

- Accept the grief**
- Talk about it**
- Keep busy**
- Take care of yourself**
- Eat well**
- Exercise**
- Put guilty feelings in perspective**
- Accept your understanding of the death**
- Share with others who are also grieving**
- Hold onto the good memories**
- Get professional help if needed**

If you haven't experienced it already, sometime in your life you will lose a loved one. Knowing what to expect in the grieving process will help you get on with living.

As always, your Employee Support Services Bureau is here to help.

**GRIEF**

Grief will touch all of us at some time in our life. While there is no “right” way to grieve, this pamphlet lists many of the ways grief might affect you. You may experience all of the phases listed here or maybe just one or two. Whichever way it affects you, knowing what is happening (or may happen) during the grieving process, may help you endure through that painful time.

## **PHASES OF GRIEF**

*SHOCK*

*DENIAL*

*ANGER*

*GUILT*

*DEPRESSION*

*TEARS*

*ACCEPTANCE*

*GROWTH*

### **SHOCK**

The first response to a loss is sometimes called shock. A numbness envelops you. It's your mind's way of cushioning the blow.

### **DENIAL**

Hard on the heels of shock can come denial. You know what has happened, but on a deeper level, all of your habits and memories may be denying the loss.

### **ANGER**

Anger is also a normal response. You may have it in any degree from mild to raging, depending on your personality and the circumstances. You may even blame the one who died and be angry at that person for dying.

Anger, if felt, needs to be acknowledged. Everyone should at least talk about it. Bottling up anger causes stress, and the cork tends to come off in one way or another, often affecting job performance and other relationships.

### **GUILT**

Guilt can occur for a variety of reasons; it is blaming turned inward. The terrible tragedy of suicide often compounds guilt feelings. We may ask ourselves “what if,” or wonder, “if only” or “I should have known.” In reality, you cannot control the behavior of another person, they have to ask for, and want help.

### **DEPRESSION**

When numbness wears off and rage has been exhausted, depression or sadness may arrive.

### **TEARS**

Perhaps crying is not your style. A man reared in the typical masculine image often will not. But tears are usually a helpful release. Repressed grief may lead to psychological harm and physical illness.

Take time to grieve, to feel the loss, say goodbye, and then move on.

### **ACCEPTANCE**

For some, spiritual beliefs may help. Many take comfort in their spiritual roots and pass more easily through the process of grief. Others find strength in other ways. This is the start of accepting the loss.

### **GROWTH**

Time alone won't heal grief. You have to deal with it, to work through it. In the process you can actually turn grief into personal growth. You can become something more than you were.