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# *50 Tips for Dealing with Grief & Loss*

Tips from my personal experience to help a fellow griever reclaim their power & take their life back after loss.

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## *Start Your Journey to Recovery*

Anyone dealing with loss knows there's no quick fix for grief. Everyone experiences and handles grief differently. **There's no right or wrong way to feel. There's no specific time frame when you should be "over it."** I don't think we ever truly get over loss. The way we process our grief defines who we are- in a good way- if we've moved forward in a healthy manner.

**This list is a way to get started.** It's a collection of ideas that might help you. They might not all help, they might not all feel good, but you can test out what works for you & just do those. **You are your own guide on this journey,** (unless you have the help of a doctor, in which case you should talk with them of course!). I'm not a medical professional, so please do not mistake these suggestions as professional guidance. I'm simply **speaking from my personal experience.**

These tips helped me deal with the loss of my grandfather, which was a physical loss. But these are also things that helped me cope with the loss of people who are still alive, like after a breakup. So, **I'm coming from personal experience & I'm not a doctor; I'm just someone who's been there and knows how hard this is and I wanna help.**

*♡xo, Nikki*

# 50 tips for dealing with grief & loss

- 1 **Write a letter.** Address it to them, to god, to the universe, to yourself, whoever you like; but get your feelings out whatever they are. You're not going to mail this, so be free with what you say. Getting the thoughts out on paper helps release your mind and enables you to process your emotions.
- 2 **Exercise/Movement.** Find something you like to do that involves moving around. Lots of people like walking, yoga, stretching, even going to the gym. Getting your blood flowing and endorphins pumping is a natural pick me up.
- 3 **Create a memory board or scrapbook.** Use photos, quotes that remind you of them, like song lyrics. You can also choose to keep their possessions close to you, by adding some of their trinkets or jewelry.
- 4 **Create a mood board.** How do you want to feel? Cut out pictures, colors, textures, foods, quotes and activities that evoke the way you want to feel & the things you want to do. Decide how you want to feel & try to see the possibility that you might get there one day. Commit to your best future self. Display your board somewhere you'll see it every day.
- 5 **Start a journal.** Write down the good memories, add photos, trinkets, positive quotes. It can be hard to do this at first, so take your time and do as little or as much as you like in one sitting. You'll be happy looking back on it later.
- 6 **Support System.** Reach out to friends and family. You need to have a support network and lots of distractions. You might want to consider seeing a therapist or grief counselor for extra support.

**7 You have the right to feel however you feel.** Give yourself a safe space to cry freely, without holding back. You gotta get it out. Allow yourself to feel all the feelings without apologizing or feeling bad or guilty. Even if you're not feeling sad or tears won't come, that's ok. Things will get better, but you have to process all these emotions in order to move on.

**8 Call a helpline.** If you're really struggling with your mental health or you don't feel comfortable reaching out to family or friends for help, these *free and confidential* helplines are your best solution:

**SAMHSA National Helpline-** 1(800)622-HELP

**National Suicide Prevention Helpline-** 1-800-273-8255

**The Samaritans-** (877) 870-4673 (HOPE)

**9 Give yourself grace.** You'll have good days and bad days. Allow yourself to stumble. The healing process is long and sometimes you'll need to go backwards before you can move forward.

**10 Get professional help.** Obviously, a trained professional like a therapist or psychologist is the most qualified person to give you advice and help on your journey.

**11 You're not alone.** Even if you feel alone- there's always someone you can reach out to. If you don't feel like you have anyone, call one of the hotlines. Or message me- I'm happy to talk, even if we don't know each other- yet. 😊

**12 Mantras & quotes.** Find some phrases or even just a word or two that you can repeat to yourself when you're having a hard time. I like to say, "I got this," or "I'm strong- I've gotten through a lot before & I will get through this."



**13 Breathing techniques for calm.** Taking deep breaths is the best way to calm yourself down if you're freaking out. During a panic attack or particularly stressful moment, stop and take a couple deep breaths. If you have time, try **box breathing**: Inhale for 4 seconds, Hold for 4 seconds, Exhale for 4 seconds, Hold for 4 seconds. Repeat 6 times.

**14 Meditation.** It might seem silly or impossible at first, but from personal experience- it will change your life. Start with a guided meditation app like Headspace, so you can ease into it. Even just 5 minutes a day will really help you recenter, destress and quiet your mind.

**15 Gratitude journal.** By focusing on what we do have rather than what we don't have really helps keep things in perspective. You've just lost someone close to you- there's a huge hole in your heart. This journal will help you remember that you've got a lot of things to try and refill the hole. And even though it'll never be completely full again, you'll feel a little less empty.

**16 Find a hobby.** Focus your free time and get out of your thoughts. Keeping your hands busy is a great way to take your mind off of things. Plus you'll feel good when you're making something.

**17 Get some sunshine.** Feel the warmth on your face. Soak up the vitamin D & re-energize. This giant ball of fiery gas is burning millions of miles outside of the Earth and is responsible for our entire ability to exist- think about that for a while.

**18 Laugh.** Watch some comedy or read the funnies in the paper. You can even listen to comedy on Pandora or Sirius XM.

**19 Eat healthy.** What we put in our bodies directly affects our mood and how we feel. When I eat crap, I feel like crap. When I eat healthy, I might not enjoy the action of it as much, but I feel good and energized afterwards. It's worth thinking about.

**20 Set up a routine.** I like to have my morning, work day/weekend day, and night time routine. Following a checklist of items helps me stay focused and keeps my mind off other more dark thoughts.

**21 Stick to your schedule.** Now that you have a routine, you need to stick to it. It's easy to skip showering or washing your face before bed, but you'll regret it. And then that regret turns into negativity and that's the last thing you need right now. And I know what you're thinking, "well in that case, I won't even set up a routine cuz I know I won't follow it and then I'll just feel bad when I don't stick to my schedule, so forget it." But hear me out. You need the routine so that you get yourself out of bed, maintain your hygiene, and function day to day. It's important. And if you're finding that you really just can't, it's time to see a professional.

**22 Listen to music.** I always find songs and lyrics helpful. It can be hard to want to be happy right now, but music is an easy way to feel things other than what you're actually feeling. Music is feelings conveyed in the form of song, so you can escape yours by getting into someone else's.

**23 Watch a feel good movie or show.** There's no shame in artificial happiness gained from some mindless TV.

**24 Art project.** This can be a great way to let out your emotions. Whether you want to paint, draw, color, or sculpt, you can't go wrong. Express yourself and clear your head with a fun art project.

**25 Home organization/cleaning.** Sometimes the best way to feel in control again is to clean up or organize something. You just feel better when things are clean, right? Plus, it'll fill your time which means less time for thinking & being sad.

**26 Podcasts for dealing with grief.** Try listening to a podcast and see if it helps provide some relief. There are lots of choices out there, mostly hosted by professionals. Some provide tips for dealing with grief, share stories of people who've moved past grief, or feature interviews with bereavement specialists. Do a search wherever you get your podcasts & listen to some.

**27 Spend time with friends & family, or a pet.** Being alone during this process is inevitable, but you don't have to be constantly alone. Reach out to your loved ones who are still here, and spend time with them. It might help fill the void, if even just for the time you're physically together.

**28 Take a bath.** Give yourself some self-care time. A nice bath will do you some good. Add some bath salts or essential oils for aromatherapy and feel the calm soak in.

**29 Gardening.** The benefit here is twofold. You get to be outside & you get to see the fruits of your labors grow. Sunshine delivers vitamin D, and it's scientifically proven that the higher your vitamin D levels, the happier you are. Plus, you'll feel a sense of pride each time you tend your garden.

**30 Compliment yourself & someone else.** It's really hard to be positive, so sometimes you'll have to force it. Try to find a way to give yourself and someone else a compliment each day. You may have to dig deep to see anything positive right now, but it's there & this exercise will help you refocus on the good in yourself & others.

**31 Go Outside.** Be in nature, listen to the birds, hear the bugs buzz, appreciate the colorful flowers or green trees, feel the wind on your face. Feel something other than what's on the inside.

**32 Comfort food.** You deserve anything that makes you feel good right now. Just try not to go overboard.

**33 Make your living space more comfortable.** Incorporate soft lighting, new bedding, fuzzy blankets- whatever you need to be relaxed and safe at home.

**34 Aroma Therapy.** Try burning incense or lighting a candle. You can even use an essential oil diffuser to bring up your mood. A few scents that are good for bereavement are: Cypress, Clary Sage, Frankincense, Myrrh, Marjoram, Lavender, Neroli, Rose, & Rosemary. For more information on using essential oils for grief management, [click here](#).

**35 Get a massage.** You can build up a lot of tension from stress and many times when we're grieving we forget to take care of ourselves. This is a great way to relax and remember that you deserve love from yourself.

**36 Cry it out.** This one is simple- get some tissues and let it go until you've got nothing left.

**37 Ride out the wave of emotions.** Sometimes, feelings of anger, sadness, fear and pain will come out of nowhere at inopportune moments. The best thing is to try and ride it out knowing it will pass.

**38 Designate a safe space where you are free to feel & act however you like.** This is usually a private space where you can cry or scream into a pillow without feeling embarrassed.



**39 Don't feel bad if you can't talk about it, or feel anything.** It's normal in the healing process. Just keep putting one foot in front of the other.

**40 Know that you don't have to talk about it with anyone you don't want to.** If someone asks, and you either don't feel like it or you're not comfortable sharing with them, simply say, "I'd rather talk about something else." Trust me, they'll bring up another subject.

**41 Find comfort in a higher power.** Whether that's in the form of God, the universe, Mother Nature, Buddha, Allah, etc. There is a massive amount of solace to be found in religion, the bible, prayer, church counsel, meditation, nature, reiki- whatever you believe is bigger than you.

**42 There is no right or wrong way to grieve.** Your journey is yours and yours alone. The best thing is to listen to your inner self and what you need and feel. Then do the things that will help you fill those needs.

**43 You're coping every day, even if it doesn't feel like it.** There's no point at which you should be "over it," and sometimes you think you are, and then you're not. It's ok to feel sad about it. It's ok to be angry again. You're on your own path.

**44 There's no time frame to when you'll be "over it."** Are we ever truly past this type of loss? Maybe we're past the terrible aching feeling and the crying, but I don't think we ever truly stop feeling sadness or loss of this person. Maybe it becomes less painful, but their memory and the fact that they're missing is still there. You just figure out how to keep going without them. And one day you'll be able to smile about how they'd react in a certain situation or when something reminds you of them. But that day comes at a different time for everyone- you're doing just fine.

**45 Your grief doesn't define you.** Grief has happened to you, but it cannot be all that you are. Don't lose sight of yourself.

**46 The future is in your hands.** You get to decide what you'll do and how you'll live from now on. Grief doesn't go away, but the pain dulls over time.

**47 Focus on what your loved one would want you to feel.** Would they rather you be happy or sad? Home alone or surrounded by friends? You can use the "What Would [insert loved one] Do?" method.

**48 Dance.** It's really hard to not smile or at least feel happier when you're dancing around, right? Can't hurt to try.

**49 Limit social media consumption.** Seeing everyone going on with their lives can be upsetting, especially when you feel stuck. Instead of filling your time with social media, try reading a book or talking with friends to take your mind off things.

**50 Do something you would do together & think about happy times you've had together doing it in the past.** When I was grieving over my grandfather I used to go for long drives in my muscle car, cranking up his favorite music. It made me feel closer to him because he was a car guy. I felt like he was smiling down on me and it made me feel closer to him.

## *Last Thoughts*

**Remember that you're living for them, because you loved them- it's what they would want you to do.** Honor your loved one however you can & know they're looking down on you smiling.

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