

DOES GRIEF EVER REALLY GO AWAY?

Part 2

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In the last issue of We Need Not Walk Alone, I asked the question that's in this title, and of course you already knew the answer. In that article we focused on grief issues related to the Mind. This article is Part 2 of the answer in which we look at grief from four other perspectives: Heart (emotional), Spiritual, Social and Physical.

As I said last time, when you approach people who've not experienced a significant death in their life, especially the death of a child, grandchild or

sibling, and ask, "How can you tell if someone is in grief?" you often get answers such as, "They are crying, they look sad, they talk about their loved one, they aren't themselves, they seem out of it."

However, as you know, grief is so much more than that. Have found yourself experiencing any of the reactions listed below? If so, that's grief. You may want to give this article to someone to help them further understand how you never will really be "over it."

Read the grief reactions below along with statements that people say and check the ones that still apply to you today:

HEART (EMOTIONAL) REACTIONS

- Helplessness.** "I don't really feel in control of my life anymore."
- Anger.** "There are things about the death that still make me angry."
- Guilt.** "I still have guilt thoughts such as, if only, and why didn't I, and I should have."
- Sadness/depression.** "There is still a sadness inside me that hasn't gone away."
- Grief Attacks.** "I'll be doing something and suddenly I'm hit with an upsurge of grief."

- Worried.** "As a result of the death, I worry a lot that something will happen to my loved ones."
- Lost.** "Sometimes I walk around just feeling lost."

SPIRITUAL REACTIONS

- God.** "My relationship with God has forever changed."
- Meaning of life.** "As a result of the death I wonder what is the meaning of life."

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- Altered sense of just world.** "I now know that it is not a fair world and that bad things happen to good people."
 - Afterlife beliefs.** "I now have a different view of afterlife."

REACTIONS TO OTHER PEOPLE

- Feeling isolated.** "Since the death I've lost friends."
- Pain for other loved ones.** "It hurts me so much to see my other family members in grief."
- Family role changes.** "We can never fill the gaping hole in our family."

PHYSICAL REACTIONS

- Crying.** "There are still times when I find tears in my eyes."
- Sleep problems.** "I still don't sleep as well as I used to."
- Physical exhaustion/lack of energy.** "My energy level has never returned to normal."
- Feelings of emptiness.** "I just feel empty inside."

As I noted last time, these are just some of the grief reactions that can have a lifetime effect. How many did you check? Don't worry if you checked many or a few. There is not a score to add up.

The death forever changed your life.

So, the next time you hear someone talk about grief, you might want to remind them that, while some of the early reactions to a death may subside and even go away, some reactions last a lifetime. Although your child, grandchild or sibling lived for a short period of time, some of your grief and more importantly, all of your love, will last a lifetime. Why wouldn't it?