

Campus Health Counseling Services

Coping with Loss

Losing someone we know, like, or love, can be one of life's greatest challenges. Grief is a natural response that occurs after loss. The pain after a sudden and unexpected loss can be overwhelming. In the aftermath, we may experience a myriad of emotions from denial, shock, disbelief, intense sadness, anger and guilt. Grief can not only cause intense emotions that can feel confusing, but it can also cause disruption to our physical health and routines, such as poor appetite, loss of sleep, and difficulty concentrating. It is important to remember some key factors after loss: First, no two people grieve the same way. There is no rule book when it comes to grief and individuals experience grief differently. Second, there is no grief timetable. Some individuals may start to feel better in weeks, while others it may be months, or years. It is critical that you do not compare yourself to others during this time, and that you be compassionate with self while you let the process unfold naturally.

Coping Tips

- Turn to others. Make time to be with friends and family. Try to find safe spaces to be. Do not be afraid to tell people how they can best support you.
- Join a support group
- Talk to a therapist or grief counselor
- Do **NOT** deny your feelings. Face them, and express them in a tangible way
- Do not let others tell you how you should feel. Set boundaries when needed.
- Attend to your physical health. You will be better able to cope with your emotions by attending to yourself in physically healthy ways. Avoid alcohol or drugs to numb feelings. Get enough sleep, eat right and exercise if possible.
- Try to maintain your interests and hobbies.
- Be compassionate and flexible with self. "It is okay, not to be okay." You will not feel like yourself right now and this is normal.
- Contact Campus Health if you need to talk to someone, and schedule an appointment with the counselor, Shivaun Nafsu (502-852-6446).