

Myths and Facts about Grief

MYTH: The pain will go away faster if you ignore it.

Fact: When we try to ignore pain or keep it from coming up throughout daily life, we actually make things worse for ourselves in the long run. It is necessary to actively deal with your grief to really heal.

MYTH: Moving on with your life means you're ignoring your child with an ASD.

Fact: Moving on means you've accepted your loved one's diagnosis. That is not the same as forgetting. Once we've accepted the diagnosis, we really have the opportunity to learn more about ASD and get interventions that will be helpful for our children.

MYTH: Friends can help by not bringing up the diagnosis.

Fact: People who are grieving usually want and need to talk about their loss. Bringing up the subject can make it easier to talk about. This also shows others this is an ok subject to talk about, making it easier for others to ask questions and show support for your family.

MYTH: Ignoring the diagnosis, and acting as if nothing has changed, will help my child "grow out of" the Autism diagnosis.

Fact: You need to be proactive! The earlier you get intervention into your child's life, the better the outcomes. Ignoring the Autism diagnosis will make things more difficult for your child and family, as well as cause your child to miss out on beneficial treatments.

MYTH: I am a bad parent because I'm upset by the initial diagnosis

Fact: We know it can be very difficult and overwhelming once your child receives an ASD diagnosis. All parents experience a range of emotions after a diagnosis, which includes guilt, grief, anger, sadness, disbelief, etc. It is normal to experience many different feelings.

MYTH: My family members should be saddened by the diagnosis, if they are not grieving, they don't care.

Fact: Everyone grieves differently. Each individual family member will have their own perception of the diagnosis as well as way of handling the changes within your family. Even if a family member is not acting "sad" or "upset" does not mean they aren't dealing with their own feelings their own way. Make sure, as a family, you are open and discuss the diagnosis, changes, treatment, etc. Keeping this topic opened allows for everyone to feel more comfortable about discussing his/her feelings.

MYTH: If I share my feelings with others they will think I'm weak.

Fact: We encourage you to share your feelings with others! Feeling sad, angry and lonely are normal reactions to a new diagnosis. Crying doesn't mean you are weak. Showing your true feelings can help friends help you.

MYTH: Letting go of my feelings of sadness and anger means that I'm giving up on my child.

Fact: Letting go of these feelings does not mean you're giving up, if anything it means that you have worked through these feelings and are ready to move forward with life!

Excerpts taken from: www.griefandhealing.org