



Brochures in this series include:



Coping With The Death Of A Spouse



After You Leave



Staying Safe When You Share Parenting & Custody with an Abusive Partner



How to Help a Friend in an Abusive Relationship



Coping With The Death Of A Child

For Support & Resources:

East & West Parry Sound Victim Services:

Office: (705) 746-0508

24/7 Crisis line: (705) 938-1476

Parry Sound Family Services:

Office: (705) 746-9789

Email: info@psfamilyservice.com

Ontario Victim Support Line

(Victim Notification System):

(888) 579-2888

Muskoka-Parry Sound Community Mental Health Service:

Parry Sound: 1-866-829-7049

Sundridge: 1-866-829-7050

B'saanibamaadsiwin Native Mental Health

Program:

Office: (705) 746-2512

24/7 Crisis Assistance and Referral Service

Phone: (705) 746-0508

Crisis Line 24/7:

(705) 938-1476



MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
MINISTÈRE DU PROCUREUR GÉNÉRAL

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Coping with the death of a friend



The Early Stages

For the first time in your life, you may experience a multitude of feelings and emotions that you have not felt before. You may feel confused, disoriented, disorganized, numb, fearful, and a host of other emotions. They may be difficult to put into words.

Guidelines to help:

- *Be aware you will be shaken.*
- *Take care of yourself physically.*
- *Remember to eat.*
- *Avoid mind-altering substances.*
- *Loss of concentration.*
- *Don't drive unless you have no other choice.*
- *Talk about the person who has died.*
- *Allow yourself some time alone.*
- *Sleep may be a problem.*
- *Fatigue will be a problem and, at first, you may not want to be alone.*
- *Allow others to help.*
- *Honor your emotions.*

Coping With The Death Of A Friend

Think of the good times. Recall fond memories of things you've shared together and remember those. Do not play over the tragedy that took his or her life.

Write poetry, listen to music you like, spend some time alone to reflect. Make it a point to replay the funny or even goofy moments you both shared. Doing things that remind you of your friend will help you attach positive feelings to thoughts of your friend, even if you cry the entire time you're doing it at first.

Accept help that others might give you. Lean on family and friends.

Allow yourself to feel sad. Don't let anyone tell you how long you should feel sad, or how sad you should feel. The loss of a friend affects different people in different ways, but it is painful no matter what.

Talk to your friend. This might sound weird, but it might help. Tell your friend how you feel, that you miss him or her; talk over things that are happening in your life, and how different things are since your friend can't be with you.



Your Grief is Unique

Accepting yourself will give you strength and internal wisdom to adopt the one-day-at-a-time approach to your grief. Just try to remember that your grief will be your own and you follow your schedule.



Coping with Death

Get enough sleep - or at least rest. Often, soon after the death of a loved one, we are plagued by bad dreams, or sad ones, and sleep seems scary and impossible. Lie down in a darkened room, and if you find it hard to sleep, at least put on some soothing music, or let the TV play softly in the background. The music or words from the television can help direct your dream state a little, keeping you from recycling your grief through your dreams. Do know, though, that our subconscious mind processes situations and helps us deal with things, so don't avoid your dreams, though some may make you wake up sad.

Resume your place in the world. Once you feel better, go out with your friends and do things you like to take your mind off the pain. Distracting your thoughts for a while will not make you forget your friend forever. Dwelling on your own pain doesn't honor your friend's memory - having a big, bold life, and remembering your friend with love and affection as you do is what your friend would want you to do.

Do something cool in your friend's honor. If your friend liked to ride his or her bike, find out when the next MS ride is, and ride in your friend's honor. Or if he or she battled cancer, check with the Cancer Society and do a Walk For the Cure or something similar. Donate any funds you raise in your friend's name. This gives great honor to your friend's memory, and does something positive in the world at the same time.