

## Grief—A Normal Reaction to Loss

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Both mourning and grief are a natural and normal part of the experience of loss. To distinguish between the two, mourning is the process of withdrawing emotional attachment from that which was lost. Grief is the emotion experienced during mourning. Grief is the longing for that which was lost. To successfully complete the mourning process, a person must grieve. Grieving involves allowing yourself to experience the feelings associated with the loss. When these feelings are hindered, a more serious condition of depression begins to set in.

Some of the danger signs that a person may not be moving successfully through the grieving process include: 1) Suppression of emotions and hiding behind a facade, 2) Extended indecisiveness, 3) Detrimental behavior, 4) Self-punishment through guilt, 5) Hyperactivity such as staying too busy to mourn, 6) Enshrinement such as setting aside a room, or keeping the loved one's stuff as it is. 7) Altered relationships such as withdrawal. These signs are measured by intensity and duration.

If you are concerned that you or a loved one may be having an abnormal reaction to a loss, please seek help from a pastor or Christian counselor.