

COMMON RESPONSES TO THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE

The responses below were shared by people who've faced a loved one's death.
Having an idea of what is normal in grief can be helpful.

You'll likely experience many emotions at once. Grief emotions are not orderly, but are more like a tangled ball. And some of the emotions listed here are polar opposites! Note that this list, while long, is not exhaustive. After looking over this list, if you're not sure if your grief experience is normal, talk with your GriefShare group leader. He or she will be able to help you.

Please understand that thinking you don't want to go on is normal, but thinking about suicide—especially making plans to take your life—is not normal. Seek help immediately.

- Abandoned
- Afraid of facing emotions
- Ambushed by grief
- Anger with others, self, loved one, and/or God
- Anguish
- Annoyance
- Anxiety
- Apathy
- Avoiding church
- Avoiding grief
- Avoiding thinking about the death
- Being harsh with others
- Betrayed
- Bitterness
- Blame
- Can't pray
- Can't talk about loved one
- Change of priorities
- Comparing your grief to other people's
- Compassion
- Complaining
- Concerned about your family members
- Confusion
- Consumed by grief
- Crisis of beliefs
- Crying
- Dazed
- Denial
- Depending on God
- Depression
- Desire for justice
- Despair
- Devastation
- Disappointment
- Disbelief
- Discontentment
- Discouragement
- Disorganized
- Disoriented
- Distracted
- Diving into work
- Don't want to go on
- Drained
- Drawing closer to God
- Dread
- Emotional wreck
- Emptiness
- Encouragement
- Envy
- Exhaustion/weakness
- Fatigue
- Fear of future
- Feeling judged
- Feeling like everything is in slow motion
- Feeling like everything is too hard
- Feeling like God isn't there
- Feeling like mush
- Feeling like something's missing
- Feeling like you're doing something wrong
- Feeling like you're losing your mind

- Feeling like your faith isn't working
- Feeling like your grief is marginalized
- Feeling out of control
- Feeling part of you is gone, ripped away
- Feeling rushed
- Feeling you're being a burden
- Financial worries
- Flashbacks
- Forgetfulness
- Frustration
- Full of questions
- Going through the motions
- Guilt
- Hallucinations
- Happy your loved one is no longer suffering
- Heartbroken
- Heightened emotions
- Helping everyone but yourself
- Helplessness
- Hiding grief
- Hope
- Hopelessness
- Hurt
- Impatience
- In a dark tunnel
- Inability to do things as well as you used to
- Inability to function
- Inadequacy
- Increased appetite
- Insomnia
- Internalizing grief
- Intrusive thoughts
- Irritable
- Isolating self
- Jealousy
- Lack of concentration
- Lack of focus
- Loneliness
- Loss of appetite
- Loss of identity
- Loss of purpose
- Making silly mistakes
- Memory loss
- Mental fog
- Missing loved one
- Nervous
- Nightmares
- No interest in doing things
- No sense of time
- Not allowing self to grieve
- Not enjoying what you used to enjoy
- Not trusting God
- Numbing pain
- Out of control
- Overwhelmed
- Panic attacks
- Peace
- Physical problems: stomachache, headache, chest and heart hurting, nausea, hurting all over, migraines, shortness of breath
- Prayer
- Pretending you're okay
- Questioning your sanity
- Questions about heaven
- Rage
- Refusing joy
- Regret
- Rejection by friends
- Relief
- Roller coaster emotions
- Sadness
- Second-guessing
- Self-pity
- Shame
- Shock
- Shutting down
- Shutting people out
- Sleeping a lot
- Social and relational struggles
- Sorrow
- Squashed
- Staying busy
- Staying in bed
- Stress
- Stuffing down emotions
- Surprise
- Tangled emotions
- Thankfulness
- Tired
- Trying to take care of everything yourself
- Turning to God
- Unable to make decisions
- Uncomfortable with others
- Unproductive
- Unwilling to accept help
- Vindictiveness
- Vulnerable
- Wanting to rush through this
- Worry
- Other _____