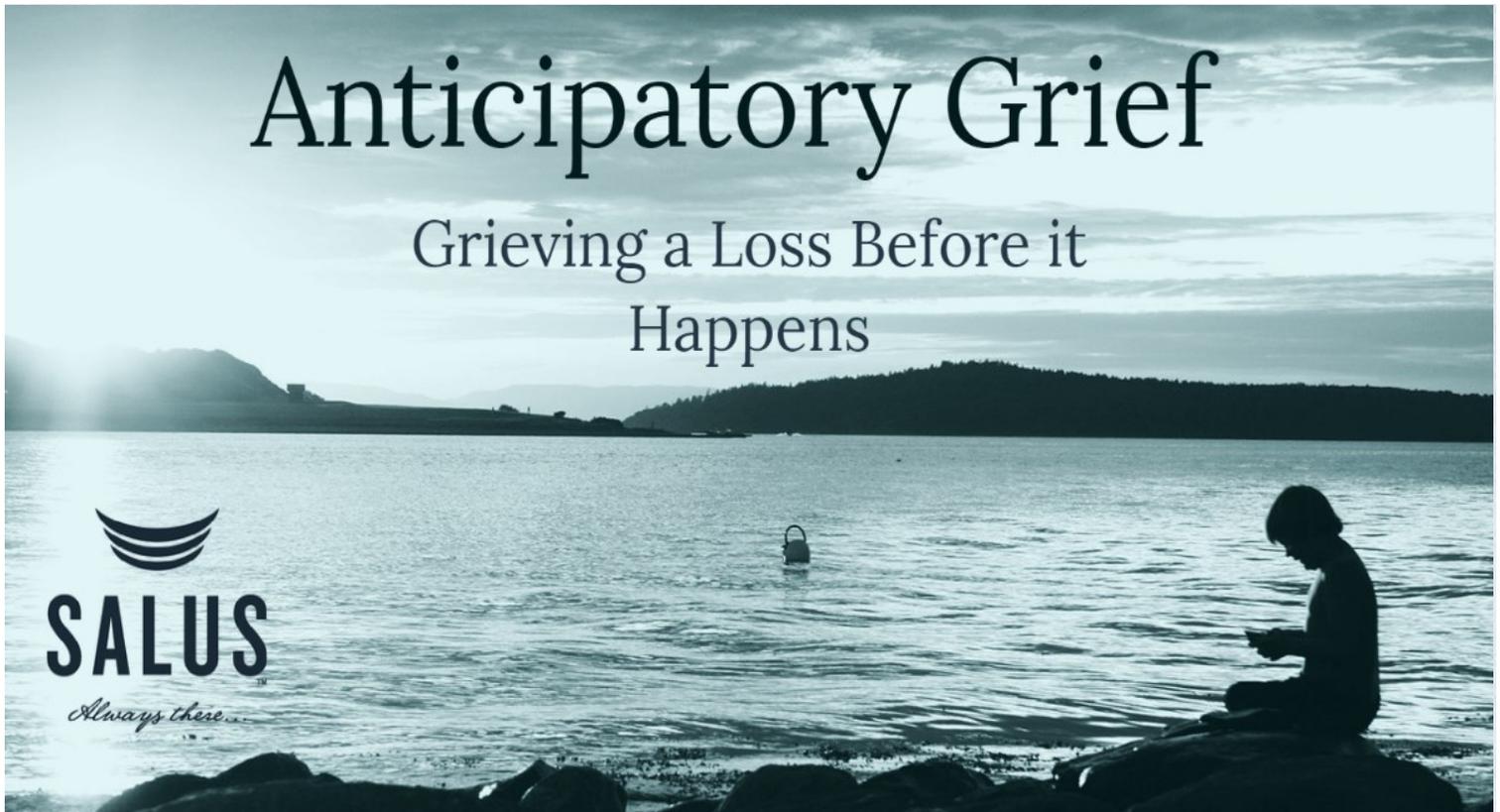


Journey through grief: **ANTICIPATORY GRIEF**



WHAT IS GRIEF



Grief is the process by which a person adjusts to the physical absence of someone with whom they continue to have a psychological or spiritual relationship.

According to one writer, “Grieving is not just something that happens after someone passes away.

Preparing for a loved one’s end of life or a major loss is what defines anticipatory grief.

“Grief can affect you in many ways, for example, how you feel and think, and how much energy you have.

You may find that you have difficulty making decisions, feel all alone and/or uncertain about the meaning or purpose of your life.

You may also feel great joy and love when you share the memories and stories that are special to you and your family”.

Grief vs. Depression

Grief:

- Irritability
- Deep sadness
- Difficulty practicing acceptance
- Seeing or hearing things related to the loss

Similarities:

- Intense malaise
- Sleeping disruption
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss

Depression:

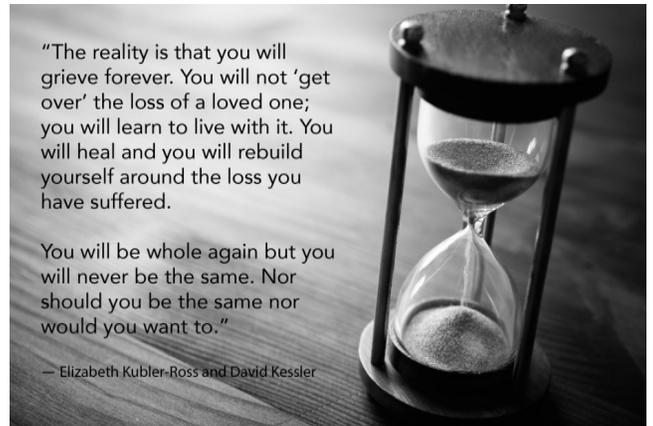
- Guilt, unrelated to grief
- Preoccupation with worthlessness
- Prolonged difficulties functioning
- Suicidal ideation

well



Question: How long does grieving take?

The answer to this emotional question is an ongoing discovery as you confront and resolve your personal issues. By now you likely understand that grief comes and goes; it ebbs and flows. Gradually, you learn to live alongside it, but grief usually lasts longer than most who grieve expects. Grief will not be rushed (Julie Yarbrough).



Mourning: is expressing our grief outside of ourselves. Grief is internal; mourning is external.

Grief: Grief is normal, and it is a process. Expressing grief is how a person reacts to the loss of a loved one. Grief is hidden; mourning is visible. It is said that mourning is “grief gone public”

Dr Alan D Wolfelt describes a ‘mourning ritual’ as a “symbolic activity that helps us together

with our families and friends to express our deepest thoughts and feelings about life's most important events."

Examples of mourning include:

- Candlelight vigils
- Arranging your loved one's funeral
- Talking about the person who died
- Writing down your thoughts and feelings in a journal
- Prayer meeting

Remember that, "there is no right way to mourn. As long as you're expressing your grief outside of yourself and it feels helpful or cathartic to you, you're on the right track"

The Bible tells us that:



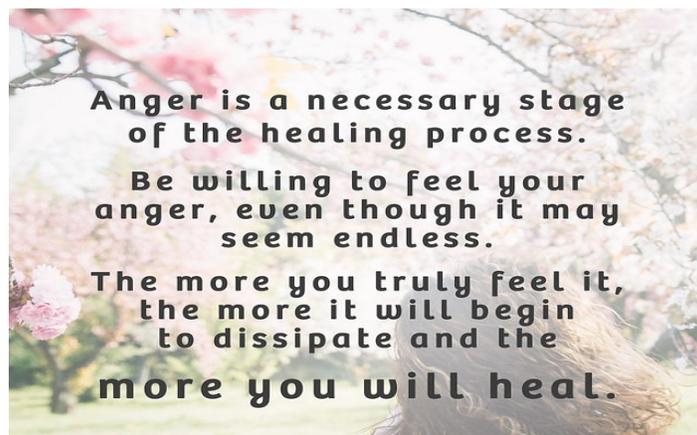
Anticipatory Grief

Anticipatory grief refers to the grieving that begins even before a death occurs. The many changes that occur when a loved one's health worsens can lead to many changes for you and your family. These losses can add up and at times feel like it is too much (NHS).



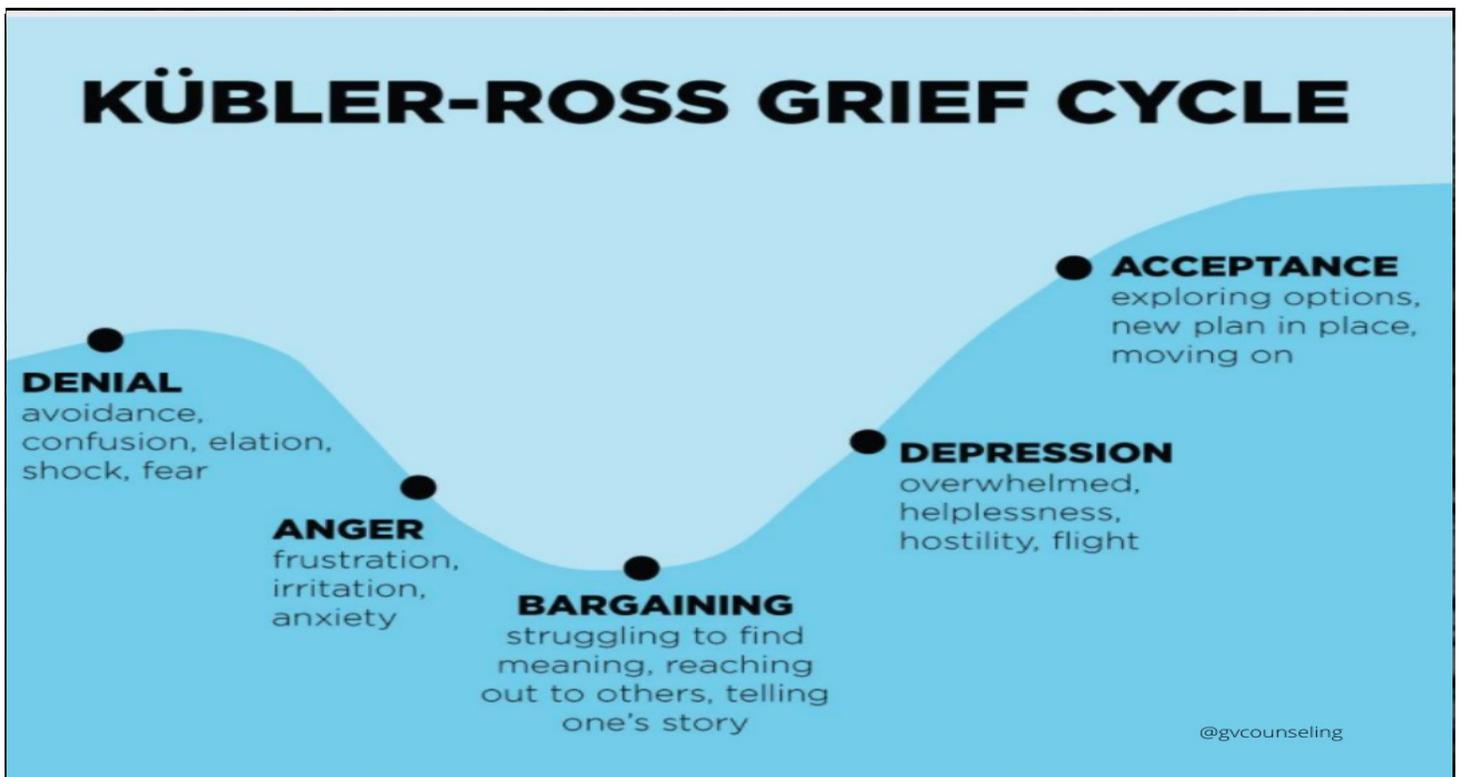
According to Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and David Kessler, in some cases, anticipatory grief may happen months or years before the loss. It is important for us to remember that this anticipatory grief stands alone from the grief we feel after a loss.

For many, they say, anticipatory grief is just a run-up to the painful process we face, a double grief that will ultimately bring healing.



A Thought

To watch helplessly as your loved one is going through anticipatory grief is heart-breaking; it is deep sadness, and all consuming. It must also be very distressing for the person who is dying, and they too must feel a deep sense of helplessness. I can imagine that he or she would be going through the five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance as they wait helplessly for their life to end. He or she may also feel a "deep sense of burden in



you taking on such a challenging task in caring for them.

Knowing that you are taking care of yourself and being honest with your feelings may bring them comfort”.

According to Cruse Bereavement Care, Anticipatory grief involves many losses.

It includes watching your loved one change and grieving the loss of the person you once knew long before they actually die.

There is also the loss of companionship, changing roles and loss of future plans and dreams.

Fears can also overwhelm us—for example: fears over whether we will be able to provide the support they need, and how we will cope?

What will happen, and will they suffer? Will they change? What will it be like at the end?



A Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, thank you that you are the source of all true joy in life. Your Word says that, even though I walk through the darkest valley in life, I will fear no evil, for you Lord are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me (Psalm 23:4). Lord, right now, I am struggling with the challenges that anticipatory grief brings; and Lord if I am struggling to cope, I cannot imagine what my beloved family member who is waiting for their life to end is going through.

My Father, May you strengthen us as a family and comfort our hearts for the days, weeks, or even months ahead. I don't know what will happen from one day to the next, but I know my God that You do; so I am asking that you hold us in Your arms and surround us with Your presence.

Lord, Your Word in Hebrews 13:5 reminds me that, "You will never leave nor forsake me", so right now, I am asking that, You walk alongside us as a family in this journey of anticipatory grief. My Abba Father, I thank You that You are my strength and my hiding place. Whenever I am feeling sad and alone, I can always come to you for comfort, peace of mind and reassurance. I give you all the praise and glory in Jesus Name. Amen.

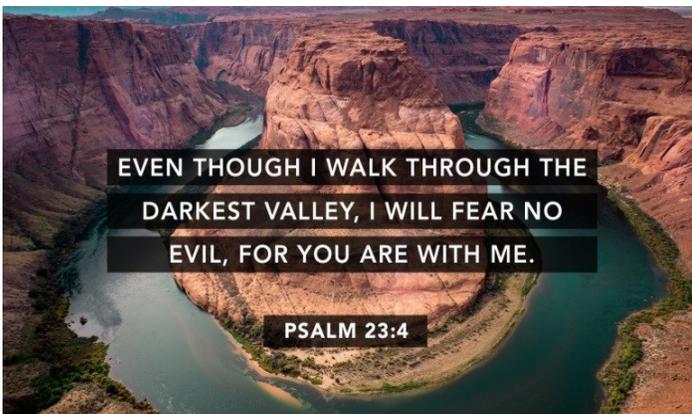
What does the Bible say about grief?

Psalm 119:147-148

I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word. My eyes stay open through the watches of the night that I may meditate on your promises.

"Lord, you are always speaking. Open my ears to hear your voice. Let me look to you above anyone else or anything else for comfort, strength, courage, and guidance".

Psalm 23:4



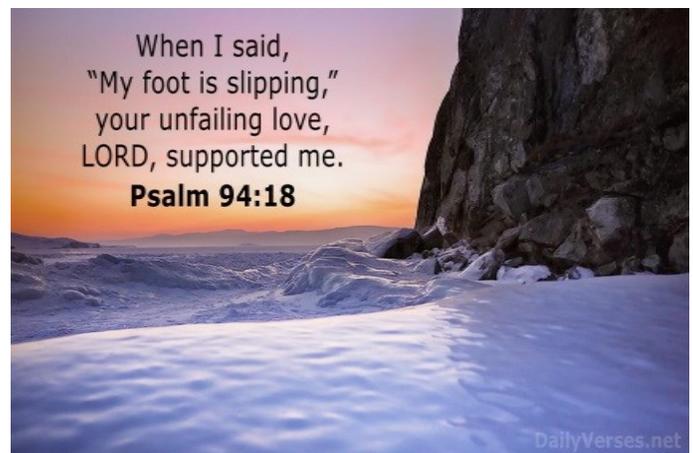
Remember that, "We don't need to be afraid because we know that our Shepherd is with us in the midst of our trials. We can take comfort that He protects and guides us with His rod and staff, walking with us in the darkest of valleys. Even when faced with death, we don't need to be afraid, He walks hand in hand with us".

Psalm 31:9:

"Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and body with grief "

Abba Father, right now, I am crying out to you as sorrow is gripping at my heart. Be my rock. Be my comfort. Be my strength.

Other Scripture Verses



What makes anticipatory grief so difficult?

According to one writer, watching your loved one decline can bring on feelings of loss. This sense of

loss isn't just for the present but for the future plans you shared. You hoped to see children married and grandchildren born, you looked forward to enjoying your retirement and traveling together, the communication, fellowship and support. These are just a few of the things you will grieve over.

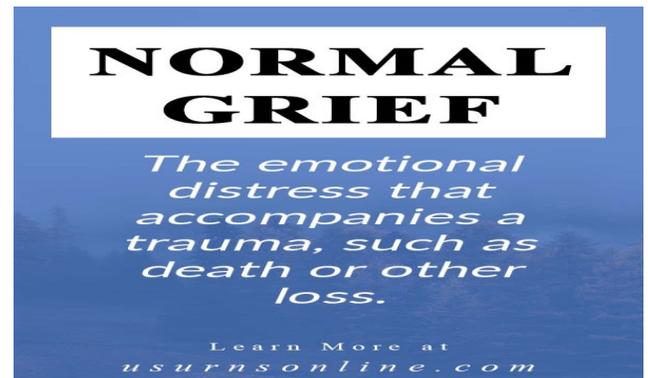
The writer went on to say, anticipatory grief may be hard to discuss with anyone. You may have guilt over your feelings, especially if you have a sense of relief at the thought of your loved one's passing. This is normal; it is ok to have a part of you want *their pain to be over and your trial to end*. These thoughts do not mean that you wish ill upon your loved one.



Anticipatory Grief: How is it different from normal grief?

Anticipatory grief happens when you know there will be a loss, but it is not yet occurs.

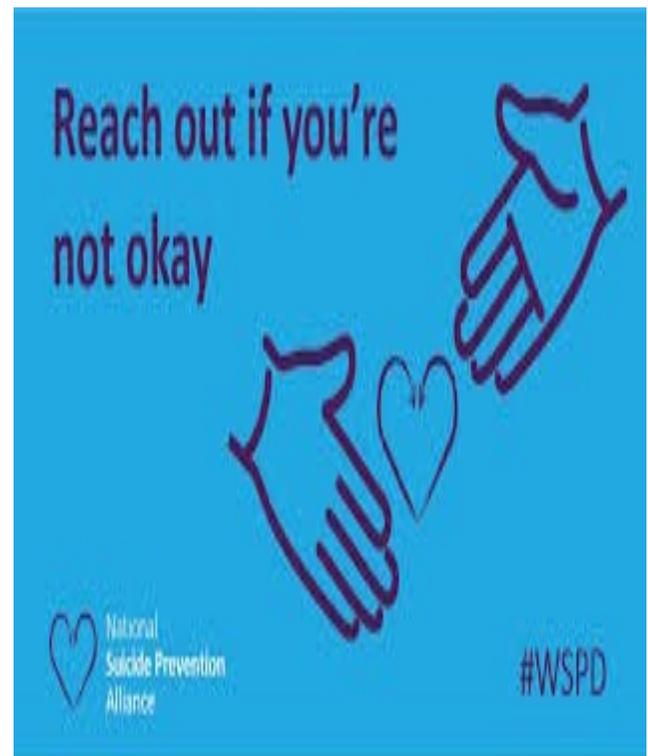
- The difference between anticipatory grief and conventional (normal) grief is that, anticipatory grief can often be mixed in with hope that your loved one will live.
- Unlike bereavement after death, anticipatory grief is experienced by both the person who is ill and by the other family members.
- Unlike bereavement after death, anticipatory grief can include a period of hopefulness when the illness is being effectively managed.



Please note!!

We recognise that “enduring the pain of a loved one whether through “Normal” grief or “Anticipatory” grief is one of the most difficult challenges we can face in life. At its core, a loss creates a void, a hole in your life that must be faced”.

If you feel at any time that you're struggling to cope with anticipatory grief, having suicidal thoughts or any other negative emotions *and you'd like the space to talk through and understand your feelings*, please do not sit in silence. Help is available!



NATIONAL
SUICIDE PREVENTION
LIFELINE™
I-800-273-TALK
I-800-273-8255
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
www.samhsa.gov

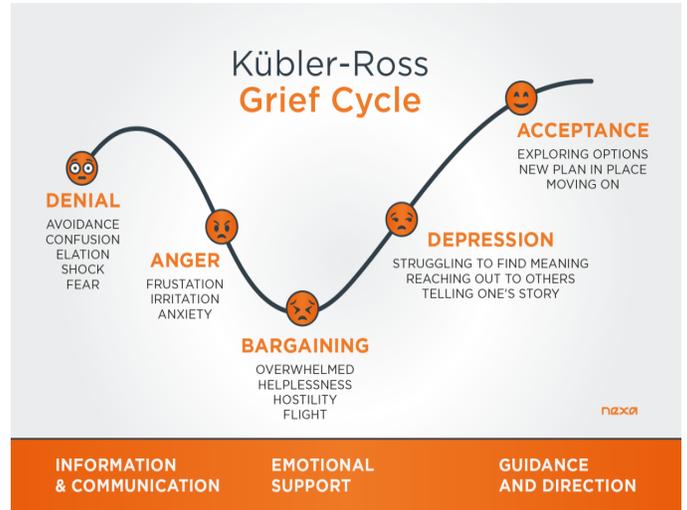
CRUSE NATIONAL HELPLINE
0808 808 1677

MONDAY 09:30 - 17:00
TUESDAY 09:30 - 20:00
WEDNESDAY 09:30 - 20:00
THURSDAY 09:30 - 20:00
FRIDAY 09:30 - 17:00

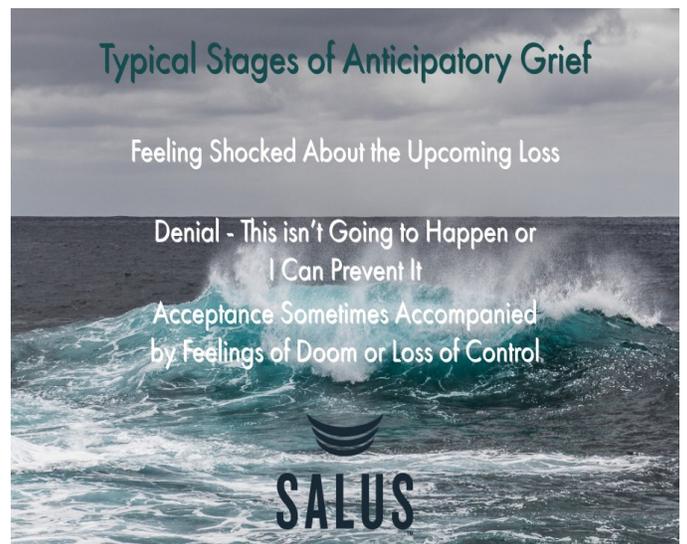
Cruse Bereavement Care



Stages of grief



The five stages of grief are part of the framework that makes up our learning to live with the one we lost. They are tools to help frame and identify what we might be feeling. But they are not stops on some linear timeline in grief. Not everyone goes through them or goes in a prescribed order (Elizabeth Kubler-Ross).



Anticipatory Grief

Something that complicates anticipatory grief is that, in addition to worrying about the impending loss of your loved one, you might worry about things that are impacting you right now such as:

- ✦ Finances

- ✦ Lack of a social life
 - ✦ Unavoidable changes in your routine
 - ✦ How your role in the family has shifted
 - ✦ Loss of companionship that you're experiencing if your loved one is incapacitated.
- The loss of opportunity; even a missed opportunity to enjoy an upcoming family gathering or vacation that you planned

What You Might Feel When Experiencing Anticipatory Grief

People undergoing anticipatory grief report a range of feelings that may include:

Anticipatory Grief: How to Cope & When to Get Help

Some Common Symptoms of Anticipatory Grief

• Guilt	• Tearfulness
• Denial	• Depression
• Helplessness	• Anxiety
• Shock	• Anger
• Numbness	• Sadness

CHOOSING clarity

- **Sadness and tearfulness:** These emotions tend to rise rapidly and often when you least expect.
- **Fear:** Feelings of fear are common and include not only the fear of death but fear about all of the changes that will be associated with losing your loved one.
- **Irritability and anger:** You may experience anger yourself, but it can also be difficult coping with a dying loved one's anger.



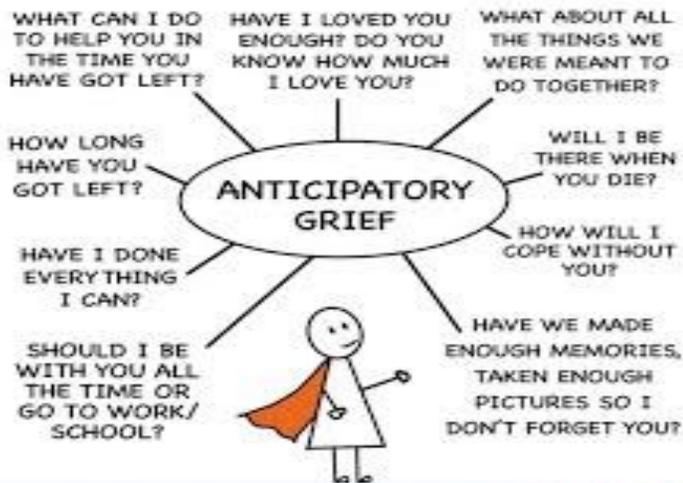
Denial helps us to pace our feelings of grief. There is a grace in denial. It is nature's way of letting in only as much as we can handle.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

Eterneva ∞

DEAR
PILLOW,
SORRY FOR
ALL THE
TEARS.

Questions you're likely to ask yourself?



Remember it is important that you say your goodbye before your loved one passes. Take time to talk about regrets, fears and concerns. Tell your loved one it is OK, and you'll be OK, too (if appropriate) (Hospice of the Red River Valley).

Healthy Ways to Cope with Anticipatory Grief include:

- Express your pain
- Make amends with any existing/unresolved issues
- Acknowledge that the end is near, Communicate verbal and non-verbal goodbyes
- Take care of your physical and emotional health
- Spend time together now
- Practice love, forgiveness and letting go (salushomecare.com)

Remember also to allow your dying relative to express how he or she is feeling without judgement. Listen, be patient and share stories with one another. If there are unfinished business / unresolved issues, it is important to address them.

One writer said that, "Some people are reluctant to visit a loved one who's dying. They may want to avoid the emotional pain, or wish to remember the person "the way they were" before their illness. However, anticipatory grief presents important opportunities for healing.

Practice self-compassion.

- Rather than argue with or dismiss your grief with harsh judgment and criticism, meet your pain with gentle understanding.
- Offer yourself words of comfort.
- Give yourself a hug.

Treat yourself with the same kindness, caring, and compassion [you] would show to a good friend or even a stranger (Kristin Neff – Self-Compassion).

Ideas for Spending Quality Time Together

- Going Through Photo Albums
- Sharing Stories About Happier Times
- Playing Card Games
- Talking & Sharing Feelings
- Singing Songs or Playing Music
- Quiet Time, Meditation or Prayer

“SELF-COMPASSION IS SIMPLY GIVING THE SAME KINDNESS TO OURSELVES THAT WE WOULD GIVE TO OTHERS.”

- CHRISTOPHER CERMER
HEALTHYOURS.COM

Self-Compassion is:



Self Kindness

Be loving towards ourselves, instead of self-critical.



Common Humanity

Everyone suffers. You are not perfect. No one is. You are not alone.



Mindfulness

Notice our struggle. Feel it, instead of being reactive. Be with it, avoiding self-judgement or overreaction.

From the work of Kristin Neff

LuminateWellness.com

Be blessed; Stay safe: The Bereavement Café

Also, please remember to bear in mind that lockdown has eased but COVID is still out there! If at all possible, wear your masks especially in crowded places and maintain social distancing.



The Bereavement Café

Resources on Grief

you can find most of the books below on Amazon

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/>

- Donna R. Williams & JoAnn Sturzl- Grief Ministry
- Norman Wright – Experiencing Grief
- Marty Tousley- Finding Your Way Through Grief: A Guide for the First Year
- William Worden – Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy
- Tom Zuba – Permission of Grieve : A New Way To Do Grief
- Malcolm Duncan: Good Grief -Living with Sorrow and Loss
- Norman Wright – Experiencing Grief



- Mary Williams and Steve Fraser – Someone has died suddenly
- Kathleen O’Hara – **A Grief Like No Other: Surviving the Violent Death of Someone you Love**
- Pam Vredevelt – Empty Arms: Hope and Support for Those Who Have
- Suffered a Miscarriage, Stillbirth, or Tubal Pregnancy

Useful Contacts

Please note

We recognise that "enduring the pain of a loved one is one of the most difficult challenges we can face in life. At its core, a loss creates a void, a hole in your life that must be faced". If you feel at any time that you are not coping with bereavement, having suicidal thoughts or any other negative emotions, please do not sit in silence. Help is available!

If you are not able to talk about your feelings with a family member or friend, you can contact:

OR

- Your Pastor or a member of the pastoral team
- Your GP
- www.wntcg.org/bereavement
- www.wntcg.org/care
- Samaritans Helpline: **08457 909090**
24 hours a day
- Cruse Bereavement Care: 0808 808 1677
- Bereavement Trust Helpline: 0800 435 455, from 6–10pm
- Association of Christian Counsellors (ACC)
- On the website– Homepage (ACC), Click on ‘Find a Counsellor’, then scroll down the page and enter your postcode for a list of counsellors in your area. You could Telephone 024 7644 9694 and someone will guide you through the process.

Young People –Bereavement services/Emotional support

Grief Encounter

- Provides support to children and families who have been bereaved via phone, online chat and email.
- You can also take part in group activities with likeminded families at their Fundays, Grief Groups and Remembrance Days.

- Phone open Monday–Friday 9am–9pm: 0808 802 0111

Email: griefftalk@griefencounter.org.uk

Winston’s Wish

- Provides support to bereaved children, families and any adults supporting a young person through bereavement.
- Open Monday–Friday 9am–5pm.
- Phone: 08088 020 021
- Email: ask@winstonswish.org

Their [online chat](#) service provides support directly to young people. Open Fridays 10am–1pm.

Cruse Bereavement Care

- Provides support to anyone affected by bereavement.

Helpline open Monday–Friday 9.30–5pm, with extended hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings when they’re open until 8pm. Phone 0808 808 1677.

Grief Encounter: Provides support to children and families who have been bereaved via phone, online chat and email.

- ✦ You can also take part in group activities with likeminded families at their Sundays, Grief Groups and Remembrance Days.

Phone open Monday-Friday 9am-9pm: 0808 802 0111

Online chat - Email:

griefftalk@griefencounter.org.uk

Free, local support for you  **Bereavement HELPLINE**

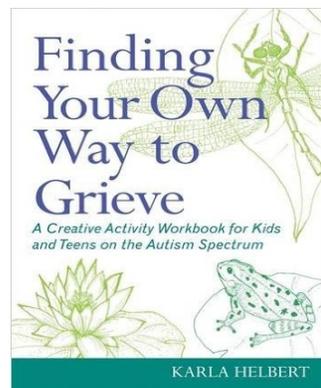
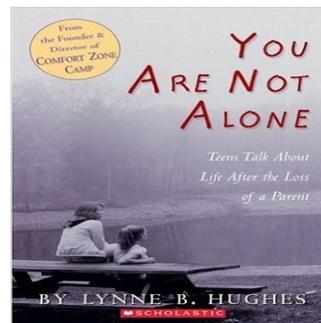
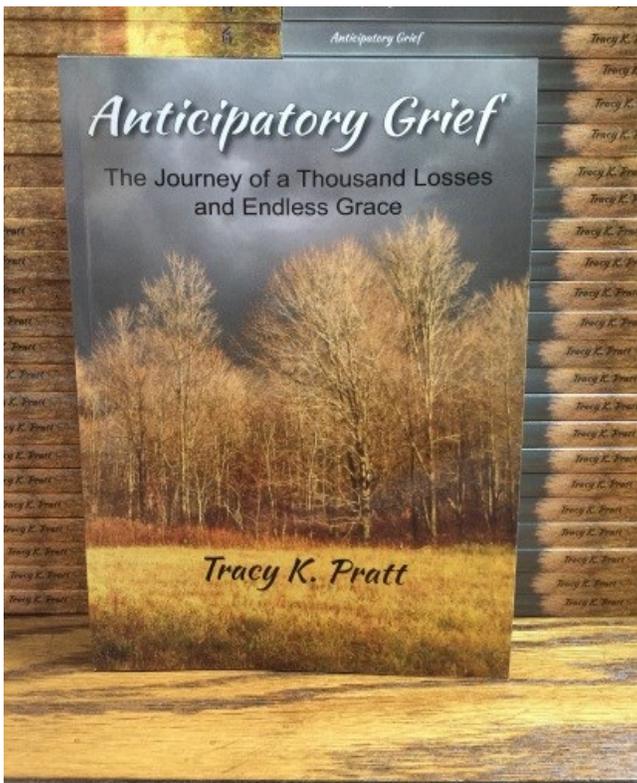
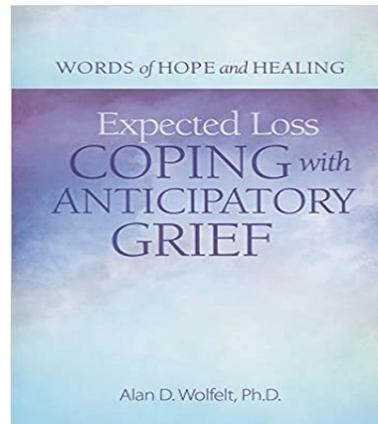
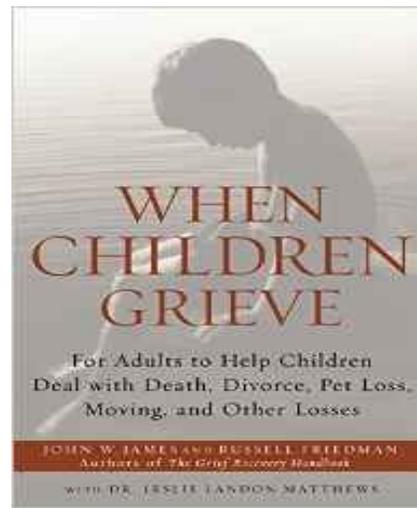
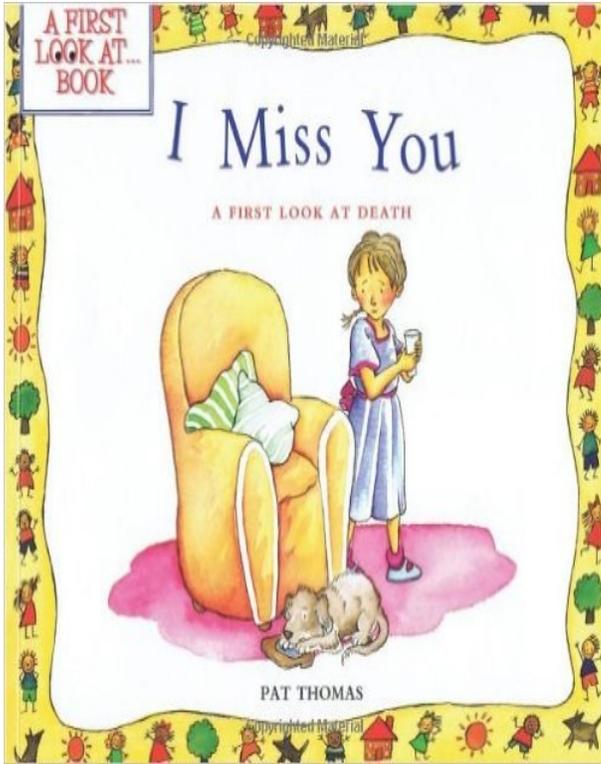
By calling our Bereavement Support Helpline, you can:

- Benefit from a listening ear and emotional support
- Find information & guidance on what to do after someone has died
- Discover free, local support in your community, tailored to you

Call our Helpline now on **01279 967670**



Reading Resources on Grief:



Bereavement

How other people can help



Do remember that appearances can be deceptive

I may look as if I'm coping okay, but inside I may be falling apart.



Don't be unprepared for the truth

Don't ask me how I am if you only want to hear "I'm okay thank you."



Do invite me out to coffee or lunch

Just to change the scene for a while.



Don't tell me that you've been too busy to phone or get in touch

Better to say "I didn't know what to say."



Do be ready to listen

To all the jumble of emotions I may be feeling without being judgemental.



Do encourage me

To be kind to myself and not to push myself to meet other people's expectations of how I should be.



Don't try and give me answers

It is unlikely that you will have any that will satisfy me – just allow me to express all my fears, questions and doubts.



Do be aware that there will be times when I don't feel able to talk

But this doesn't mean I won't want to talk at another time.



Don't measure the way I react

Or the emotions I express by your own expectations or experience. My grief is unique to me.

Don't feel you have to do something

Just be there.



For more information on bereavement support please visit: www.careforthefamily.org.uk/family-life/bereavement-support