

*For further help, contact your doctor  
or a mental health professional*



**MY PHYSICIAN** \_\_\_\_\_

**MY COUNSELOR** \_\_\_\_\_

## **In an Emergency, Dial 911**

**Ga Crisis Line**  
1-800-715-4225

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline**  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)

**Shiloh Behavioral Health**  
www.shilohbh.org

**Southern Counseling Services**  
912-705-0858

**Appling Counseling Center**  
912-367-4614

**Cord of 3 Counseling Services**  
912-282-0992



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This guide is presented as a supplement to, and NOT a substitute for, the knowledge, skill, and judgment of qualified counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, physicians, and health care professionals. It is not intended to diagnose a mental health condition. If you have further questions about or are seeking treatment for mental health conditions, please consult a counselor or other health care professional.



# **Grieving a loss**

**FIND HEALING FOR YOURSELF  
OR A LOVED ONE**

***FREE  
TAKE ONE***

## WHAT NOT TO SAY to someone who is grieving

- ▶ Everything happens for a reason
- ▶ You've just got to stay busy
- ▶ Try not to think about it so much / get your mind off of it
- ▶ Time heals all wounds
- ▶ Your loved one would want you to be happy
- ▶ God won't give you more than you can handle
- ▶ You're the man/woman of the house now
- ▶ I understand, I lost my...

Some things might be ok to say later or in a different context, but they usually don't help when the hurt is fresh.

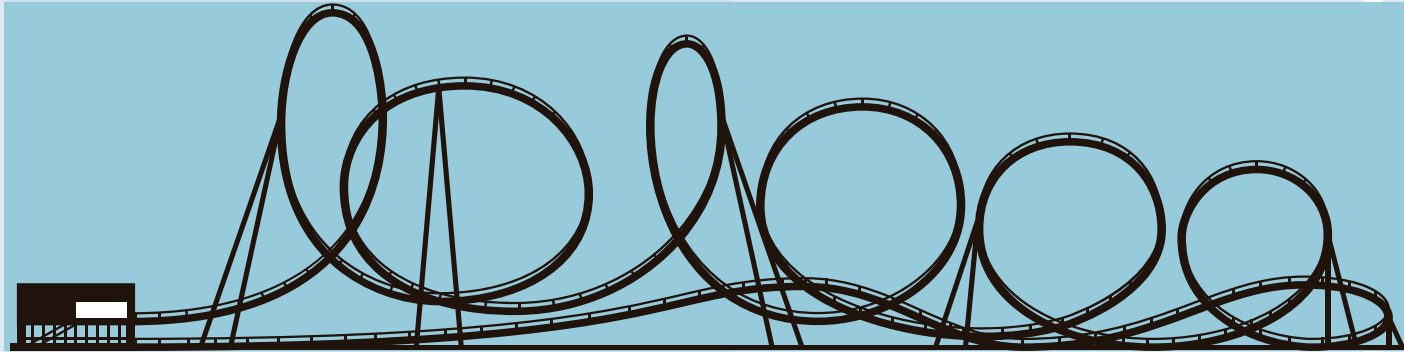
## WHAT TO DO INSTEAD

- ▶ Let them talk or let them be silent; your presence is enough.
- ▶ Let them set the pace for your support.
- ▶ Commit to support you can sustain, rather than giving a lot at first and then nothing.
- ▶ Ask them what they need (it may not be something you can provide).

## REMEMBER

- ▶ Are you a close friend or simply a member of their community? This can set the tone for how much support you can offer. It can also help you keep appropriate boundaries.
- ▶ If you're not sure, try starting with the least intrusive form of support, like a card or a text, and go from there.
- ▶ If you had a shared relationship with the deceased, being around you might also be difficult for that person.
- ▶ This is a very personal process, and it takes trust and vulnerability to let you join them.

# Grief is a Process



## THE PHASES OF GRIEF

- ▶ **Denial:** "This isn't real. Someone made a mistake"
- ▶ **Anger:** "This is someone's fault, and they're going to pay."
- ▶ **Bargaining:** "God, if you'll bring them back, I'll do anything."
- ▶ **Depression:** "I can't go on. I will never feel happy again."
- ▶ **Acceptance:** "I miss my loved one, **AND** I am at peace."

This is rarely a step-by-step process. Grief will take you back and forth between phases, no matter if it's been days or decades since your loss.

*Loss can trap us into focusing on what we don't have. Healing helps us look at what we do have.*

## SOME WAYS TO COPE

### HOLD ON LOOSELY



When thoughts are overwhelming, imagine they are leaves floating by on the surface of a stream. Try not to watch them one by one. Instead, let them all drift in and out of your field of view.

### ⌚ MAKE TIME FOR IT

Set a timer for 5 minutes. Go to a safe, private place. Turn the shower on or play some white noise. Let yourself completely fall apart for that space of time. Then when the timer goes off, gather yourself and return to what you were doing beforehand.

### COMMITTED ACTION



Think of something you can do to honor your loved one or to mark a new season in your life. This could be public or private, big or small, free or costly. What matters is that it is meaningful and healing to you.

## & THE POWER OF "AND"

You don't have to choose between grief and living your life. You can make space for both. Instead of thinking "I want to get out of bed, **BUT** I am grieving so much," change one word: "I want to get out of bed, **AND** I am grieving so much today." Then give yourself grace to move at the pace you need.

Your tears represent all the love you had left to give. Don't wipe them away too soon.