

14 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO ENHANCE YOUR HEALING

“How long does grief take?” That’s a common question asked by many who are grieving. There is no standard, “one-size-fits-all,” answer. Everyone’s grief time frame is unique and personal. Grief takes as long as it takes. Here are some suggestions to help you enhance your healing.

- Realize and recognize the loss.
- Take time for nature’s slow, sure, stuttering process of healing.
- Give yourself massive doses of restful relaxation & routine busy-ness.
- Know that powerful, overwhelming feelings will lessen with time.
- Be vulnerable, share your pain.
- Be humble enough to accept support.
- Surround yourself with life: plants, animals and friends.
- Use mementos to help with your mourning, not to attempt to live in the past.
- Avoid rebound relationships, big decisions, and anything addictive.
- Prepare for change, new interests, new friends, solitude, creativity, growth.
- Realize that forgiveness, of self and others, is a vital part of the healing process.
- Know that anniversaries can bring up painful feelings that you thought you had successfully worked through.
- Realize that any new death-related crisis will bring up feelings about past losses.
- Know that the best memorial to the person who has died is to work toward a future full of growth & love.

“Many people describe grief as waves from a storm crashing onto the shore. At first the waves are very large, coming at you one right after another... Often you don’t have time to get back on your feet after one wave before the next one knocks you down. But gradually the waves get smaller and come further apart... In time an occasional wave may still batter you, but more often you’re able to keep your balance and stay on your feet.

Right now the most important thing you can do is not let anyone – including yourself – pressure you to stop grieving. You can’t stop the waves of grief from hitting you any more than you could stop storm waves from rolling onto the shore. The waves need to come and go until they gradually subside. Grief simply takes time.”

Kenneth C. Haugk, Finding Hope and Healing