

## Signs and Symptoms of Grief

Grief is expressed differently in every individual. Consider reaching out to a support network if you have recently lost a loved one and are experiencing any of these signs:

- Withdrawing socially
- Having trouble thinking and concentrating
- Feeling restless or anxious
- Experiencing a loss of appetite
- Feeling depressed
- Dreaming of the deceased
- Experiencing unexpected weight changes
- Having trouble sleeping
- Feeling tired or weak
- Becoming preoccupied with death or events surrounding death
- Searching for reasons for the loss
- Dwelling on mistakes, real or imagined, that you made with the deceased
- Feeling guilty for the loss
- Feeling alone, distant, or isolated from others
- Expressing anger when seeing others with their loved ones

### References:

PDQ Supportive and Palliative Care Editorial Board. Grief, Bereavement, and Coping With Loss (PDQ®): Health Professional Version. 2017 Apr 20.

American Cancer Society. May 10, 2019.

Kübler-Ross, E., & Kessler, D. (2005). On grief and grieving: Finding the meaning of grief through the five stages of loss. New York ; Toronto: Scribner.

## T.E.A.L.® Support

Facing the loss of a loved one to ovarian cancer can be difficult. T.E.A.L.® has support groups and resources that can be attended virtually or in-person:

- **Daughters of T.E.A.L.®** - A group for women who have lost their mother, sister, aunt, or friend to ovarian cancer.
- **T.E.A.L.® Workshops** - Free wellness workshops that focus on self-care techniques, including meditation, breath empowerment, fitness, reiki, and more. Visit [www.TellEveryAmazingLady.org/workshops/](http://www.TellEveryAmazingLady.org/workshops/) for a full list of workshops.
- **Events** - Our events are attended by survivors, caregivers, families, and friends of those who have been touched by ovarian cancer. Attending is a great way to meet others with similar experiences.

## Volunteer With Us!

Volunteering can be a source of healing for many. If you would like to join our community and help others who have been affected by ovarian cancer, T.E.A.L.® offers flexible volunteer opportunities. No matter how many hours you can commit, or what your interests or skills are, we can find just the right level of involvement for you! Visit [www.TellEveryAmazingLady.org/volunteer/](http://www.TellEveryAmazingLady.org/volunteer/) to learn more.

## Have you lost a loved one to ovarian cancer?

All losses are difficult, and watching your loved one lose the battle against ovarian cancer can be especially difficult.



Tell Every Amazing Lady About Ovarian Cancer  
Louisa M. McGregor Ovarian Cancer  
Foundation's mission is to promote public awareness and education of the signs, symptoms and risk factors of ovarian cancer while providing support to survivors and raising funds for research to find a screening test and cure for the disease.

T.E.A.L.® Community Center  
533 16th Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11215  
[info@tealwalk.org](mailto:info@tealwalk.org)  
917-310-4835

[www.TellEveryAmazingLady.org](http://www.TellEveryAmazingLady.org)

## What is Grief?

Everyone experiences grief differently. Grieving is a personal process that is unique to the individual, and therefore, there is no right or wrong way to grieve. People may experience ups and downs while grieving: they may feel better for a while, but later become sad and upset again. The duration and intensity of grief varies, but it is common for the grief process to take a year or longer.

## Taking Care of Yourself

Sometimes when a loved one passes away, caring for yourself becomes increasingly difficult. You may feel that you cannot express your feelings of grief, or may feel like it is difficult to get out of bed. Though all types of grief are normal, it is important to ask for help. **If you are experiencing these symptoms of grief so often that it is impeding your daily activities and relationships, it might be time to seek out counseling or support groups.** Individual and group therapy can be healing for many. Most hospitals and palliative care settings offer grief groups, so they are a good place to start.



## Types of Grief

**Anticipatory Grief** - The feeling of grief when waiting for an impending loss.

- Signs/symptoms: Depression, rehearsal of death, heightened concern for the dying person, attempts to adjust to the consequences of death

**Normal Grief** - The emotional progression towards acceptance of the loss and while still continuing daily activities.

- Signs/symptoms: Sadness, emotional numbness, despair, shock, disbelief, fatigue, and loss of interest

**Complicated Grief** - Persistent form of grief that involves maladaptive thoughts and dysfunctional behaviors. Grief dominates life and future seems bleak.

- Signs/symptoms: Feeling lost and alone, longing for lost loved one, preoccupation with thoughts and memories of lost loved one, and irrational thoughts that deceased loved one may reappear



## Five Stages of Grief

The five stages of grief describe the phases people tend to go through during the mourning process. Not everyone will go through all of these stages or go through them in the same order. Some people may move on from one stage and then return to it later in the grieving process. By recognizing these stages in yourself, you may feel better equipped to recognize how grief is impacting your daily life:

**Denial** - A state of shock. You may deny the news that you receive, you may wonder about life's meaning and how you will go on.

**Anger** - You may start thinking that life is not fair and begin blaming those around you.

**Bargaining** - Associated with guilt and/or false hope, you may bargain with a higher power for your loved one to survive, or start thinking about "what ifs."

**Depression** - May feel overwhelmed and hopeless. You might try to withdraw from life and avoid those around you.

**Acceptance** - Acceptance that even though your loved one has passed, you will be okay. The stage where you begin to move forward, but not necessarily to move on, with your life.