

## Helpful Hints

The following suggestions may help you through your grieving process:

- Maintain a normal routine as much as possible.
- Spend time with others; avoid isolation.
- Keep a journal, write down all thoughts and feelings associated with the loss.
- Put together a scrapbook of loved one to keep memories alive.
- Confide in a trusted individual and share your story of the loss.
- Do things that feel good to you that are emotionally and physically healthy.
- Express feelings openly and allow yourself to cry.
- Eat well-balanced meals even if you are not hungry.
- Reach out to people and groups that can offer support and help.

If the healing process becomes too overwhelming, seek professional help.

### Resources

**County of Los Angeles  
Department of Mental Health**

**ACCESS CENTER HOTLINE**

1-800-854-7771

562-651-2549 TDD/TTY

(Available 24/7 including holidays)

## County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors



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**Los Angeles County  
Department of Mental Health  
Community and Government Relations Division  
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550 South Vermont Avenue, 6th Floor

Los Angeles, CA 90020

213-738-3700

[dmh.lacounty.gov](http://dmh.lacounty.gov)

## County of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health



### Grief



*Nurturing Hope, Promoting Wellness  
and Supporting Recovery*

### Emergency Outreach Bureau Disaster Services

550 South Vermont Avenue, 10th Floor

Los Angeles, CA 90020

213-738-4919

[dmh.lacounty.gov](http://dmh.lacounty.gov)

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Director



### Mission Statement

Enriching lives through partnerships designed to strengthen the community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency.

### What Is Grief?

#### General Information

Grief is a natural response to loss, particularly to the loss of someone or something to which a bond was formed. Losses can include a loved one, employment, pets, status, safety, control or possessions. Our response can vary and is influenced by personality, family, culture, religious beliefs and how close we were to the person, pet or lost item.

#### Common Reactions

##### Physical:

- Insomnia
- Fatigue, tension and irritability
- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Stomach distress

##### Emotional:

- Tearfulness
- Restlessness and the inability to concentrate
- Recurring dreams of the loved one or loss
- Mood swings
- Feeling angry/guilty over relationship with loved one(s)
- Anger toward loved one for dying

[samhsa.gov/mentalhealth/anxiety\\_grief.pdf](http://samhsa.gov/mentalhealth/anxiety_grief.pdf)

### Stages of Grief

- **Denial:** "This can't be happening to me."

This protects people from experiencing the intensity of the loss.

- **Anger:** "It's not fair. How can this happen to me?"

This reaction usually occurs when a person feels helpless, powerless or abandoned.

- **Bargaining:** "I'll give my life savings if..."

Negotiation with a higher power.

- **Depression:** "I miss my loved one. Why go on?"

After recognizing the extent of the loss, individuals may become silent, isolate or spend much of their time crying and grieving. Changes in sleep and appetite, lack of energy, concentration or crying spells are typical symptoms. Feelings of loneliness, emptiness and self-pity can surface during this phase.

- **Acceptance:** "It's going to be okay."

This final stage comes with peace and understanding of the loss.



[Kap.samhsa.gov/products/tools/cl-guides/pdfs/QGC\\_37.pdf](http://Kap.samhsa.gov/products/tools/cl-guides/pdfs/QGC_37.pdf)

### Coping with Grief

Grief is a normal part of life. Support from friends, family, faith-based communities, support groups and a mental health counselor may help your healing process. Everyone reacts differently. Your experience is unique to you. Support can come from a number of sources:

- **Family/Significant Other/Friends**

Talking about your loss may make the burden of grief easier to carry.

- **Faith-Based Community**

Your religious community can give you emotional support.

- **Support Groups**

There are many support groups for people who are grieving. These groups include people who have lost children, survivors of suicides, etc.

- **Therapists and Other Professionals**

Consider seeking professional help if the following symptoms impair your ability to go about your daily routine:

- ◆ Problems falling or staying asleep
- ◆ Decrease or increase in appetite
- ◆ Feelings of sadness or emptiness
- ◆ Difficulty concentrating
- ◆ Feelings of hopelessness



[Mayoclinic.com/health/suicide/MH00048](http://Mayoclinic.com/health/suicide/MH00048)