

Common Reactions in the Grief Process

Physical Changes:

Appetite - loss or increase
Breathing Difficulties
~ hyperventilation
~ shortness of breath
Chest tightness
Dizziness or fainting spells
Dry mouth
Fatigue
GI upset
~ constipation
~ diarrhea
~ nausea
Cold hands
Headaches
Hives, rash, itching
Indigestion
Insomnia - sleep changes
Low resistance to infection
Minor illnesses
Muscle tightness
~ face, jaws, back of neck, shoulders
Numb or tingling extremities
Pounding or rapid heart beat
Pale skin or rashes
Sleep too much
Sleep too little
Sighing
Speech slowed, stuttering
Stomach butterflies
Sweating
Tearfulness
Trembling
Urinating frequently
Vomiting - dry heaves
Weakness - especially in legs
Weight gain or loss

Behavioral Changes:

Accident proneness
Absent-mindedness
Fingernail biting
Grinding of teeth
Hair twisting
Hyper mobility
Nightmares

Searching or calling out
Treasuring objects of the
Deceased

Flare Ups of:

Allergies
Arthritis
Asthma
Colitis
Herpes
~ canker sores
~ cold sores
Migraines
Illnesses

Emotional or Social Changes:

Ambivalence
Agitation
Anger or angry outbursts
Anxiousness
Blaming others
Critical of self
Crying
Emancipation
Depression
Dread
Fear of groups or crowds
Fears in general
Guilt feelings
Helplessness
Hyper excitability
Impulsive behavior
Indecisive
Irritability
Isolation
Jealousy
Loneliness
Loss of interest in living
Loss of self-esteem
Moodiness or mood swings
Relief
Restlessness
Sadness
Suspiciousness
Withdrawal from relationships
Worthlessness

Yearning

Intellectual Changes:

Concentration difficulties
Confusion
Disbelief
Errors:
~ judging distance
~ grammar
~ pronunciation
- use of numbers
Fantasy life increased or decreased
Lack of attention to details
Lack of awareness
Loss of creativity
Loss of productivity
Mental blocking
Over-attention to details
Past oriented rather than present or future
Preoccupation with the deceased
Worrying about everything

Spiritual Changes:

Angry with God
Increased interest in spirituality
Difficulty attending church
Preoccupied with eternal life
Loss of interest in living
Feelings of being punished
Finding peace and strength in one's faith

