

What is grief?

Grief is a natural response to loss. It's the emotional suffering you feel when something or someone you love is taken away. You may associate grief with the death of a loved one – and this type of loss does often cause the most intense grief. But any loss can cause grief, including:

A relationship breakup

Loss of health

Losing a job

Loss of financial stability

A miscarriage

Death of a pet

Loss of a cherished dream

A loved one's serious illness

Loss of a friendship

Loss of safety after a trauma

The more significant the loss, the more intense the grief. However, even subtle losses can lead to grief. For example, you might experience grief after moving away from home, graduating from college, changing jobs, selling your family home, or retiring from a career you loved.

Everyone grieves differently

Grieving is a personal and highly individual experience. How you grieve depends on many factors, including your personality and coping style, your life experience, your faith, and the nature of the loss. The grieving process takes time. Healing happens gradually; it can't be forced or hurried – and there is no “normal” timetable for grieving. Some people start to feel better in weeks or months.

For others, the grieving process is measured in years. Whatever your grief experience, it's important to be patient with yourself and allow the process to naturally unfold.

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