

Grief Helps



Grief Is Normal

James E. Miller



Tears hinder sorrow from becoming despair.

J. H. LEIGH HUNT



Do not let your sorrow come higher than your knees.

SWEDISH PROVERB

It's interesting, and telling, that the assertion "grief is normal"
needs to be made at all.

By their words and actions some propose that grief is not normal,
that it's somehow inappropriate or unhealthy.

"They've earned their reward and they're in a better place now,"
some survivors may say, "so why should I grieve?"

"I'm relieved the one I've loved isn't suffering any longer,"
others may say, "so I'm glad, not sad."

"We had a long, happy life together," I once heard a new widow say,
"so I have no regrets, no painful feelings; it's time to move on."

Some people hold that it's okay to grieve for several days,
or a handful of weeks, but after that it's no longer standard.

It's interesting that we don't ask, "Is joy normal?"

Of course, it is!

Anxiety? Fear? In the face of uncertainty or danger, sure!



*It is with deep grief that I learn of the death
of your kind and brave father; and, especially,
that it is affecting your young heart
beyond what is common in such cases.*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

(LETTER TO FANNY McCULLOUGH, DECEMBER, 1862)

Beyond any doubt, grief *is* normal.

It is the natural human response to the loss of any significant relationship.

Grief can appear as a deep sorrow, a painful anguish, or a strong distress.

Whatever its intensity, grief is the vehicle by which a human being
acknowledges and feels the loss, adapts to necessary life changes,
and eventually moves on to a renewed, though often changed, life.

Can grief ever be *ab*normal?

Yes, it can, though it's probably wiser to refer to certain instances of grief
as complicated.

Sometimes grief becomes unusually lengthy or turbulent or severe.

Sometimes people become stuck in their grief.

When these things happen, which is in a minority of cases,
it makes sense to turn to professionals for assistance.

But generally grief in and of itself is an expected response to loss—
in other words, it's normal.

Resources for Grieving People

BY JAMES E. MILLER

Books

One You Love Has Died
When Mourning Dawns
What Will Help Me?
A Pilgrimage Through Grief
When a Man Faces Grief
Winter Grief, Summer Grace
How Will I Get Through the Holidays?
Change & Possibility
Un Ser Amado Ha Fallecido

DVDs

When Mourning Dawns: The DVD
Invincible Summer
Listen to Your Sadness
How Do I Go On?
By the Waters of Babylon
We Will Remember
Nothing Is Permanent Except Change

Electronic Resources

100 Healing Messages for Your Grief: Emailed Videos
Grief's Healing Journey: An eNewsletter



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