



---

---

## Survival Guide for Early Grief

### Attend To Your Physical Health:

**Drink plenty of fluids.** They help flush out the toxins that result from stress. Drink a minimum of 8-10 8 oz. glasses a day, unless you need to restrict fluids. Limit intake of caffeine and alcohol, as they tend to dehydrate.

**Eat 5 or 6 small meals a day.** Or eat one item of food every 2-3 hours. Keeping an even blood sugar helps curb emotional swings.

**Engage in physical exercise.** Even a brisk 10 – 20 minute walk can do wonders for your body and spirit, including helping you focus better.

**Rest during the day.** Take breaks from whatever you're doing to nap or just rest. Listen to calm music or picture yourself in a serene setting. Breathe deeply to help you relax—count to 5 as you inhale and again as you exhale.

**Create bedtime routines to help you sleep.** Go to bed at the same time each night. Take a soothing bath or drink a cup of warm milk. To help you fall asleep, say a short repetitive prayer or count sheep. If your spouse died, try sleeping in a different room or curl up with a large pillow. If nothing helps, contact your doctor about some medication.

### Accept These Typical Reactions:

- A wide range of thoughts and feelings, including a sense of unreality and disbelief
- Physical symptoms, such as shakiness, a tight throat, queasy stomach, and bodily aches
- Inability to sleep, lack of appetite
- Fatigue and exhaustion
- Difficulty focusing and making decisions, or feeling like you're going crazy
- Thinking more about the person's death or illness than their life
- A resurgence of grief for prior losses

### Seek Support From Family and Friends:

- **Ask them for help** with everyday tasks or simply to be with you for periods of the day.
- **Talk or write** about your feelings and cry when you feel like it.
- **Ask for private time** when you need it, but do not be alone all the time.
- **Try to overlook statements** that seem insensitive, or gently correct when others offend.

