

COMMON FEELINGS

You have undoubtedly heard the term **grief work**. You may also have heard that the only way **out** is **through**. This means that avoidance of griefwork and the bereavement process only postpones your reconciliation. During the coming weeks you have an opportunity to learn new ways of working through your grief, getting a better understanding of yourself and how to dissipate the strong feelings in healthy ways.

Many people come to support groups thinking there is something wrong with them. They are experiencing thoughts and emotions with an intensity they never thought possible.

For some, the intensity causes them to feel as though they're going crazy, are out of control, and wonder whether the rollercoaster will ever stop. It will.

YOU ARE NOT CRAZY

Following is a list of feelings and conditions which are common and normal during grief. You might experience many of these, or just a few. Much of our group time will be spent on how to recognize and deal with these feelings, their frequency and their intensity. Although normal, these feelings are still painful. These support sessions are not going to take the pain away. Because you're concentrating on your griefwork, you may even find that the pain intensifies—that, too, is normal. But you will be rewarded by your griefwork as the tunnel forward becomes brighter.

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| ▪ Anniversary obsessions | ▪ Guilt | ▪ Regrets |
| ▪ Anxiety | ▪ Helplessness | ▪ Release |
| ▪ Confusion | ▪ Holiday obsessions | ▪ Relief |
| ▪ Crying and sobbing | ▪ Physical illness | ▪ Rumination |
| ▪ Denial | ▪ Joy and guilt | ▪ Sadness |
| ▪ Depression | ▪ Loss of intimacy | ▪ Search for meaning |
| ▪ Disbelief | ▪ Loss feelings | ▪ Searching |
| ▪ Disorganization | ▪ Mystical experiences | ▪ Self-Focus |
| ▪ Dreams | ▪ Numbness | ▪ Shock |
| ▪ Drugs and/or alcohol | ▪ Obsession with personal objects | ▪ Sudden mood changes |
| ▪ Emptiness | ▪ Panic | ▪ Suicide thoughts |
| ▪ Anger and/or rage | ▪ Powerlessness | ▪ Survivor's guilt |
| ▪ Fear | ▪ Psychological changes | ▪ Time distortion |
| ▪ Grief attacks | | ▪ Yearning |