



Symptoms of Bereavement

Hospice of Central Iowa

Most people who suffer a loss experience one or more of the following:

- **Feel tightness** in the throat or heaviness in the chest
- **Have an empty feeling** in their stomach and lose their appetite
- **Feel guilty** at times and angry at others
- **Feel restless** and look for activity but find it difficult to concentrate
- **Feel as though the loss isn't real**, that it didn't actually happen
- **Sense the loved one's presence**; expecting the person to walk in the door at the usual time, hearing his/her voice, or seeing his/her face
- **Wander aimlessly** and forget and don't finish things they've started to do around the house
- **Have difficulty sleeping** and dream of their loved one frequently
- **Experience an intense preoccupation** with the life of the loved one
- **Feel guilty** or angry over things that happened or didn't happen in the relationship with the loved one
- **Feel intensely angry** at the loved one for leaving them
- **Feel as though they need to take care of other people** who seem uncomfortable around them by politely not talking about the feelings of loss
- **Need to tell and retell and remember** things about the loved one and the experience of the loss
- **Feel mood changes** over the slightest things
- **Cry** at unexpected times

All of these are natural and normal grief responses. It is important to cry and talk with people when you need to do so. By learning about the process of grief and learning also to express our feelings concerning our experience, we are helped to arrive at a healthy readjustment of our lives and a reinvestment of our emotional energy.

