

Grief Notes

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Am I Going Crazy or Is This Normal? by George McLaughlin, Bereavement Coordinator

We quickly learn that the death of a loved one affects every area of our lives. The impact is far reaching and greater than we could ever anticipate. Unfortunately, our culture is one in which grief and its deep impact on our lives is rarely talked about. As a result, many have little idea as to what effect grief would have and so before long, may begin to wonder, "Have I lost my mind?"

People often share that they used to be a "detail person" who could keep everything straight without notes or a calendar. Now they have difficulty recalling their dog's name, what day it is, or if they have eaten breakfast. No one told us the places our minds would go. Beyond the usual things like forgetting where your keys are or what to pick up at the grocery store, you may now feel like your mind is confused, is in a deep fog, or has stopped functioning completely. We knew losing a loved one would not be easy but didn't realize that the deep pain and emotional stress would continue to remain at such a high level. Few people shared their grief journey with us or talked about what to anticipate as we stumble into the grieving process. It seems we are just drifting along in a sea

of intense emotions, unable to focus, and struggling to know how to pull it together.

If this describes you at times, here are a few things to consider:

Please know that you are not alone. You're not the only one who feels like you are going crazy. The loss of a loved one hits hard and stuns us. We often feel lost as the previous norms and routines have disappeared. There is no resource or check list that defines what normal is. Grief, especially early grief, is not a normal time. It is common and okay to feel disoriented: everything in your world has changed.

Memory loss, confusion, and an inability to concentrate all often accompany grief. They are temporary but can last much longer than you may anticipate. You've experienced a great loss that has had a deep impact on your brain and, you're trying hard to make sense of it all. Don't lose hope. Don't hesitate to reach out to a family member, friend, or professional who you feel could be of help and support.

Find ways to rest your mind. Find things that calm your spirit: read a book, watch a movie, go for a walk, pray



or meditate, exercise, cook or bake for someone else, or just take a nap. Explore various activities or pasttimes to discover what works best to help you relax and gain rest from the stress of grief.

Admit to yourself that you're not at your best right now. Take one day at a time. It will get better. Grieving is a process not an event, so be patient with yourself as you journey through it.

We are here for you. As Bereavement Coordinators, it is our desire to help provide answers to your questions and support you in any way we can. Please reach out if you need to talk or to request additional resources that will assist in the journey toward healing and wholeness.