

Is My Grief Normal?

People often ask three questions when going through grief:

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

There is no right way to grieve. Many of the strangest emotions and thoughts can be quite normal. Instead, ask yourself whether your grief is healthy.

The following checklist may help you figure out how you are doing. Complete the checklist every month or two and record the scores below.

Check each box that applies to you. Give yourself 1 point for each check. The higher your score the more you are improving. If not improving, or if you feel overwhelmed, get some help. Answer each question honestly:

- Am I able to laugh without feeling guilty?
- Do I pay attention to my personal appearance? (hair, clothes, make-up)
- Am I able to feel pleasure in sexual experiences?
- Am I able to sit quietly by myself and think of things other than the loss?
- Do I take an interest in current events and news? (television or radio news, newspaper)
- Do I feel I can effectively parent my children living at home?
- Am I able to do the daily tasks I'm used to performing? (yard work, housework, cooking, household maintenance)
- Do I look forward to outings, trips, special events?
- Am I involved in activities that I participated in before the loss? (church work, volunteer work, clubs, sports teams, a job)
- Can I talk about the loss without showing strong emotion? (sadness, anger, jealousy)
- Do I feel like the fog has lifted?
- Do I pay special attention to my surroundings? (beautiful scenery, the taste of food, the smell of perfume)
- Am I able to get a good night's sleep and awaken feeling rested?

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- Am I able to concentrate on work and conversation?
- Am I less forgetful and better able to think clearly?
- Can I recall past events?
- Do I feel stronger and more in control? (less like an open wound, better able to cope with others' comments, better able to cope with everyday crises)
- Am I able to deal with everyday life without feeling panicked, frantic, or very worried? (for example - minor injury to a child, someone arriving late, or travel)
- Do I feel that there is meaning to my life?
- Can I look back at what happened and feel that something good came out of the tragedy?

Total Score _____

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

My Weight Record

(If your weight changes more than 20 pounds while you are grieving, check with your doctor.)

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Limbo, R. K. & Wheeler, S. R. (1993). When a baby dies: A handbook for healing and helping. Unpublished booklet from Gunderson Lutheran Medical Center, LaCrosse, WI