



DEALING WITH

GRIEF

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DEALING WITH THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE

You are feeling so many emotions at once, anger, guilt, sadness, and defeat. The death of a loved one is never easy to accept, even if it was expected. Coping with this loss may be difficult, and you may feel all alone.

We know how excruciating the pain of loss can be so these tips may help.

• Talk about your feelings

Your first reaction when you lose someone may be to withdraw into a shell. This reaction may be fueled by the desire to be away from everyone. While it is true that many of our friends and family are often at a loss about what to do or say when someone we love dies, we still need them. Take up your friends and family on their offer to be there for you. Try to reach out and talk about how you are feeling. This process is often therapeutic and helps you with accepting what has happened.

You may even start a journal about it.

• Don't suppress memories of your loved one

As you deal with the loss, you should also strive to remember the beautiful times with your dearly departed. If you have happy or funny videos of them, you can watch these and relive the great moments you had with them. Don't let your grief take away all the joy and laughter you loved one brought to you.

• Let people help you

It may be hard for you to return to life as it was. You may struggle with keeping your household going, or with carrying out your day to day activity. You don't have to do it on your own. Allow those around you to help you out as you slowly get back on your feet.

• Grief is not linear

You may have heard about the 5 stages of grief.
Denial
Anger
Bargaining
Depression
Acceptance

Not everyone goes through the stages, and you may not go through them in a stepwise manner. Grief is not a linear process. So, on some days, you will feel like you are finally moving on with life, and coping with your loss better. While on other days your grief will be fresh, and your loss will hurt deeply.



• Everyone grieves differently

You may not mourn the same way as your family members and friends. So, don't resent anyone for not mourning like you are. Also, you should avoid feeling bad if you seem to be making less progress than others. Grief is an individual journey.

• Prepare for anniversaries

Special events like the birthday of your deceased loved one can trigger negative emotions. You may feel their loss acutely on those days. Planning can make it easier for you to cope with such days. You can spend such special days with other family members, or do something in memory of your loved one.

• Honor your loved one's memory

One way to honor the memory of your loved one is by ensuring that you live life to the fullest. Death is a reminder that life is finite. So, ensure that you keep doing the things you love. Take time out to smell the flowers, and experience new things.

Sometimes, traveling or trying new experiences can help with coping with loss. Substances like alcohol may get your mind off your pain temporarily, but they won't help you heal.

• If you find it difficult to get back to your routine or feel any of the symptoms below. You should see a doctor as you may be suffering from complicated grief or depression.

- Intense, pervasive sense of guilt
- Thoughts of suicide or a preoccupation with dying
- Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Slow speech and body movements
- Inability to function at home, work, and/or school
- Seeing or hearing things that aren't there

DEALING WITH THE LOSS OF A BABY

Losing your baby is a trying experience. You may feel alone and find it hard to get on with life. You may also feel guilty for trying to move on with your life as well.

With the right approach, we believe that you can mourn your child and still find a way to smile from the depths of your heart again.

We've compiled some ways to help you through the five stages of grief (Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, Acceptance)

• Accept What Has Happened

It may be daunting for you to come to terms with what has happened. After months of talking to your baby and feeling its playful kicks, accepting that your baby is no more may be too much. You don't have to rush yourself. Take your time and slowly come to terms with what has happened.

Remember that your acceptance does not mean that you are choosing to forget your baby. Our loved ones who have left this world live on in our hearts. So, your baby is very much alive in your heart, and it is aware of the love overflowing in your heart.

• Talk About It If You Need To

One way to cope is to let out what you are feeling and how you are feeling. You can do this by talking to your partner about it. But, if the memories are too painful for your partner to bear, try to be patient. Everyone deals with loss differently.

You can take to journaling your thoughts to help you express yourself. Don't keep it in. Let it all out on paper, or in songs and poetry.

• Reach Out

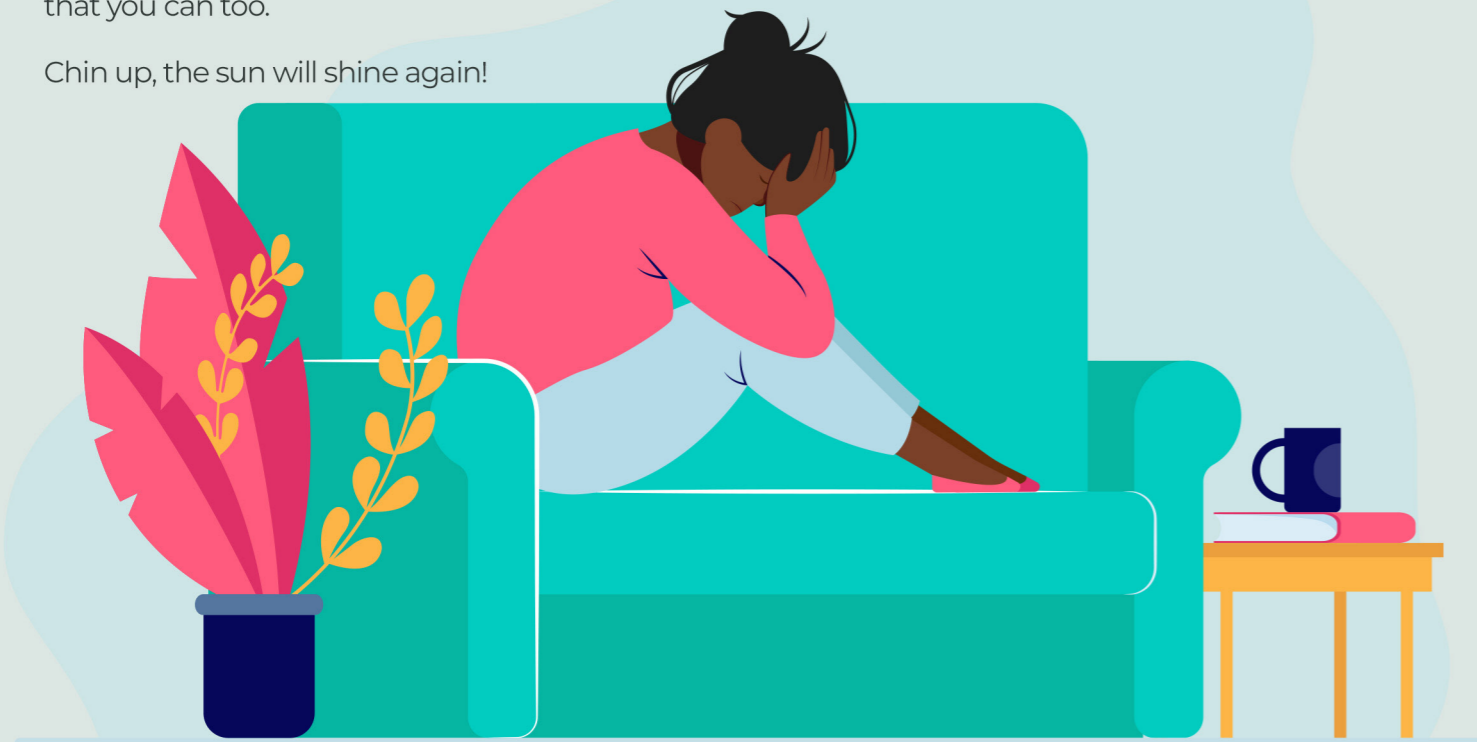
Don't be scared of leaning on others for support. You may even know someone who has gone through a similar experience. Lean on the person's strength to get through this period. If there are support groups, you can join one, either online or offline. You can also read up on experiences of those that have gone through something similar. You may learn one or two things from how they dealt with their loss.

Whatever you do, remember that you are not alone in this.

• Make Use Of Art

There is a work of art for every experience in the world. There are poems and books about losing a baby. Even songs about it, listening to these songs, and reading these books can help you feel less alone. They can also help you realize that there is light at the end of the tunnel. If they can get over it, you best believe that you can too.

Chin up, the sun will shine again!



• Engage In Exercise

Mental and physical exercises are ways of letting out your anger and frustration at what has happened. You can burn all the rage in you and get rid of the guilt by working out and practicing meditation, yoga, or mindfulness.

You should also take strolls and walks in nature, try to watch the sunrise and sunset. Taking mental journeys that stretch you beyond yourself can be instrumental in helping you get past your grief.

• Heal With Your Partner

The loss of a child is one event that can make or mar your relationship with your partner. Ensure that you keep communicating with each other throughout the process. Don't shut your partner out, and even on days when you feel alone, don't forget that your partner is in this with you. You both lost someone special to you, so be kind to your partner and vice versa.

Use this time to reconnect and heal together.

• Try Again When You Are Ready

You don't need to be in a hurry to try to have a child again. Regardless of all the external pressure, you should discuss with your partner and decide together on what you want to do. Work together as a team, knowing that when you are ready, the patter of children's feet will still resound in your home.

While your wounds may not go away in a flash, they will fade eventually. Your healing will come in bits and pieces, and some days will be terrible, while others will be great. Give yourself enough time to heal.



DEALING WITH A CANCER DIAGNOSIS



Getting told you have an illness is never a pleasant experience. Worse still when you learn that you have cancer. News of this nature can be very destabilizing, and you may feel like your life is over. Many people have beaten cancer, and you can draw strength from them. Also, here are some steps to help you cope with a cancer diagnosis

- **Learn about the illness**

Right now, the cancer is your enemy, and one part of defeating it is by understanding how it operates. Studying will also give you the knowledge for the next step.

- **Discuss your options**

You need to have a session with your doctor to explore your options. This session is necessary to help you have realistic expectations and help you choose what therapy you will be receiving.

- **Get a support system**

You will need all the support you can get during this period, so don't keep this news to yourself. Get your family and friends involved in this battle. Living with cancer can be challenging and you will find yourself in need of emotional and physical support at different points. Allow your family and friends help you in whatever way they can. Remember that they care for you and love you, so you need to allow them to contribute their quota towards your care.

- **Plan ahead**

The best time to plan for the course of this battle is now. Cancer treatment can be unpredictable. It can also be financially draining, especially if you do not have an existing insurance plan.

Depending on the stage of your cancer, you may need to plan for your family and loved ones in the event of your passing. Even if your prognosis is good, a cancer diagnosis can be an opportunity for you to get your affairs in order.

- **Stay fit**

The battle ahead will drain you in so many ways, so you need to fortify your body now. Chemotherapy and radiotherapy are some common forms of cancer therapy that will be very demanding and draining. Ensure that you eat healthily and keep your body fit so you will be in the best shape to fight cancer.

- **Stay Positive**

Your mindset can be the difference between a good and a bad outcome. Try to remain optimistic about everything. Devise coping mechanisms for times when you feel overwhelmed by your illness. These mechanisms can include journaling, meditation, and even taking up a new hobby like painting or gardening.

Remember, you can win.

WHAT TO DO AFTER YOU'VE HAD A SURGERY

Every surgery no matter how small is a big deal.

So, congratulations on the success of your surgery.

But, just like you've been told, you'll need to ease into things gradually. We've put together a few things you need to know after you've had surgery.

- **Take it Slow**

You've just had surgery, so you can't return to life as usual just yet. Your body is still in recovery, and this can take a few weeks to months depending on the nature of your surgery and how well it went. You need to take a break from strenuous activities like driving, sports or sexual activity until your doctor says it is ok to engage in them. Laughter or sneezing can also put pressure on the incision, so go easy on these activities for now. Also, take a break from work during this period to allow for a full recovery.

Also, this period may not be the best time to make serious financial or legal decisions, especially during the first 24 hours after major surgery, when your mind is still recovering.

- **Mind What You Eat**

If you've had major surgery, don't go rushing to 'down' a hot plate of amala or pounded yam just yet. The specific details of what you can eat after your surgery will differ, but generally, you start with liquids and semi-solid meals first. Then you can work your way up to more solid meals. You may have some nausea and food may taste different for a while, but that should go away eventually. Also, abstain from alcohol for now.

Eat a lot of fruits and vegetables, and stay hydrated too.

- **Take Care Of The Wound**

You may have a dressing over your wound that you need to change regularly. You may change it at home or the hospital, depending on your doctor's discretion. Stitches and staples are removed in the hospital within 2 weeks of your surgery.

You need keep the wound clean and dry. Also, avoid using methylated spirit or iodine on it, unless directed by your doctor because they can slow the healing process. If you are discharged with a surgical drain, your nurse will tell you how to take proper care of it.

You should avoid swimming or soaking in a bath until your doctor says it is OK to do so. You can shower instead.





- **Make Changes To Your House**

Since you are not back to your optimal self, you may need to adjust the layout of your house to help you move about more easily. You should also ensure that your home is free of clutter to avoid tripping on objects. Climbing stairs may be a bit of a chore, so if you live in a big house, you may have to change your room to one on the lower floor in your house.

Ensure that items you use regularly are within your reach to avoid stressing yourself unduly.

- **Move It**

Taking it easy is not an excuse for being sedentary. Early mobility after surgery reduces your chances of having complications like chest infections and stroke.

So, try to walk around unless instructed otherwise. Also, breathing exercises and chest exercises like incentive spirometry (a type of exercise to strengthen the lungs) are crucial to help you clear fluid in your lungs and get them working at full capacity again.

Take care while moving through to avoid putting pressure on your incision.

- **Take Your Drugs**

You should take your medications as directed. Avoid taking more than the prescribed dosage. If the pain becomes unbearable, contact your doctor.

Don't forget to take other routine medications you might be taking for chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension.