



Montréal-Ouest

Navigating grief, one step at a time....

Support resources

A message for you

Our entire team extends our deepest condolences during this difficult time.

This guide is meant to provide information and support. It does not replace a professional assessment or follow-up.

What is grief?

Understanding grief

Grief is a normal response to loss. Everyone experiences grief in their own way.

Grief can follow a death. It can also follow another type of loss, such as a separation.

Grief can also occur during an illness. A person may experience changes in their identity, abilities, or relationships. This is sometimes called grief without a death or ambiguous loss. Both the person who is ill and their loved ones may experience this type of grief.

A reminder

Over time, the pain may ease. However, certain memories or moments can bring your grief back or make it feel more intense (e.g., a song, a meeting, a date, a smell, an event).

Your reactions and your needs

You know your needs best. It's normal to ask for help when you feel ready.

Everyone experiences grief in their own way and at their own pace. Grief can vary depending on the situation, such as an illness, an accident, or a sudden death.

Your relationship with the person who died can also affect how you experience grief.

You may experience many different reactions. These reactions can change over time.



Possible reactions

- sadness, anger, helplessness, frustration, guilt;
- extreme tiredness, pain, stress;
- loss of appetite, trouble sleeping;
- difficulty concentrating, feeling confused;
- withdrawing from others, losing interest in things, fear of being alone;
- doing too much or staying constantly busy;
- questioning the meaning of life;
- feeling discouraged or losing hope;
- thinking about death more often.

These reactions are normal. Ask for help if your pain becomes more intense or interferes with your daily life.

What can help you

Simple things can help you move forward. Take a moment to think about yourself and your needs. Choose what feels helpful to you.

Use your strengths

Think about what has helped you in the past.
Choose simple things you can do now, such as:

- Spend time with people who make you feel good.
- Try new ways of doing things.

Take care of yourself

Make time for yourself. Respect your limits.
Give yourself permission to feel your emotions

- Get enough rest each day.
- Eat regularly and drink enough fluids.
- Do an activity you enjoy.
- Breathe slowly when you are experiencing strong emotions.
- Surround yourself with caring and supportive people.

Express what you are going through

- Talk to someone you trust.
- Share what you have been through.
- Write a letter or keep a journal about how you feel.
- Draw, sing, or create something.
- Share memories of the person who died.
- Keep objects that remind you of the person.
- Help others, if it feels right for you.
- Join a support group.

Create rituals

Rituals can help you find meaning in what you are going through.

- Look at photos or videos with others.
- Take part in rituals that reflect your beliefs.
- Attend a funeral or ceremony.
- Visit an important place, such as a cemetery.
- Take a moment to pray or meditate.
- Set aside some quiet time to say goodbye.
- Plan an activity to remember the person.
- Create a memory space at home with objects or photos.
- Do something symbolic, such as planting a tree.



Important

Avoid alcohol and drugs. These substances can increase your distress. If needed, ask for help with your alcohol or drug use. msss.gouv.qc.ca/repertoires/dependances





Supporting a child or teen who is grieving

Children of any age can also experience grief. Talk to the child about death and what has happened. This can help them feel understood and safe

They may:

- express their emotions
- ask questions
- feel included
- feel supported and surrounded by others

A child's understanding of death depends on their age. Ask the child what they understand about the situation. Use words that are appropriate for their age. Go at their pace.

A child may need time to process what has happened. They may also talk about their grief later, even several years after the loss. Stay available and open to talking.

Here are some simple tips:

Listen and be there

Pay attention to their reactions. Invite them to talk about how they feel.

- Observe their reactions.
- Listen without judging.
- Remind them that you are there for them.
- Let them know they can ask questions, now or later.

Talk about death

Use simple, clear words. Use the word “death”.

- Avoid keeping secrets.
- Explain what happened.
- Help them say goodbye to the person who died.
- Remind them of their strengths.

Answer their questions

Use simple words.

- Tell the truth when answering their questions.
- Tell them about the death and explain what will happen.
- Explain any changes to their routine.
- If the child wants to, let them see and touch the body of the person who died.

Involve them

Include the child in rituals:

- Draw a picture, write a note, sing a song.
- Go to ceremonies or events together.
- Create a ritual that is meaningful to them.

Comfort them

Show your affection. Offer comfort.

- Hold them in your arms.
- Let yourself cry together.
- Offer a comforting object that reminds them of the person.
- Read a book or watch a movie, TV series or show about grief that is appropriate for the child's age.
- Offer support when needed (from a loved one, a support group, or a professional).

When to seek help for a child

You know your child or teen best. Pay attention to their reactions (e.g., nightmares, changes in behaviour, withdrawing at school). Ask for help if you have concerns.

When to seek help for yourself

Sometimes, grief can become more difficult. You may feel overwhelmed. Remember that you don't have to go through this alone. Help is available if you feel you need it.

Remember that talking can help. If needed, do not hesitate to reach out to someone you trust. There are also resources available to listen to you and support you.

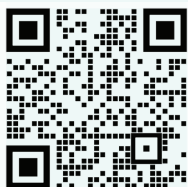
Your health and well-being are important. We encourage you to ask for help.

Support resources

Several services are available near you.

You can choose the one that is right for you:

- grief support groups
- community organizations
- support lines



www.santemonteregie.qc.ca/ouest/documentation/ressources-de-soutien-en-deuil-pour-mieux-vous-guider



NEED HELP RIGHT AWAY?

1. Call Info-Social at 8-1-1, option 3.

- Someone will listen to you with respect and without judgment.
- The service is free and confidential

2. You can also:

- talk to your doctor or healthcare provider
- ask about mental health services in your area



USEFUL RESOURCES

Resources for adults

These services are free and confidential.

Ligne Le Deuil: 1-888-533-3845 or [Tel-ecoute.org](https://tel-ecoute.org)

Tel-Aide: 514-935-1101 or 1-877-935-1101 telaideмонтreal.org/en

Écoute Entraide: 514-278-2130

[Suicide.ca/en](https://suicide.ca/en): 1-866-277-3553 or text: 535-353

[Mygrief.ca](https://mygrief.ca): Support at your own pace

[Infodeuil.ca](https://infodeuil.ca): Tips and personal stories

Resources for children and teens

Deuil Jeunesse: 1-855-889-3666

Tel-jeunes: 1-800-263-2266 or teljeunes.com/en

Ligne Parents: 1-800-361-5085 or teljeunes.com/en/parents

[Suicide.ca/en](https://suicide.ca/en): 1-866-277-3553 or text: 535-353

[Kidsgrief.ca](https://kidsgrief.ca): KidsGrief.ca helps support children and teens

**“Grief can feel overwhelming today.
Over time, it may be easier to carry.
You are moving forward, one step
at a time.”**

— Inspired by Johanne de Montigny, psychologist

To learn more...

Books, movies, TV series or shows about grief

These resources can help you better understand grief

- [Ambiguous loss \(lappui.org\)](http://lappui.org)
Resources for people living with Alzheimer's disease or a related condition, and their loved ones.
- [“Grief, animated” \(lappui.org\)](http://lappui.org)
Short animated videos to help better understand grief (for loved ones and children).
- Biblio-Santé.ca
Free books and resources available through Québec libraries.



Notes



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