

# Recognizing Symptoms of Grief

## Cognitive:

- Shock
- Numbness
- Poor attention span
- Easily distracted
- Poor memory
- Diminished ability to retain info

## Physical:

- Appetite & weight changes
- Sleeping problems
- Exhaustion
- Muscle tension
- Hyper-startle reactions
- Shortness of breath
- Sighing
- Tightness in throat
- Headaches
- Chest pain
- Abdominal pain
- Gastro-intestinal irritations
- Nausea
- Changes in blood pressure
- Immune system illnesses
- Fatigue

## Emotional:

- Fear
- Yearning
- Vulnerability
- Helplessness
- Powerlessness
- Numbness
- Sadness
- Anger
- Relief
- Irritability
- Guilt
- Loneliness
- Longing
- Meaninglessness
- Abandonment

## Spiritual:

- Feeling abandoned or punished by God
- Feeling little meaning/purpose
- Feeling angry with God
- Questioning your religious beliefs
- Feeling spiritually connected to the person who died
- Feeling spiritually connected to God
- Finding hope in prayer/spiritual beliefs
- Finding purpose in life

## Social:

- Your "give a darn" is broken
- Hypersensitive to what you are missing
- Feeling dependent
- Withdrawn (isolative), avoidance
- Noticing that others may be avoiding you
- Lack of interest
- Snapping at others
- Having explosions (being over-reactive)

## Family / Friends:

- Initial closeness
- Hyper-vigilance regarding your loved ones' health/safety
- Increased anxiety regarding your immediate family's safety
- Protecting yourself and loved ones from your grief
- Differences in how each member expresses their grief may cause misunderstandings

