

COPING WITH GRIEF

Grief can be a powerful and challenging life experience. Each person has their own unique way of reacting to a loss, but some typical feelings and reactions can include:

- Shock
- Denial
- Anger
- Guilt
- Sadness
- Loneliness
- Fear
- Disbelief
- Remorse
- Relief
- Helplessness
- Yearning/Separation
- Confusion
- Acceptance
- Anxiety, Panic
- Numbness
- Resentment, Blame
- Regret

You may experience physiological and behavioral reactions such as:

- Change in sleep
- Change in appetite
- Low energy
- Lowered immunity
- Difficulty concentrating and/or disorganization
- Disinterest in schoolwork, self-care, or normally pleasurable activities
- Isolation or social withdrawal
- Somatic complaints (e.g. stomachaches, headaches, back pain, neck pain)
- Substance use
- Quitting a job, school, or sport

To cope with grief...

- Do what is right for you. Go at your own pace.
- Recognize that everyone's grief looks different. There is no right way to grieve (this can be challenging).
- Seek out support people in your life (classmates, teammates, family, friends, and counselors).
- Remember that accepting the loss is a PROCESS with ups and downs.
- Find ways to express and release emotions such as talking, journaling, and crying.
- Consider getting back into your routines

Signs you may need more support to work through your grief could include:

- Feelings of panic and/or frenzy
- Feeling overwhelmed or incapacitated by fear and grief
- Emotional numbness that doesn't go away
- Going to extremes to avoid thinking about the loss (substance use, excessive work)
- Intense emotions daily for prolonged period of time
- Obsessive thoughts about death or suicide
- Nightmares or flashbacks with emotional intensity 1 month after loss

**If you need support, contact:
MTSU Counseling Services
(615) 898-2670**