



PARENT & GUARDIAN

SELF-CARE AFTER  
IMMEDIATE LOSS



# SELF-CARE AFTER IMMEDIATE LOSS PARENT & GUARDIAN

## HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AFTER THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE

### 1. MAKE ROOM FOR YOUR GRIEF

There is no right or wrong way to feel after losing a loved one. So many variables contribute to how you'll react to the loss, including your relationship with the person, your personality, and your history of loss. You may feel shocked, brokenhearted, anxious, or even numb to begin with. It's also natural to feel guilty for being still alive while your loved one is gone, relieved that he or she is no longer suffering, or even angry that he or she has left. Allow yourself the time and space to grieve. You may need to take time off of work or other responsibilities to look after yourself.

### 2. PREPARE YOURSELF FOR OTHERS' REACTIONS

Be prepared for family and friends to not know what to say, become distant, or attempt to comfort you with clichés, such as "she's in a better place" or "time heals all wounds". Often, well-meaning people are uncomfortable with talking about death, but it doesn't mean they don't genuinely care. Keep in mind that your family and friends are also grieving in their own way and doing the best they can.

### 3. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Grieving takes a toll on your physical and emotional wellbeing. You may lose your appetite, lose sleep, become easily agitated and/or feel unmotivated to do anything. Be patient with yourself and focus on self-care. Of course, it may be easier said than done, but try to take care of yourself by eating well, exercising, and getting sleep. Try to avoid drowning your sorrows by drinking excessively, as that will likely add to your troubles. Research shows that the risk of death for a surviving spouse goes up, particularly in the first three months of bereavement. Taking care of yourself in the months after your loss will be essential, for you and for your children.



### 4. ASK FOR YOUR NEEDS

In such a confusing and lonely time, it is very important to find ways to get your needs met. Research shows that the loss of a loved one can make you vulnerable to depression and anxiety. Ensuring you remain connected and reach out to others for the help you need is particularly important after loss.

### 5. CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Social support is a key contributor to emotional wellbeing. The most self-compassionate action you can take is to connect with a social support system of caring individuals who provide the understanding and caring you need during this time. You may lean on those you already receive support from or even find a community of like-minded others also suffering the pain of loss.

THE FEEL THE MAGIC GRIEF COMMUNITY IS A GREAT PLACE TO START TO  
CONNECT WITH OTHERS.



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ftmgriefcommunity>

1 IN EVERY 20 AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN  
WILL EXPERIENCE THE  
DEATH OF A PARENT BEFORE  
THEY REACH THE AGE OF 18.

**PROVIDING GRIEF EDUCATION AND  
SUPPORT FOR BEREAVED CHILDREN  
AND THEIR FAMILIES**



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