Practical suggestions to help you cope with grief

"Kindness is self-care. It’s allowing your pain to exist without judgement, in trusting yourself, and in saying yes to what helps and no to what does not. Kindness means not letting your own mind beat you up.

Grief requires kindness.
Self-kindness.
For all you have had to live.

- Megan Devine, Refuge in Grief
Be careful not to place unrealistic expectations on yourself as you cope with your grief. Such harmful myths may thwart your ability to grieve and cope with your grief in a healthy manner.

Some common harmful myths...

- I need to be strong and carry on
- I need to “get over” my grief and if I don’t, that means I’m not grieving the correct way
- There is a correct way to grieve
- Death/Grief is something we don’t talk about
- Grieving is a problem to be fixed
- The first year is the worst
- There is a timeline for grief and it’s the same for everyone
- If my grief comes back up over time, like on special days like their birthday, then something is wrong with me
- Time heals all wounds

List some of the myths that you have heard and believed in your own grief journey:

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

These myths may cause you to feel guilty about or ashamed of your grief experience. Your grief is YOUR grief. It is the natural and normal reaction to loss. Allow it to be what it is.

**Practice Patience**

Our society is constantly trying to speed up our grief. Practicing patience, with yourself and others, opens your heart to the present moment and allows to find moments of comfort and even joy.

Use the space below to reflect on how you have been patient with yourself in your grief. If you realize you have not been practicing patience, write down some ideas of how you plan to do so in the days ahead:

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________
A vital part of healing often includes “telling your story”.
Tell your story...of the person’s life and/or death...over and over again.

Seek out those special people who are willing to listen to you...over and over again.

Allow your story to change over time as you continue to grow and change. Know that this is to be expected as a reflection of your “new normal”.

Another way to tell your story is by journaling or writing. Here is an outline to help guide you as you record your story in writing. Consider sharing your written story with family or close friends on a special day, such as your loved one’s birthday, the anniversary of his/her death, or at a special holiday.

Don’t Overextend Yourself

Avoid isolating yourself, but be sure to recognize the need to have special time for yourself.

As you cope with your grief, you may find it easy to dive into your work or various other activities in an effort to keep yourself busy. It is important to strike a balance between tending to your grief, taking care of yourself and having distractions that give a rest from your grief for a moment.

Take this opportunity to examine yourself. Make a list of the current activities that you are involved in:

___________________________  ___________________________
___________________________  ___________________________
___________________________  ___________________________

Next, ask yourself the following questions:

• Am I able to take time for myself when needed?
• Am I avoiding my grief by overextending myself?
• Am I willing and/or able to minimize my involvement in some of these activities in order to allow time to grieve?
**Give Yourself Permission**

Allow yourself to feel the pain of your grief, but also give yourself permission to…

- Have fun
- Laugh
- Enjoy life
- Enjoy the people around you

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<th>What are some of the ways in which you have given yourself permission?</th>
<th>What areas in your life, related to your grief, can you give yourself permission going forward?</th>
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**Grow Through Your Grief**

In doing your grief work, the practical actions of taking care of you, you will come to a place of growth and purpose. Already, you may be able to recognize some areas of growth in your life.

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<th>List the ways in which you have grown:</th>
<th>Now, reflect on the areas of your life in which you would like to grow through your grief:</th>
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For more information and grief resources for all ages...

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