

5 Ways to Cope with Grief & Loss

When a loved one dies, the loss and grief you feel can be deep. You might feel sad, angry, or lost without the person who died. It can take time to adjust to what's happened. Be patient with yourself, and lean on people you trust for support and comfort.

Here are 5 ideas that might help you cope when someone you love has died:

1. **Join in rituals.** Memorial services and funerals are times to gather. They can help people get through the first few days or weeks. Just being with other people who knew your loved one can be comforting.
2. **Accept your emotions.** Don't stop yourself from having a good cry if you feel one coming on. Accept the feelings you have, rather than think you "should" feel a different way. Sometimes, others may expect you to "move on" before you're ready. But take the time you need. Know that you can (and will) heal over time. Healing doesn't mean you forget the person who died. It doesn't mean that you miss them less.
3. **Talk about it when you can.** Some people want to tell the story of their loss or talk about their feelings. But sometimes people don't feel like talking. That's OK, too. No one should feel pressured to talk. If you don't feel like talking, find ways to express your emotions and thoughts. You can write in a journal, write a song, a poem, or make a photo tribute about your loved one. You can do this just for yourself, or you can share it with others.
4. **Preserve memories.** You could do something to honor the person you love in a way that fits. Plant a tree or garden. Take part in a charity run or walk. Make a memory box or folder that has reminders of the person who has died. Include mementos, photos, quotes, or whatever you choose. If you want, write a letter to the person. In it, you might include your feelings and things you want to say. Some people write a gratitude letter. It's a way to thank your loved one for being a part of your life. If they encouraged good qualities in you, keep living those good qualities as a way to honor them.
5. **Get the support you need.** It takes time to adjust after a loved one dies. And it helps to have plenty of support. You can get support from family, friends, or adults in your life. Grief counselors, therapists, and support groups can help, too. Ask your school counselor Mr. Ford for resources too!