

Myths vs Truth About Grief

Overview

Grief is often misunderstood. Well-meaning advice, cultural expectations, and social pressure can create beliefs about how grief *should* look—leaving people feeling broken or behind.

This handout gently separates common myths from the truths about grief. Its purpose is to reduce shame, normalize lived experiences, and offer permission to grieve in a way that is honest, personal, and humane.

Myths vs *Truth*

Myth: Grief follows clear stages in a predictable order

Truth: Grief is not linear. Emotions come and go in waves, often repeating or overlapping. There is no fixed sequence or finish line

Myth: Time heals all wounds

Truth: Time alone doesn't heal grief—support, expression, and integration do. Grief changes shape over time, but it doesn't simply disappear.

Myth: You should be “over it” after a certain amount of time

Truth: There is no timeline for grief. Love does not expire, and neither does the impact of loss.

Myth: Being strong means not falling apart

Truth: Strength in grief often looks like allowing yourself to feel, rest, ask for help, and show vulnerability.

Myth: If you're functioning, you must be okay

Truth: Many people function while grieving deeply. Productivity does not equal emotional resolution.

Myth: Talking about the person keeps you stuck

Truth: Speaking their name and sharing memories can be a healthy way to honor the relationship and process loss.

Myth: Grief only looks like sadness

Truth: Grief can include anger, guilt, relief, numbness, confusion, anxiety, and even moments of joy.

Myth: Moving forward means leaving them behind

Truth: Healing does not mean forgetting. Grief often becomes about learning how to carry the relationship differently.

Myth: You should grieve the same way as others

Truth: Grief is deeply personal. There is no correct way to grieve—only what is true for you.

Myth: If grief returns, you've gone backwards

Truth: Grief resurfacing is normal. Anniversaries, milestones, and unexpected reminders can reopen feelings without undoing progress.