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**What is Grief**

Grief is a natural response to loss. It’s the emotional suffering you feel when something or someone you love is taken away. Often, the pain of loss can feel overwhelming. You may experience all kinds of difficult and unexpected emotions, from shock or anger to disbelief, guilt, and profound sadness. The pain of grief can also disrupt your physical health, making it difficult to sleep, eat, or even think straight. These are normal reactions to loss—and the more significant the loss, the more intense your grief will be.

Coping with the loss of someone or something you love is one of life’s biggest challenges. You may associate grieving with the death of a loved one—which is often the cause of the most intense type of grief—but any loss can cause grief, including:

* Divorce or a relationship breakup
* Loss of health
* Losing a job
* Loss of financial stability
* Miscarriage
* Retirement
* Death of a pet
* Loss of a dream
* A loved one’s serious illness
* Loss of a friendship
* Loss of safety after a traumatic event
* Selling a family home

Even subtle losses in life can trigger a sense of grief. For example, you might grieve after moving away from home, graduating from college, or changing jobs. Whatever your loss, it’s personal to you, so don’t feel ashamed about how you feel, or believe that it’s somehow only appropriate to grieve for certain things. If the person, animal, relationship, or situation was significant to you, it’s normal to grieve the loss you’re experiencing. Whatever the cause of your grief, though, there are healthy ways to cope with the pain that, in time, can ease your sadness and help you come to terms with your loss, find new meaning, and eventually move on with your life.