



WHAT YOU MAY EXPERIENCE AS YOU GRIEVE

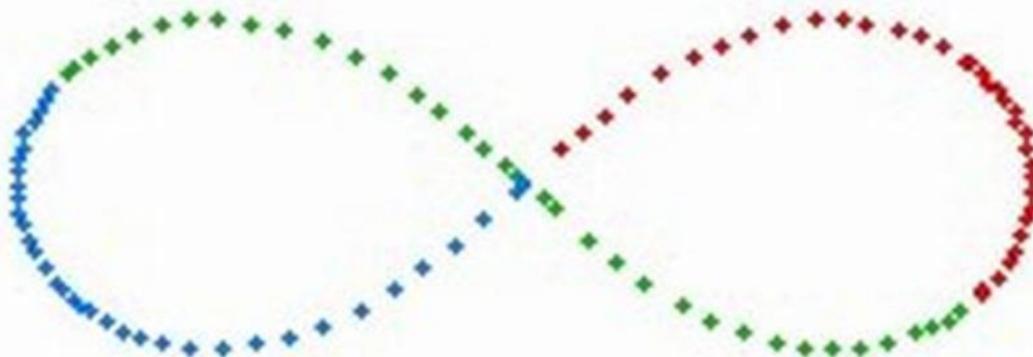
adapted from Therese A. Rando

- Your grief may take longer than most people think it should.
- Your grief may take more energy than you can imagine.
- Your grief will involve continual changes.
- Your grief will show itself in all spheres of your life. It will affect your social relationships, your thoughts, feelings and spiritual beliefs. It will affect you physically and may affect your health.
- Your grief will depend upon how you perceive the loss.
- You will grieve for many things (both symbolic and tangible and intangible), not just the death itself.
- You will grieve for what you have lost already as well as for the future; for the hopes, dreams and unfulfilled expectations you held for and with that person.
- Your grief will involve a wide variety of feelings and reactions: some expected, some not – this loss may bring forward old losses, feelings and unfinished business from the past.
- You may have some confusion about who you are; this is due to the intensity and unfamiliarity of the grieving experience and uncertainty about your new role in the world.
- You may have a combination of anger and depression: irritability, frustration, intolerance.
- You may feel guilty in some form.
- You may struggle with your sense of self-worth.
- You may experience waves of acute upsurges of grief that occur without warning.



- You will have trouble with focus and concentration which may show up in your thinking or making decisions: poor memory and organization.
- You may feel like you are going crazy.
- You may seem like you're obsessed with death or preoccupied with thoughts of your person who died.
- You will search for meaning in your life which may lead you to question your values and beliefs.
- You may find yourself behaving differently.
- Society has unrealistic expectations about your mourning so people may respond inappropriately because of their lack of awareness about loss, grief and mourning.
- You may have a number of physical reactions.
- Certain dates, events, seasons and reminders will bring upsurges in your grief.
- Certain experiences later in life may bring forward intense grief feelings for you.

GRIEF - FIGURE 8 MODEL



Grief is like a figure 8. There are many emotions, many parts and pieces to grieve that may appear, move away, and/or reappear throughout your life. Additionally, not everyone will feel the exact same emotions at the same time, and some people may not experience certain emotions at all.

It is important to remember that everyone's grief is unique.