

Facing Loss is Never Easy

It is never easy to lose a loved one whether our loss has been awaited and expected or sudden and unexpected. Whatever was the deceased's age or circumstances, death is shocking and disturbing.

How we react to our loss can accentuate our pain or support us to survive. Some things that don't help us are isolating ourselves, denying our feelings, miring ourselves in self-pity, and excessive ruminating.

Although we may feel as if nothing can make this challenge easier, the following are some suggestions to help support us and ease the path ahead that I've learned from clients and from my own losses.

One day at a time

Just live this moment, this day. Things change. When we project our feelings into the future or globalize our situation and think we will never recover or never be happy again, we take away all our power.

Connect with others

We accentuate our grief by isolating ourselves and listening only to our own thoughts. We need nourishment and support from others. Share time and feelings with friends, family, support groups, and grief counselors. Perhaps get a pet.

Release feelings

Swallowing emotions never works, but sometimes we find it hard to express our pain. We can speak it aloud or even shout it to the winds. Writing in a journal has helped many people move through their grief.

Appreciate what you have

Experiencing gratitude can be uplifting. When times are tough, looking around at what is good in our lives or writing gratitude lists can change our perspective. At least in those moments of feeling grateful, we realize there is more than loss in our life.

Pay attention to who you are today

When we face loss and change, we also change. What interested us before may not interest us now. We may make different choices of activities and people. We need to notice what supports us and honor that, and reject what doesn't work for us now.

Be kind to yourself

Processing grief takes time and patience. We need all the self-love we can muster to survive our loss. Try to avoid whatever doesn't feel good. This is a time to put ourselves first and help ourselves face our loss as best we can. We need to be our own best cheerleader.

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