

Grieving A Family Member

We love them. We miss them. We'll always remember them.

What You Might Experience

You may experience overwhelming guilt, anger, numbness, or disbelief. Many people also grapple with questions like, “Could I have done more?” or “Why did this happen?” These thoughts are human.

- Grief after a substance-related loss can be prolonged, complicated, or unrecognized by others. ¹
- Many people experience traumatic stress and a profound sense of social isolation. ²

What Could Help

- Speak your loved one’s name. Their life mattered, and saying their name honors their memory.
- Consider writing to them. Journaling or letter-writing has been shown to aid emotional processing. ³
- Connect with other bereaved families. Groups like GRASP (grasphelp.org) and The Compassionate Friends offer support without judgment.
- Be kind to yourself. You are grieving, not failing. Healing doesn’t mean forgetting.
- “Acknowledging grief and reducing isolation can ease the intensity of bereavement.” ⁴

Resources For Grief

- GRASP – grasphelp.org
- The Compassionate Friends – compassionatefriends.org
- Shatterproof– <https://shatterproof.org/resources>
- National Helpline (SAMHSA) – 1-800-662-HELP

MEMORIALIZE YOUR LOVED ONE ALL YEAR LONG

Visit The National Addiction Memorial

(<https://www.shatterproof.org/nationalmemorial>) to add your memorial and loved one’s story today.

Scan Me



Note: This resource is for educational support only and does not replace therapy, diagnosis, or clinical treatment.

References

- ¹ Feigelman, W., Jordan, J. R., & Gorman, B. S. (2011). Grief after substance-use-related death. *OMEGA*, 63(4), 291–316.
- ² Dyregrov, K. (2019). Supporting people bereaved by drug-related deaths. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 38(3), 261–267.
- ³ Pennebaker, J. W. (1997). Writing about emotional experiences. *Psychol Sci*, 8(3), 162–166.
- ⁴ Shear, K., et al. (2011). Complicated grief and related bereavement issues. *Depress Anxiety*, 28(2), 103–117.

