

Helping yourself grief when your spouse dies...

A lot of people say that emotional pain is more painful than physical pain. No one knows this better than a grieving spouse. The loss of a spouse is one of the most painful events in life. You may feel uncertain if you will ever overcome this loss. Besides, you will have doubts if you have energy or desire to overcome the whole situation. You may feel sad, angry or disappointed.

Understanding what you can do to help yourself move towards healing is important.

Below are tips that can help you cope with the death of your spouse.

1. Acknowledge your loss

Instead of allowing yourself to slip into denial when your spouse dies, remember the good times you had with him/her and hold on to them. These memories will carry through your hardest days. You can also go through your favorite pictures together, plant a special flower or plant in the memory of your loved one that will remind you of him/her.

2. Recognize that your grief is unique

Your grief is unique because the relationship you had with your spouse was exclusive. Your personal grief experience will also be influenced by your support system and religious background. So, don't try to compare yourself with others who went through the same experience. Take your personal healing process one-day-at-a-time.

3. Find a support system

Find people who encourage you to be yourself and acknowledge your feelings. A caring friend or relative can be the support system you need. Someone you trust. Avoid people who are critical to your situation. They may tell you "time heals all wounds" or "you will get over it soon". These comments are probably well intended but you don't have to accept them at this stage.

4. Speak out your thoughts and feelings

Talk about your feelings; communicate with your surroundings about how you feel, the things you are missing about your spouse. It is by sharing your grief with others that healing starts. Talk about your spouse, the person he/she was, the activities you shared and enjoyed...Remembering memories will bring laughter and tears. Talk openly and speak from the heart. This is a normal part of grief.

5. Expect to feel a multitude of emotions

You may feel confused, disoriented, afraid, relieved, guilty or angry. These emotions are all normal feelings and are all part of the grieving process. Find someone you trust and feel comfortable to talk to him/her about them.

6. Understand your physical and emotional limits

The loss experience you are facing can make you feel tired, confused and disoriented. It is important to listen to your body. Eat a healthy diet, get daily rest. Don't be too hard on yourself and don't put high expectations on yourself.

7. Give yourself time with your spouse personal belongings

Some persons around you will encourage you to do something with your spouse belongings. However, only you are the one who decides when and what to do with your spouse's clothes and personal belongings. Don't force yourself to do anything you are not ready to, take the time and do this step whenever you feel ready.