



## A Word of Encouragement

Three questions people ask when they are going through the grieving process:

1. "Am I normal?"
2. "Am I going crazy?"
3. "Will I ever get over this?"

The answers? Yes, you are normal. You don't feel that way initially because pain has a way of altering our world and bringing everything we believe about life into question. Loss has a way of creating an emotional earthquake in our lives and the aftershocks will continue for a period of time.

No, you are not crazy. However, you are going through a period of emotional and relational adjustment seeking to integrate the loss into a "new normal." You will not be like this forever.

It isn't that you will get "over it" as much as you will get "through it." The grieving process is different for each person. Also, when there are multiple losses or trauma involved, the grieving process may be longer.

With time and tears you will experience emotional healing. You will smile again.

Jim



## Dealing with Grief in a Positive Way

1. **RELEASE EMOTIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** Admit to yourself, family, or friends when you are having a difficult day. Let them share your grief and cry with you.
2. **ACCEPT HELP.** Let friends and family come over and help with the housework, bring a meal, do the laundry, or watch the children while you are out for an hour.
3. **KEEP A JOURNAL.** Keep a record of your thoughts and feelings. Journaling will provide insight into your grief process and will later reveal the progress you are making.
4. **EAT WISELY.** Although you may not have much appetite at first, eating nutritious foods will help you feel better. Avoid "junk" foods, but rather eat fresh fruit, vegetables, and protein for a well-balanced diet.
5. **EXERCISE DAILY.** Whether it's walking, swimming, biking, jogging or aerobics, exercise will help you feel better physically and emotionally. Pace yourself according to your physical needs.
6. **UTILIZE RESOURCES.** There are many excellent books available on all aspects of grief. Consider joining a grief share group for additional support.
7. **REMEMBER TO REST.** Tremendous amounts of emotional energy are used during the grieving process. Sometimes just getting through the day feels like a major ordeal. A quick nap can be refreshing or going to bed earlier than usual can provide you with extra endurance.
8. **BE CAREFUL IN MAKING DECISIONS.** Loss is usually accompanied by depression, and it is not wise to make major decisions when you are depressed. Give yourself time. Be cautious in making any major decisions for at least a year.
9. **CHECK ANY PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS WITH YOUR DOCTOR.** When you are grieving and under stress—physically and emotionally—your body may react. Consult a medical professional regarding any physical or emotional concerns.
10. **SEEK SPIRITUAL COUNSEL.** If you feel confused or aren't sure how God fits into your situation with your loss, seek out spiritual counsel from someone who can listen and be there for you.