



How to Survive the Loss of a Love

Preview Points

- Losing a loved one can be very traumatizing.
- While a loved one is irreplaceable, there are some ways to survive the loss of a loved one that is healthier than others.

Contents

Personal losses can be wrenching even though they're a part of life. There are ways to mourn and survive the loss of a love by putting the loss into perspective. The points below help people who are grieving move through some of these challenges.

1. **Support from Friends and Family.** Spend time with your friends and / or family members. Share your thoughts and feelings. Talk it through. The emotional support, companionship, and opportunity to "ventilate" will help you greatly.
2. **Physical Exercise:** Regular cardiovascular / aerobic exercise (walking, swimming, jogging, and bicycling, etc.) has the unique ability to reduce anxiety, depression, and stress, and to improve your energy and sense of well-being during this difficult time.
3. **The Stability of Daily Life Tasks:** Going to school or work and doing what you normally do is very helpful when going through a major change. It also helps to provide you with other areas to think of, giving you a break. However, immediately following a loss, give yourself a brief period to recover, and refocus your attention.
4. **Pleasurable Activities:** Push yourself to do your hobbies and interests that have given you pleasure in the past. You will probably not "feel" like doing these things, and you may feel guilty in doing them. However, you are worth it. You need to have some enjoyment, even mild, in hard times.

5. **The Power of Laughter:** Laughter and humor can heal a broken heart, help a troubled mind, soothe a weakened body. Rent a funny movie. Spend time with people who can make you laugh. And remember, it is okay to laugh during hard times. It helps.
6. **Sleep, Rest, and Deep Relaxation:** Get a good night's rest, but do not sleep excessively. Spend 10 – 15 minutes a day relaxing, such as taking slow, deep breaths; tensing and relaxing muscle groups; listening to music, or doing visualizations of pleasant places.
7. **Pamper Yourself:** Give yourself some TLC (tender, loving care). Do something to soothe a troubled heart. Take a long bath. Treat yourself to a gourmet dinner. Get a massage. Listen to music. Tell yourself you deserve it.
8. **Improve Yourself:** This is a good time to invest in a little self-improvement. Learn how to do something new or work on yourself in ways you've thought of in the past. It will boost your self-esteem.
9. **Avoid Harmful Substances:** This is not a good time to "drown your sorrows in a glass of booze." Avoid the temptation to use drugs, alcohol, or excessive caffeine or nicotine as a way of altering your mood. They only create new problems you can't afford.
10. **Time to Grieve:** It is normal and necessary to grieve the loss of an important person in your life, even if there were problems in the relationship. Give yourself enough time to feel the loss, to hurt, to cry, and to talk it through.
11. **Mementos to the Back:** Move the photographs and reminders out of the way if this feels right and you are able. Don't "live in the past" if it feels unhealthy for you.
12. **Avoid the Blame Game:** Everyone plays a role in life's events. Life is a learning experience. Don't focus on blaming the other person or yourself for what went wrong. It only creates more bad feelings.
13. **Beware of the Rebound:** As much as you might like to quickly find refuge in a new relationship, this is full of pitfalls for all. Give your heart a chance to hurt, to heal, and to open again in its own time.
14. **Good Nutrition to Fortify your Body:** On the other hand, over-eating, skipping meals, or eating "junk food" will deplete your body of essential nutrients that keep you healthy. Eat when hungry, but do not skip meals. Eat fruits and vegetables. Maintain a balanced diet.
15. **Meditation and / or Prayer Lifts the Spirit:** Engage in activities which renew and inspire your heart and mind. Spend time in nature and enjoy its beauty. Look for meaning in life and your own spiritual path. Find ways to accept yourself, and forgive your mistakes in life.
16. **Seek Counseling:** Therapy may be helpful to process feelings. Talk with someone. A professional counselor may help point to specific techniques for your situation and return you to a more normal place.
17. **Get Immediate Help if Feeling Suicidal:** Sometimes, a loss will trigger thoughts of "I can't go on," or "Life has no meaning." These thoughts are brought on by the immediate situation and are never correct. If feeling suicidal, contact emergency services.

Concluding Points

- The loss of a loved one may lead to depression and sadness.
- There are healthy ways of addressing these emotions of loss, bereavement, anger, and sadness.
- Drug and alcohol abuse should not be part of the solution.
- Suicidal ideas may be an extreme reaction to this event and grieving process and should be addressed seriously, with professional intervention.