

FOOD FOR GRIEF'S JOURNEY

“I do not believe that sheer suffering teaches . . . to suffering must be added mourning, understanding, patience, love, openness and the willingness to remain vulnerable.”

Anne Morrow Lindburgh, Hour of Lead

1. **Look for and receive support.** You need acceptance and caring throughout. If you lack support, make finding it *first* on your list. Start with friends, family or clergy, or call the Center for Grief and Loss for advice.
2. **Accept your grief.** The old adage “time will heal you” is not exactly true. To work through grief, you must be willing and deal with it. It is a natural healing process; roll with its ebb and flow.
3. **Discover models.** You can be inspired by persons who have healed. They are evidence that survival and growth are open to you. Books and support groups are also good sources of encouragement.
4. **Learn about grief.** There is relief in finding out you are not “crazy”. Information about your experience may make it more manageable and enable you to feel safer.
5. **Express it.** Without expression, grief can be leaden, weighing you down. Find someone (perhaps a professional) who is willing to listen to your story over and over again. You may also find ways to express it through music, art, writing poems or by keeping a journal.
6. **Accept your feelings.** Grief is very chaotic. It includes many intense feelings. Accept them and they will guide you to new knowledge of yourself and your loss. Resist them and you will cheat yourself out of that possibility.
7. **Be patient.** Grief takes most of your energy and tires you out. A slower pace that allows for diversions and mild exercise will maximize healing, as will good nutrition.
8. **Involve yourself in meaningful activity.** Your work and other pursuits give your life structure and purpose.
9. **Don't fear laughter and fun.** They are good medicine and bring freshness into your life.

Take a leap of faith. You must have hope. Faith doesn't mean the absence of fear, but the willingness to go on when fear is present. Healing will come eventually.