Flagstaff Counseling Center

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**Normal Grief/Trauma Experiences**

Our reactions after grief or trauma often involves a number of experiences that may seem strange or discouraging if we are not able to recognize them as part of the normal response process. Like most aspects of grief or trauma, these experiences do not last very long, but it can be helpful to know what to expect while going through this experience.

**Physical Symptoms**

* Lack of energy
* Shakiness
* Loss of appetite or increased hunger
* Digestive issues
* Nausea
* Shortness of breath, tight chest
* Dry mouth
* Increased perspiration
* Headaches
* Increased sensitivity to noise
* Poor immune system, frequent illness or accidents

**Behaviors**

* Difficulty with focus, confusion
* Sighing
* Crying
* Sleeping more or less than usual
* Eating more or less than usual
* Significant increase or decrease in activity levels
* Restlessness
* Withdrawing from others
* Yelling
* Poor personal hygiene
* Increased alcohol, other drug consumption
* Changes in performance at school or work

**Feelings**

* Shock, numbness
* Sadness
* Anger, frustration, hostility, irritation
* Depression
* Guilt
* Helplessness
* Loneliness
* Yearning
* Fear
* Relief
* Peace, resolution

**Thoughts**

* Disbelief, “This can’t be happening”
* Anger, “it’s not fair”
* “If only…I wish…”
* Finality, “Things will never be the same”
* Forging ahead, “I have to get through this”
* Preoccupation in thinking of the deceased
* Fears about our own or someone else’s death