

## How to Cope with Grief and Loss

### Do You Know...

- Grief is like riding waves. One tends to bounce between the stress mode (e.g., wallowing) and the growth mode (e.g., undertaking a task their loved one left) during the grieving process. This oscillation tends to decrease and diminish over time.
- People take different paces to grieve – There are no right or wrong ways to grieve or predictable timelines in the grieving process.
- Grief looks different across cultures and communities. Access to community support is an essential facilitator to long-term healing.

### A Toolkit to Help You Cope with Emotions Accompanied with Grief

| <b>SELF-CHECK:</b> Ask yourself... How strong is my emotion at this moment, from 1 to 10?  |  |  |   |
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| <b>ACCEPT</b> Emotions with Four Steps   | <b>SOOTH</b> Emotions with Five Senses   | <b>PROCESS</b> Emotions with Journaling  | <b>HEAL</b> Emotions with commemorative activities  |
| <b>Observe:</b> Bring awareness to the feelings in your body.<br><b>Breathe:</b> Take a few deep breaths.<br><b>Expand:</b> Make room for these feelings.<br><b>Allow:</b> Allow them to be there. Make peace with them. | <b>Vision:</b> Look at nature around you.<br><b>Hearing:</b> Hum a soothing tune.<br><b>Smell:</b> Open the window and smell the air.<br><b>Taste:</b> Eat some of your favorite foods.<br><b>Touch:</b> Take a long hot bath or shower. | Today, I’m having a hard time with...<br><br>One thing I want to remember about them is...<br><br>I need more/less of...<br><br>If I could forgive them/myself for something, it would be... | <b>Memory Box:</b><br>Pick a box of your choice and decorate it as you wish.<br>Place any objects connected to your loved one factually or symbolically into the box.<br><br><b>Grief Playlist:</b><br>Your loved one’s favorite songs.<br>Songs you shared with them.<br>Songs that bring a memory.<br>Songs of comfort. |

### Tools to Help Community Healing

| When you want to support a loved one or community member with their grieving...  |   |
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| Do   | Don't   |
| <p><b>Be compassionate and acknowledge their feelings.</b><br/>Ask <b>open-ended questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has this has been like for you?</li> <li>• What do you miss the most about your loved ones?</li> </ul> <p>Be <b>culturally sensitive:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you help me understand how I can best be of help to you and your family?</li> </ul> | <p><b>Make assumptions</b> about or <b>judge</b> their feelings or actions.<br/>Tell them how to feel.<br/><b>Push them</b> to focus on the positives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid saying, “At least they’re not in pain anymore.”</li> </ul> <p><b>Avoid the topic</b> due to your own discomfort when they want to talk about their grief.</p> |

### Resources for Additional Support

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| <b>988 Suicide &amp; Crisis Lifeline</b> | Call/Text: <b>988, Available 24/7</b>   |   |
| <b>UI Support &amp; Crisis Line</b>      | Call/Text: <b>844-461-5420 Available 24/7</b>   | More Information:  |
| <b>University Counseling Service</b>     | Call: <b>319-335-7294</b><br>8 am – 5 pm, Mon - Fri<br>Follow us on IG/FB: <b>@uiowaucs</b> | More Information:  |