

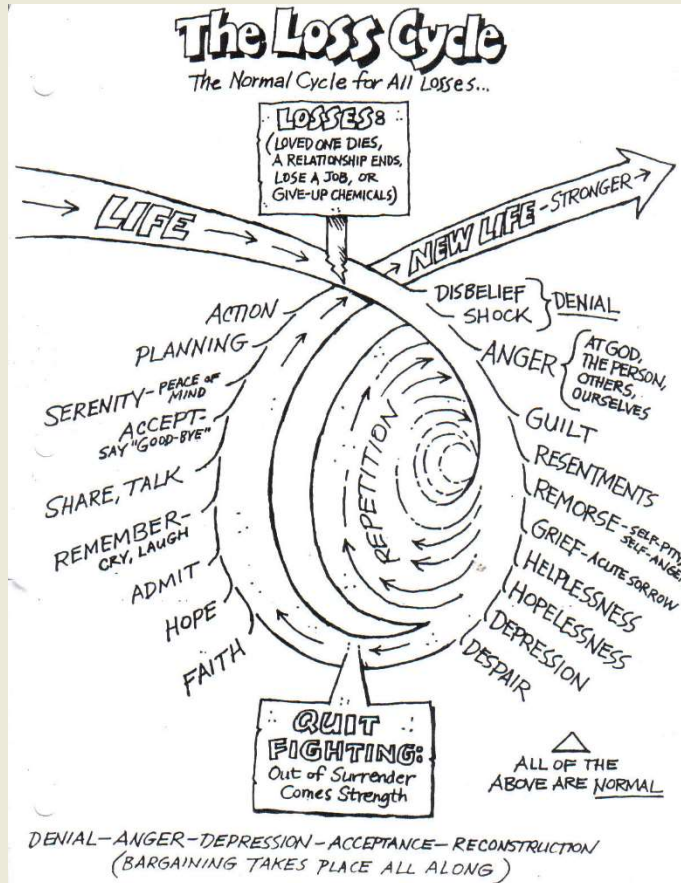


# SOUTHERN INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC.

4058 Willows Road ▪ Alpine, CA 91901

Phone (619) 445-1188 ▪ Fax (619) 659-3144

www.SIHC.org



## THIS WEEK

### What is Grief?

An explanation of grief and loss

### Processing Grief and Loss

Learn about unhealthy ways of grieving and maladaptive coping mechanisms

### Supportive Resources

Support groups, hotlines, and books to help with the grief process

## What is Grief?

By The Mayo Clinic

Grief is a strong, sometimes overwhelming emotion for people, regardless of whether their sadness stems from the loss of a loved one or from a diagnosis they or someone they love has received.

They might find themselves feeling numb and removed from daily life, unable to carry on with regular duties while saddled with their sense of loss.

Grief is the natural reaction to loss. Grief is both a universal and a personal experience. Individual experiences of grief vary and are influenced by the nature of the loss. Some examples of loss include the death of a loved one, the ending of an important relationship, job loss, loss through theft, or the loss of independence through disability.

Experts advise those grieving to realize they can't control the process and to prepare for varying stages of grief. Understanding why they're suffering can help, as can talking to others and trying to resolve issues that cause significant emotional pain, such as feeling guilty for a loved one's death.

Mourning can last for months or years. Generally, pain is tempered as time passes and as the bereaved adapts to life without a loved one, to the news of a terminal illness, or to the realization that someone they love may die.



# Processing Grief and Loss

By Tami Mason, LMFT

## Supportive Resources

SIHC Grief Support Group: Fridays at 11:00am starting 6/4/2021. Contact Rebecca Prine at 619-357-9408 if you are interested.

Sharp Bereavement Support: 619-667-1900

Crisis Response Network: 800-203-CARE (2273)

Grief Share: [griefshare.org](http://griefshare.org)

*Hardcore Recovery: An Honest Guide to Getting Through Grief without the Condolences, Sympathy, and Other BS* by Steve Case (**Warning: Adult Language**)

*Healing After Loss: Daily Meditations for Working Through Grief* by Martha Whitmore Hickman

*Healing the Hurt Spirit* by Catherine Greenleaf

*I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye: Surviving, Coping, and Healing After the Sudden Death of a Loved One* by Brook Noel and Pamela D Blair

*Moving Through Grief* by Gretchen Kubacky, PsyD

*Notes on Grief* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Releases on 5/11/2021)

*The Fall of Freddie the Leaf (A Story of All Ages)* by Leo Buscaglia

*The Grief Forest: A Book About What We Don't Talk About* by Laraine Herring

*Why Do I Feel So Sad?: A Grief Book for Children* by Tracy Lambert-Prater, LPC



Grief, loss, and mourning have come up a lot lately because of the recent COVID and Opioid pandemics. As a therapist, part of my job while working with grief is walking with clients as they process, allowing space for their feelings and emotions, teaching them how to actually feel their feelings without denying them or engaging in behaviors that blocks their emotions, and learning how to honor their loved ones with their grief. I teach my clients that, while there is no right way to grieve, there are several wrong ways.

Unhealthy ways of grieving and maladaptive coping mechanisms:

- Denying or repressing your feeling: Often leads to increased risk-taking behaviors, excessive drinking, drug use, self-harming behaviors, compulsive spending, etc.
- Isolating: Leads to increased depression and anxiety
- Attempting to control others in your life

These are just a few of the ways people can attempt to fill the void that grief causes in their life. Unfortunately, these strategies do not help the grieving process. Instead, they simply block the process and prolong the suffering. We live in a society that has taught us that emotions and feelings are "bad." We are taught to "suck it up [or] get over it." These messages have left us believing that being sad or depressed when a loved one passes is wrong.

I've heard so many times from clients: "I know I shouldn't be feeling this way." I'm always shocked because, honestly, how should you feel? Feelings of grief, sadness, depression, dejection, numbness, anger, shock, anguish.... are NORMAL responses to grief! Grief is the price we pay for love, and without grief, we would not be able to experience the joys of love.