

Common Grief Reactions

Physical Changes:

Appetite-loss or increase
 Breathing Difficulties
 -hyperventilation
 -shortness of breath
 Chest tightness
 Dizziness or fainting spells
 Dry mouth
 Fatigue
 GI upset
 -constipation
 -diarrhea
 -nausea
 Cold hands
 Headaches
 Hives, rash, itching
 Indigestion
 Insomnia-sleep changes
 Low resistance to infection
 Minor illnesses
 Muscle tightness
 -face
 -jaws
 -back of neck
 -shoulder
 Numb or tingling
 extremities
 Pounding or rapid
 heart beat
 Pale skin or rashes
 Sleep too much or
 Sleep too little
 Sighing
 Speech
 -slowed
 -stuttering
 Stomach butterflies
 Sweating
 Tearfulness
 Trembling
 Urinating frequently
 Vomiting-dry heaving
 Weakness
 -especially in legs
 Weight gain or loss

Behavioral Changes:

Accident proneness
 Absent-mindedness
 Fingernail biting
 Grinding of teeth
 Hair twisting
 Hyper mobility
 Nightmares
 Searching or calling out
 Treasuring objects of
 the deceased

Flare Ups of:

Allergies
 Arthritis
 Asthma
 Colitis
 Herpes: canker/cold sores
 Migraines
 Illnesses

Emotional or Social Changes:

Ambivalence
 Agitation
 Anger or angry outburst
 Anxiousness
 Blaming others
 Critical of self
 Crying
 Emancipation
 Depression
 Dread
 Fear of groups or crowds
 Fears in general
 Guilt feelings
 Helplessness
 Hyper excitability
 Impulsive behavior
 Indecisive
 Irritability
 Isolation
 Jealousy
 Loneliness

Loss of interest in living
 Loss of self-esteem
 Moodiness
 Relief
 Restlessness
 Sadness
 Suspiciousness
 Withdrawal from relationships
 Worthlessness
 Yearning

Intellectual Changes:

Concentration difficulties
 Confusion
 Disbelief
 Errors:
 -judging distance
 -grammar
 -pronunciation
 -use of numbers
 Fantasy life is either
 -increased/decreased
 Lack of attention to details
 Lack of awareness
 Loss of creativity
 Loss of productivity
 Mental blocking
 Over-attention to details
 Past oriented rather than
 -present or future
 Preoccupation with the deceased
 Worrying about everything

Spiritual Changes:

Angry with God
 Increased interest in spirituality
 Difficulty attending church
 Preoccupied with eternal life
 Loss of interest in living
 Feelings of being punished
 Finding peace and strength in
 one's faith