

Myths and facts about grief and grieving

Myth: The pain will go away faster if you ignore it

Fact: Trying to ignore your pain or keep it from surfacing will only make it worse in the long run. For real healing, it is necessary to face your grief and actively deal with it.

Myth: It's important to “be strong” in the face of loss.

Fact: Feeling sad, frightened, or lonely is a normal reaction to loss. Crying doesn't mean you are weak. You don't need to “protect” your family or friends by putting on a brave front. Showing your true feelings can help them and you.

Myth: If you don't cry, it means you aren't sorry about the loss.

Fact: Crying is a normal response to sadness, but it's not the only one. Those who don't cry may feel the pain just as deeply as others. They may simply have other ways of showing it.

Myth: Grieving should last about a year.

Fact: There is no specific time frame for grieving. How long it takes differs from person to person.

Myth: Moving on with your life means forgetting about your loss.

Fact: Moving on means you've accepted your loss—but that's not the same as forgetting. You can move on with your life and keep the memory of someone or something you lost as an important part of you. In fact, as we move through life, these memories can become more and more integral to defining the people we are.