



SENIOR HEALTH

Death and Dying

HOW TO MAKE IT THROUGH THE GRIEF

We all know death is inevitable. But facing our own mortality or the death of a loved one brings up emotions that can be difficult to deal with. Grief is the healing process that allows us to adjust to the change or loss in our lives.

EMOTIONAL STAGES OF GRIEF

Denial

When the reality of death is overwhelming, denial often occurs. If you or someone you know is dying, it takes time for the full impact of the situation to sink in and become real. Initial denial is healthy and a way of delaying the shock.

Anger

Expressing anger when faced with death is a normal, healthy part of the grieving process.

Bargaining

It's perfectly natural for some people to bargain with God. They may make promises to do something in exchange for a longer life or the chance to see another birthday or holiday. Bargaining is like a temporary truce.

Depression

Depression comes with the full understanding of what's happening, when you fully face the death and feel the loss.

Acceptance

In this stage comes peace. Acceptance is coming to terms with the death. You may feel what's done is done.

MAKING IT THROUGH

- ▶ Take as much time as you need to grieve. Reminisce with friends and loved ones. Look through old photographs, listen to nostalgic music, read old letters.
- ▶ Let yourself cry. Crying is an excellent release and there's nothing shameful about it.
- ▶ Talk about your feelings of grief. Find friends or relatives who are sympathetic listeners. Avoid those who tell you to snap out of it.
- ▶ Be aware that the people around you may feel uncomfortable about mentioning your loss. Let them know it's all right to talk about it.

