

Grief is ...

The descriptions and definitions of grief are seemingly endless, unique to each and every individual. Thoughts surrounding grief may change from day to day, even from one moment to the next. What is grief? What is grief to you? To an informal group asked the same question:

Grief is ...

“... the empty chair at the table at mealtime, the missing voice in day-to-day conversations, the jacket hanging pointlessly in the closet.”

“... the nagging sense of a sometimes overwhelming feeling of loss, the gnawing ache twirling inside from head to toe, the deflated sensation of a heart broken.”

“... expecting to hear the voice of a loved one when answering the phone, imagining his silhouette as he walks through the door, sensing her presence in the most unlikely places.”

“... experienced, ignored, stuffed down, disrespected and pacified.”

“... frustrating, anger-causing, stress-building, confusing, mystifying, an intense feeling of hopelessness.”

Yet grief is also ... “permissible, acceptable, comforting and healing.”

Ideas of possible strategies were discovered among the group. Several recommended that, in the midst of the busyness of the holiday season, when uncertainty comes into sight, those who are grieving should:

Take time ...

“... to reflect on the memories of those no longer physically present. Dig out the old photo albums of days gone by and relive the treasured times. Reminisce and allow your feelings to be experienced and claim them as your own.”

“... to talk about the loss of the person, the circumstances, and the feelings that are being experienced and the emotions that seem to come out of nowhere.”

“... for yourself. Maintain a healthy lifestyle. Take part in activities and participate in events that deliver joy. Be surrounded and supported by family, friends and other loved ones.”

“... to remember, to pause, to smile, to laugh, to cry and to feel each of the emotions as they randomly appear.”

“... to grieve ... to be healed.”

*“Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” Matthew 5:4*