

Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.

– Helen Keller

Grief affects us mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. The all-encompassing nature of grief reflects our need for good self-care. During periods of distress when you feel depressed, anxious, and fatigued, remember that coping techniques are really survival skills. Perhaps some of the suggestions below might be sources of strength as you continue on this path of grief.

Physically

- Choose healthy meals
- Get enough sleep (*talk with your MD about options if you find you are unable to sleep at night*)
- Try to exercise, even if it is for 10 min/day
- Consider meditation, yoga, deep breathing or prayer
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol, sugar, caffeine and tobacco
- Get out of the house. Go to the mall, sit on your porch, take a walk. Change of scene can help.

Emotionally

- Balance solitude and connectedness. Identify your support system. (*e.g., friends, family, church, support groups, professional help, internet support*)
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Delegate responsibility if you become overwhelmed.
- It's ok to disengage from grief by focusing on something else, like going to a movie, sporting event, concert or other activity.
- Write in a journal. Honest expression can release the pain.

Spiritually

- Take time to reflect. Allow yourself to find meaning in your spirituality.
- If you find your beliefs are challenged, talk with someone who is a leader in your faith system.
- Allow yourself permission to feel. Grief doesn't negate faith. The two can co-exist.

Mentally

- Postpone thinking about problems when you are overwhelmed or distressed. Give yourself a half-hour, half-day, or overnight break, when it is a more appropriate time, before dealing with them.
- Set priorities and establish realistic short-term and long-range goals.
- Be gentle with yourself and expect shortcomings. Perfection isn't realistic. Mentally prepare for failures and know that tomorrow is a new day.
- Finish a task. When you begin a task, don't allow distractions to pull you away from what you began.
- With large or overwhelming tasks, set a timer for 15-30 minutes and work on it until the timer goes off, then put it down until the next day.
- Learn how to say "no" and when to say "yes".
- Stay aware of your limitations. They represent your humanness, not your inadequacy.
- Maintain your sense of humor and ability to laugh. Even in moments of grief, joy is healing.