



## Common Responses to Loss

Listed below, in no set order, are some common responses to loss. Perhaps you will identify with some of these. While most of these feelings and responses will lessen with time, seek guidance from a professional or someone you trust if they worsen or persist.

### **Shock, Numbness, and Disbelief:**

There is a sense of unreality—like it's just a bad dream. The numbness can serve as a "cushion," helping you get through those first days and weeks.

**Anger:** It can be directed at yourself, others, God, or the one who died.

And there are more questions than answers: "Why him?" "Why now?" "Why did God allow this?"

**Relief:** This is a common emotion after the death of someone who has endured a long-term illness. You feel relief for yourself and for your loved one. Sometimes people feel guilty for feeling relief, however.

**Guilt/Regret:** Perhaps you blame yourself for not doing enough or for something you said or did. You might be thinking, "if only I would have done things differently."

**Loneliness:** Visitors have left, and the house may seem so quiet and empty. You wonder how you will be able to face the days and weeks ahead.

**Anxiety/Panic:** C.S. Lewis once said,

"No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear." Emotions of grief can indeed feel foreign and scary! You might feel as though you're losing your mind and won't be able to function. You might also fear the future and worry something else bad will happen.

**Sadness:** Activities you previously enjoyed aren't as much fun anymore. Being with people you socialized with in the past doesn't bring pleasure either. You might not even care whether or not you wake up tomorrow. There are days when the sadness is overwhelming, and other days it doesn't feel as intense.

**Confused/Disoriented:** Perhaps you feel disoriented and find it difficult to concentrate. You forget where you put things and have trouble following conversations. You may wonder if you are going crazy.