



# Pastoral Healthcare Network *Australia*

*Committed to holistic healing*

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## ♥ GRIEF NOTES ♥

. . . from your Pastoral Healthcare Associates Team Pastoral Nurse

### Shock ~ Numbness One to two weeks

A few weeks have passed now since your loved one has died. With grief, there are no simple answers. People do survive their heartbreaks – but it doesn't happen all at once. It happens gradually. But, if one is patient, the signs of healing will begin.

While everyone's reactions are unique, there are these common characteristics that you may experience.

First, most have an inability to make decisions. The mind becomes overloaded with emotions and it may be impossible to concentrate.

Second, it is difficult to carry on meaningful conversations, even with trusted friends. You also experience having a short attention span, lose your train of thought, or have fragmented thoughts. Emotions and actions may seem to be mechanized and you may notice a loss of appetite, or a loss of sleep.

Third, most people in this stage are extremely anxious, even those who appear calm. For some, the anxiety is seen in the intense chatter, a wringing of the hands, hyperactivity, nausea, and vomiting. Some turn stoic (no emotion), others want aliveness.

Whatever you are thinking or feeling *it is okay*. After a death, it is normal to hope for reunion and to “not believe” temporarily that someone has died. But, as time passes, the death itself will become easier to accept.

Meanwhile, you can do several simple things to help yourself including getting sleep, eating regular meals and sharing your thoughts and feelings, whatever they are, with someone who will listen. Look to your family and friends or contact the parish nurse or clergy as well as other grief professionals.

For some reason too, it can also be helpful to read about the experiences of other grieving people, and about the experience of grief itself. There are many good books available including: *Good Grief* by Rae Lindsay; *Window* by Lynn Caine; *Grief and how to live with it* by Sarah Morris; *When going to pieces brings you together* by William Miller and *A gift of hope* by Robert Veninga. You may find these books or others at your local bookstore or they can order them for you.

As your Pastoral Healthcare team, we are here to offer you support and resources through your grief journey.  
Feel free to contact us.

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