



LET'S TALK ABOUT GRIEF

Special Edition | HEALTH EQUITY BEAT
A HEALTH EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

When you are grieving a loss or have experienced a traumatic event, feeling shock and anger is normal. The healing process starts when you are ready to begin. Adopting a few new habits can help you find balance. The goal is not to get over it, but to get through it.

● **GRIEF CAN BE _____**

Our response to loss is not just emotional. Grief can take on many forms and can change over time. Any of these responses are considered natural and normal for those who are grieving.

EMOTIONAL

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| Shock | Relief |
| Disbelief | Shame |
| Anger | Guilt |
| Fear | Panic |
| Sadness | Loneliness |
| Powerlessness | Emptiness |
| Hopelessness | Numbness |

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| Lack of concentration | Lack of confidence |
| Explosive emotions | Not able to feel joy |
| Lack of interest in previous activities | Extended retreat |
| | Intrusive thoughts |

PHYSICAL

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| No energy | Shortness of breath |
| Trouble sleeping | Lump in the throat |
| Sleeping too much | Muscle loss |
| No appetite | Stomach pain |
| Overeating | Tightness in chest |
| Shaking | |
| Headaches | |

SPIRITUAL

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Doubts about belief system | Interest in afterlife |
| Looking for meaning | Belief that person is in a better place |
| New priorities | |



Erie County
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OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY
www.erie.gov/health-equity

RESOURCES



 All services are linked below

CRISIS SERVICES

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Dial 988

Crisis Services 24-Hour Hotline (716) 834-3131

Crisis Text Hotline (716) 300-2338
Mon-Fri 6-11PM

Erie County Warmline: (716) 248-2941
Peer Support 4-11PM text (716) 392-2221

NY Project Hope Emotional Support Helpline 1-844-863-9314
[8am-10pm]

24-Hour Addiction Hotline (716) 831-7007

Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255
choose option 1

CRISIS SERVICES FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Spectrum CARES: for families & children in crisis (716) 882-4357

Kids' Helpline (716) 834-1144

BestSelf Child Advocacy Center (716) 886-5437

GRIEF & TRAUMA SUPPORT

BestSelf Behavioral Health Services (716) 884-0888

Endeavor Health Services (716) 895-6700

Spectrum Health & Human Services 24-Hour Line (716) 710-5172

Horizon Health Services (716) 831-1800

ECMC Help Center: (716) 898-1594
immediate mental health support daily virtual & in-person [8am-10:30pm]

GRIEF & TRAUMA SERVICES FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Child & Family Services (716) 842-2750

Family Help Center 24 Hour Helpline (716) 892-2172

Haven House 24-Hour Hotline (716) 884-6000

Jewish Family Services (716) 883-1914

Students are encouraged to connect with school counselors for support

FAMILY TIME

Whether it's the one you were born with or the one you choose, family is important when you experience loss.

You may feel alone or misunderstood. With nowhere else to turn, you may think – well at least I have my family. Family is supposed to be there for each other but trauma can make people act differently. Even if you've experienced the same thing, one person's reactions may be very different from yours.



If your loved ones start to grieve differently than you, remember the significant roots of your connection. Try to give everyone enough space to express feelings, vent or just be together. Recognize and validate each person's way of grieving together or alone. You'll find balance with time.

VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES

New York State Office of Victim Services 1-800-247-8035

ECMC BRAVE: Buffalo Rising Against Violence (716) 898-6461

Erie County District Attorney (716) 858-2400 [leave a voicemail]

Center for Elder Law & Justice (716) 853-3087

Community Services for Every1 (716) 883-8002

Neighborhood Legal Services (716) 847-0650

SNUG: Should Never Use Guns (716) 961-6947

OTHER SUPPORT

NY Connects: support services for older adults (716) 858-8526

Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition (716) 810-1038

GLYS: Growing LGBTQ+ Youth Support: virtual & in person drop in centers (716) 855-0221

Buffalo Peacemakers (716) 912-7188

NOT SURE IF YOU NEED SUPPORT?

Read feedback from real people who called for help after a loss.

Week by week, I was slowly falling apart. I think I knew that I needed help, but I wasn't sure what that looked like until I called.

I needed someone unbiased that wouldn't just say "You're going to be fine." For the first time in my life, I found someone who was willing to just listen to me.

My grief felt like physical pain and I felt paralyzed. Once I got help, I got better at understanding my grief and what to do when the pain comes.

NOT SURE WHAT IS NEEDED?

211 WNY 24-Hour Health & Human Services Hotline is connected to hundreds of local support services

Dial 211



POWER IN PARENTING

How to help a child after a parent or caregiver dies

Facing new fears. Let them know you are willing to listen to what's on their mind.

Taking care of you. The more you take care of yourself, the better equipped you are to take care of them.

Hold onto the old and embrace the new. Structure and stability help kids feel secure. Keeping a routine will provide a safety net.

Create comforting connections. Find new ways to honor your loved one with kids in mind. Build new traditions over time.

Seek support. Gather support from friends, programs and professionals to step in while you find balance.

For more info: www.nctsn.org/resources

COPING WITH TRAUMA

You can't pour from an empty cup. Taking care of yourself is an important way to begin healing and to be there for others.

Connect. Find a role model, mentor or group of people who understand what you experience. Making a connection can be a powerful part of coping. Peer interaction is a very effective way to work through your feelings.

Recognize. Acknowledge that your experiences and feelings are a normal reaction to trauma. There are no good or bad or right or wrong feelings. Denying or ignoring your painful feelings only delays your healing.

Name. When you're able to name something that is hurting you, it loses its power to cause you fear and harm. Naming your experience and your feelings can be empowering.

Experience. Pay attention to what each emotion feels like in your mind and in your body. Give yourself permission to confront each feeling.

Express. Find constructive ways of working through tough emotions. You may find a different way of expressing each feeling you recognize. Taking action has cleansing effect and the intensity of your feelings will diminish.

Pause. Remind yourself that taking time to yourself can improve your health. Rest is a radical act of self-care.

Identify. Know your specific triggers and think about how to cope with them. Role-playing your reaction will help you with anxiety and supports processing trauma.

Contribute. Consider getting involved in community care and healing circles. This can provide a sense of control, boost confidence, and contribute to the healing in others. This can also help connect you to others who can validate and support your path to healing.



THIS IS A PUBLICATION OF THE

ERIE COUNTY OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY

The Erie County Office of Health Equity was established in December, 2021. The Office of Health Equity's vision is for all populations in Erie County to achieve maximum health and wellness. The Office of Health Equity is located within the Erie County Department of Health.

Want to learn more? Visit www.erie.gov/health-equity



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