<i>SPIRITUAL</i>	<i>COGNITIVE</i>	<i>SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL</i>
Back, neck, muscle pain or headaches	Shock or sense of numbness	Need to make sense of the death – “Why?”	Disbelief, unreality, “a fog”	Can’t relate to friends anymore
Stomach upset, diarrhea, constipation	Sadness, sorrow, despair	Angry at God	Confusion, disorientation	Friendship changes
Change in appetite, Weight loss or gain	Anger, protest, irritability, resentment	Visions, sense loved one’s presence	Memory, concentration problems	Searching for the deceased
Feelings of weakness or fatigue	Self-reproach, guilt or regret	Feelings of meaninglessness	Rumination about deceased or death	Feelings of inadequacy, insecurity, lacking confidence with new roles
Feelings of emptiness or heaviness	Anxiety – general or specific - agitation	Questioning of beliefs	Idealization of deceased	Carrying or wearing objects, visiting places linked with the deceased
Restlessness, nervousness, hyperactivity, “wired”	Fear of “going crazy”	Feeling more distant from God	Difficulty with decisions	Social withdrawal
Crying spells	Helplessness, “out of control,” overwhelmed	Deepening of faith	Dreams or nightmares of deceased or death	Avoidance of reminders of deceased or the loss
Chills, sweats, cold hands	Mood swings, “emotional roller coaster”	Difficulty attending religious services	Absent-mindedness	Change in sexual desire (increase or decrease)
Chest pain, tightness, difficulty breathing	Sense of calm, peace or relief	Difficulty praying	Denial, “not really dead, just gone”	Increased use of alcohol and other drugs
Startle response	Apathy, lack of pleasure in anything	Changes in your views about life	Lowered self – esteem	Telling the story, over and over
Weakened immune system	Loneliness		Reviewing decisions or circumstances of the death	Clinging, difficulty with separations
Sleep disturbance	Yearning or pining			Lack of motivation



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