How Grief Affects You

You may not realize it, but grief affects you on every level. Here’s how:

**Physically**
- Crying
- Trouble sleeping
- Restlessness or hyperactivity
- Headache
- Stomachache or nausea
- Loss of appetite or increased appetite
- Weight loss or gain
- Lack of energy
- Pain around the heart (origin of the word “heartache”)

**Mentally**
- Unable to concentrate or stay focused
- Unable to make decisions
- Easily confused and forgetful
- Unorganized
- Constantly thinking about the death
- Not wanting to go on living
- Disbelief or denial that the person is really dead
- Glorifying the person who has died (Sometimes, we only remember the good qualities or times spent with that person.)

**Emotionally**
- Shock
- Numbness
- Anger (at the medical/legal system, the person who died, who/what was responsible for the death.)
- Guilt
- Fear (this will happen again.)
- Regret
- Sadness
- Loneliness
- Insecurity
- Relief (That the person is no longer suffering or a bad relationship is over.)
- Shame (May be felt because of the nature of the death—suicide, AIDS, anorexia, crime.)

**Socially**
- Feeling left out
- Feeling different
- Feeling isolated
- Change in peer relationships
- Withdrawal from friends and family

**Spiritually**
- A loss or questioning of faith
- Anger at your faith system
- A strengthened faith
- A rediscovery of faith or interest in other belief systems (Wanting to connect with a faith community or a group to feel a sense of family.)
- Searching for the meaning of life (What your contribution will be/how you will be remembered.)
- An increased sense of connection with the loved one who died.
- Questioning why bad things have to happen.

More this way…
What you need when you grieve

In order to cope with your loss and move forward with your life, you need:

- Rest
- Time
- Information
- Safety/Security
- Compassion
- Nutrients
- No Drugs or Alcohol
- Physical/Social Activities
- Support System