

Responding to Loss

Our response to loss is not just emotional; it can also be physical, psychological, and spiritual. Any of these responses are considered normal and natural.

Emotional Responses

- Shock
- Denial
- Disbelief
- Guilt
- Fear
- Loneliness
- Emptiness
- Sadness
- Disorganization
- Panic
- Relief
- Powerlessness
- Anger
- Hopelessness
- Shame

Psychological Responses

- Inability to concentrate
- Explosive emotions
- Low self-esteem
- Lack of interest
- Prolonged withdrawal
- Inability to experience pleasure

Physical Responses

- Tiredness / Lack of energy
- Difficulty sleeping / Oversleeping
- Lack of appetite / Overeating
- Tightness in chest
- Shortness of breath
- Headaches
- Ulcers
- Hearts problems
- Stomach pain
- Nervousness / Trembling
- Lump in the throat
- Muscle loss

Spiritual Responses

- Anger with higher power
- Doubts about belief system
- Questions about meaning of life
- Interest in afterlife
- Changed priorities
- Search for meaning in the loss
- Gratitude for time spent together
- Belief that person is free from suffering / in a better place / reunited with loved ones

If feelings of sadness and hopelessness develop into depression, contact your medical provider. If you have thoughts of harming yourself or others, please call Crisis Services at (716) 834-3131.

Affiliate of Hospice & Palliative Care Buffalo