

# Grief work

**A**djusting to the death of an important person usually requires deliberate effort. The work of grieving can be thought of as tasks one has to accomplish in order to heal. The tasks are related to phases one is undergoing, but these periods are not orderly or predictable. These overlapping phases and tasks can be thought of in the following way:

<u>Phase</u>	<u>Task</u>
Numbness...	To accept the reality of the loss
Yearning...	To experience the feelings of grief
Disorganization...	To adjust to the “empty” environment
Reorganization...	To shift energy from grieving to living

**S**ome things tend to help one accomplish the tasks of grief work and others actually hinder it. You may find the following suggestions useful to you or someone you know who is adjusting to a loss.

**Be patient and kind to yourself; avoid criticizing your grief reaction.**

Temporarily lower expectations of yourself and others; do not expect to be as active and effective as usual.

**Get plenty of rest, but avoid taking long naps during the day.**

Pay attention to nutrition.

**Beware of sleeping pills and alcohol.**

Seek medical attention for old or new health problems.

**Exercise moderately (eg. taking walks).**

Express your feelings (sadness, anger, etc.) rather than keeping them inside or strictly limiting them.

**Spend time with understanding people; try not to be alone too much.**

Talk about the person who died, recalling positive & negative memories.

**Look at pictures & other reminders of the person, rather than trying to forget.**

Engage in rituals (such as lighting candles or visiting the cemetery) if they are comfortable; don't force yourself.

**Pray and attend group worship if you have been/want to be religious.**

Be understanding of other's difficulty with grief and forgiving of their insensitivity.

**Do what feels good for yourself more than what others suggest.**