



February 2023: Navigating the Death of a Loved One



“Our dead are never dead to us until we have forgotten them.” – George Eliot

Welcome to the **February 2023 edition of TotalWellbeing**, your guide to the **8 dimensions of wellbeing**. This month we’ll talk about a very difficult subject, navigating the death of a loved one.

No death is harder to process and accept than the death of a loved one. This can include friends, family, and beloved pets. Navigating the aftermath of losing one of these special people or animals in our life takes time and can make you feel powerless and can be very overwhelming. But in these dark times we can’t let ourselves despair as life continues on for those left and we have to process what has happened so we too can continue, no matter how hard it may seem. Taking simple and small steps at first, like just making sure you eat something today, is important to start. From there reaching out to friends and family for support when you are ready and making sure you are continuing on with your self-care is a good next step. Remember that it takes time and to be patient with yourself. Healing is a long process and can take longer for some than others. To help, take a look at the advice below around coping with grief and understanding the various ways mourning and grief can affect you as well as others.

Remember that your EAP is here if you or a loved one has lost someone important, or just need to talk to someone. You have access to free and confidential counseling, wellness coaching, work/life concierge services to help find needed daily resources, and more! Plus, an online resource

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To your total wellbeing,
The MINES Team

Comforting Advice for Coping with Grief

The death of someone you love can be one of life's most difficult challenges. Understanding the process of grief and knowing some of what to expect may help.

Grief affects people in many ways. You may feel angry, anxious, guilty, sad—or all of those by turns. Often, the first reaction to the death is to feel numb or shocked. You may have difficulty concentrating or lose interest in enjoyable activities. Physically, you may feel tired, have trouble sleeping, lose your appetite, or even become ill.

Caring for Yourself Is Important

- Give yourself permission to feel however you are feeling.
- Try to keep up with daily tasks to avoid feeling overwhelmed.
- Talk with others about your feelings.
- Get enough sleep, exercise, and eat a healthy diet.
- Avoid alcohol, which can make you feel worse.

Adjustment Takes Time

The period of time following a death often holds many changes. Grieving is a process of accepting your loss and adjusting to those changes. That can take months, or even years.

While mourning a loss takes time, if you're not feeling any better in even small ways several weeks after the death, you may need help. Other warning signs that you're having trouble getting through the grief process include:

- Ongoing difficulty with eating or sleeping
- Avoiding any reminders of the loved one who passed away
- Constantly thinking about the person
- Relying on drugs or alcohol to cope
- Feeling alone or detached from others

Talking with your health care provider or a counselor can help if you're having difficulty coping with your loss. Grief support groups led by mental health professionals can also provide a place to talk about your feelings. And of course, make sure to contact MINES for free and confidential counseling, help with self-care, or just to talk things through with someone. We are here to help!

What You Need to Know About Grief and Mourning

The loss of a relative, friend, or loved one can have a different impact on everyone. Some people are able to find ways to cope with the loss. Others become overwhelmed by the loss and can find the road to recovery long and hard.

Grief is a personal experience unique to each individual situation. For some, it might come with a sense of relief, especially if the person lost was dealing with a terrible illness. For others, it might be very unexpected and lead to a sense of despair.

The Stages of Grief

For most individuals, grief and mourning follow a path that can be predictable, but the order and experience with each stage depends on the individual.

Immediate Impact: Most people are struck by a sense of denial or disbelief. The loss of a loved one or friend might seem too heavy to accept. This can lead to a feeling of disorientation, hyperactivity, and physical illness.

Periods of Pain and Anger: In the time following a loss – even weeks and months later – life might not return to normal. A person might still struggle to find a sense of normalcy. It's important to avoid taking on unnecessary concerns or activities during this time period. The recovery is still taking place.

Letting Go: During this phase the intense and immediate pain begins to lessen. This is when the individual begins to come out of the mourning period. While the chronic pain may linger in small ways, it does not necessarily impede returning to a sense of normalcy.

Growing Through Grief

It's important to recognize that grief is a natural part of the human existence. Loss is a part of life, especially when you consider the number of people close to us that might one day pass on. Growing through grief involves developing coping mechanisms for facing loss, increasing a sense of independence, and confronting mortality.

Grief and the Young

Children need to be prepared for loss in different ways. They need to know that the loss is not their fault, that there's nothing they can do to intervene, and that it's simply a part of life. It's important for children to know that someone will be there to watch over and protect them when a loss occurs. Make a point to engage children in ways that are honest and genuine, but don't unnecessarily destabilize their comfort level.

Remember, grief is unique to each person. Children may experience grief very differently than adults. If necessary, be ready to help children through a tough time by being willing to seek professional assistance. Talking with a certified counselor might be the difference between a healthy recovery and an unhealthy period of fear and anxiety.

If you or a member of your household needs assistance or guidance on any of these wellbeing topics, please call MINES & Associates, your EAP, today for free, confidential, 24/7 assistance at 800.873.7138.

To access past issues of *TotalWellbeing* please visit our [newsletters page](#). This newsletter is aimed at providing helpful information about various aspects of your wellbeing and then connecting it all back to important and relevant parts of everyday life. If you have any thoughts, questions, or content you would like to see covered here please get in contact with us. You can email us directly by clicking [here](#).

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