

Dealing with Your Emotions - Resolving Grief

- Accept all of the feelings you are having as normal reactions to an extraordinary event. You are not “crazy.” You are reacting normally to a “crazy” event. Be patient with yourself. It takes time to recover emotionally from a traumatic event.
- Accept the fact that you have been a victim and accept the feelings that result. Remember: others may not validate your feelings. In fact, they may minimize your experience: “You were only a witness,” or “You were really lucky,” or “It’s been two weeks, why are you still bothered?”
- Don’t revert to alcohol, drugs, or overeating to cope. They will only make matters worse.
- Maintain normalcy. Go about your daily routines and take care of business.
- Attempt to understand what happened by getting the facts.
- Talk about the event and write about it.
- Combat any guilt you might have by:
 - Accepting it as normal.
 - Talking to others about your role and their role during the event. You are probably not alone in your reaction to this event.
 - Realizing you were a victim yourself and not a trained rescuer.
 - Recognizing what you “did right.”
 - Recognizing the extenuating circumstances related to the event: the suddenness, the danger, etc.
 - Help others in your family or group.
 - Reach out to support those who are particularly traumatized.
 - Respect each other’s way of coping. Don’t victimize them by judging their individual coping style. Let the “grievers” grieve and allow the “doers” to do.
 - Bereavement groups provide an opportunity to share grief with others who have experienced a similar loss.
 - If the healing process becomes too overwhelming, seek professional help.

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