

## *Some Thoughts About Grieving. . .*

**Accept the grief.** Do not try to "be brave." Take time to cry. Men too.

**Talk about it.** Share your grief within the family; do not try to protect them by silence. Find a friend to talk to, someone who will listen without passing judgment, or offering your advice. If possible, find someone who has experienced a similar loss. And talk often. If the friend tells you to "snap out of it," find another friend.

**Keep busy.** Do work that occupies the mind, but avoid frantic activity.

**Take care of yourself.** Bereavement can be a threat to your health. Right now, you may feel that you don't care. That will change. You are important. Your life is valuable. Take care of it.

**Eat well.** At this time of emotional and physical stress, your body needs good nourishment. If you can only pick at your food, a vitamin supplement might be helpful, but it will not make up for a poor diet. Be good to yourself.

**Exercise regularly.** Return to your old program or start one as soon as possible. Depression can be lightened a little by the biochemical changes brought by exercise. And you will sleep better. An hour-long walk every day is ideal for many people.

**Get rid of imagined guilt.** You did the best you could at the time. If you made mistakes, accept that you, like everyone, are imperfect. If you cannot shake the deep feelings of guilt, consider professional or spiritual counseling. Don't spend the rest of your life feeling guilty.

**Join a group of others who are sorrowing.** Your old circle of friends may change. Even if it does not, you will need new friends who have been through your experience.

**Associate with old friends also.** This may be difficult. Some will be embarrassed by your presence, but they will get over it.

**Postpone major decisions.** For example, wait at least a year, if you can, before deciding to sell your house or change jobs.

**Record your thoughts in a journal.** It helps to get your feelings out, and it may help you to read back through it and see how far you have come.

**Take advantage of your religious affiliation,** if you have one. If you have been inactive, this might be the time to become involved again.

**Get professional help if needed.** Do not allow crippling grief to continue. There comes a time to stop crying and to live again. Sometimes just a few sessions with a trained counselor will help you resolve the anger, guilt, and despair that keep you from functioning.

**Remember, no matter how deep your sorrow, you are not alone.** Others have been there, and will help share your load if you will let them. Do not deny them the opportunity.

~ ~ ~ Samaritan Hospice ~ ~ ~