

Practical Suggestions for Loss and Healing

Take the little losses seriously.

By taking the time to show caring for a friend who is moving away, or our sadness in leaving a home grown too small or large for our needs, we give ourselves an opportunity to “rehearse” for the larger losses in our lives.

Take time to feel.

Build in quiet time to be alone and undistracted. Privately writing about our experiences and observations can contribute to a sense of release and understanding.

Confide in someone.

Burdens shared are not as heavy. Accept the caring gestures and listening ears of many others graciously, recognizing that your turn to reciprocate will come.

Allow yourself to change.

Losses of people and roles important to our lives change us. Embrace those changes. Find opportunities that exist for growth, however bittersweet that growth may be.

Maintain a daily routine.

Consistency becomes important in relieving stress. Try to get six to eight hours of sleep a night. On the days you can't sleep, at least rest. Try to eat three meals a day. On days that food doesn't sound good, try to eat at least something.

Exercise.

It's a powerful antidote for depression. As we exercise, our bodies release endorphins. These proteins can help give us a feeling of well-being again, without the need for medication.

(Continued on page 2)



(Continued from page 1)

Release anger.

Venting anger, of course, can be done constructively or destructively. Certainly, throwing a pillow is much preferred over throwing a fist. Writing an angry letter, knowing it won't get sent, is far better than saying mean things that cause pain and perhaps regret. Find ways to vent anger constructively.

Avoid chemicals.

It's important not to try drowning out our pain with drugs or alcohol. Alcohol may seem to give temporary relief. But alcohol is a depressant, and aren't we already depressed enough? Avoid stimulants such as caffeine, nicotine and sugar. These can add to that feeling of shakiness. Generally, medications are not needed and if they are, it's for specific symptom relief. There are no pills for grief. Self medicating can be very dangerous. It's best to consult a physician before taking any over-the-counter preparation to relieve distress. There may be times when a physician encourages use of medication. If so, follow instructions carefully and report back any changes in symptoms.

Help the body and mind work together.

Find ways to break down a task so it isn't as overwhelming as it might seem at the start. Breathe deeply. Take that walk. Watch the sunset. Go out for dinner. Sit and stare at the walls, if that's all the energy you have at the moment. Ask for help from other people.



If you or a family member is experiencing difficulty with healing, consider seeking assistance from Continuum EAP. You can contact us at 402-476-0186 or 800-755-7636 to make a confidential appointment.

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