

DID YOU KNOW YOUR EAP...

Has services available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

Is staffed by experienced, masters level counselors.

Assists tens of thousands of individuals each year dealing with personal problems.

Makes confidential referrals to thousands of resources.

Has provided help for employees and family members since 1986.



Grief: Coping with Reminders After Loss

For some, the holidays and the New Year can be a difficult time. While we enjoy the time we have with family and friends, it is also a reminder of the loved ones who are no longer with us. Feelings of grief can return months and even years after a loved one passed away. These feelings, also referred to as anniversary reactions, are a normal and natural part of the grief process. In order to continue to cope with your loss it is important to know about these reactions and ways to cope.

The Process of Healing

The process of grief is different for everyone. Also it's a cycle, so there are times where you might feel like you have regressed or taken a step back in your progress. It is normal for important dates like holidays and birthdays to trigger reactions such as:

- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling sad or depressed
- Lack of energy and motivation
- Feeling numb
- Anger
- Anxiety or fear
- Guilt and remorse
- Trouble eating and/or sleeping

Dates, events and memorials are common triggers, but movies, sights, music, and even smells can trigger an emotional reaction or pain associated with the loss you experienced.

Coping with Reoccurring Grief

Each of us has different styles to cope with grief. Below are ideas that may help you manage your feelings of grief and continue to heal:

Be Patient with Yourself and Your Feelings. With time and support the intensity of your grief will lessen.

Allow Yourself to Feel your Emotions. It OK to feel sad with these memories. Allow yourself to grieve but also allow yourself to experience the joy and happiness associated with your loved one as well.

Connect to Others. These are times when support systems are important. Surround yourself with family and friends, social systems, or support groups. Talk to others who were also close to your loved one about your memory of them.

Stay Busy. Schedule activities or visits with loved ones during times when you might be reminded of the loss of your loved one.

Seek Help. If your grief appears to be getting worse over time or is interfering with your ability to function, seek the help of a counselor. A counselor can help you with the process of healing.

Remember: *Unresolved grief can lead to other mental health problems or depression. If you need to talk to a counselor, call the EAP at 800.272.2727 where counselors are available 24/7.*



Making Your Resolution a Reality

This tends to be the time of year when we explore different ways to better ourselves through New Year resolutions. Lose weight, quit smoking, start exercising, have a positive outlook, and getting organized are just a few of the popular goals. We might start out strong, but what happens to these resolutions as the year goes on? How can we make these resolutions a reality? A key to making any lasting change is building motivation and commitment to that change. Motivation is the internal and/ or external drive that moves us from thinking about the change to taking action.

Building Motivation

Once you've chosen a target behavior to change, try the following to help build your motivation and confidence to reach your goal.

- **Is this change important to you?** Take some time to think about why you want to make this change. What impact will it have on your life if you don't change? If you do? Write these down. Motivation is enhanced when your motives or reasons for the change are clear.
- **Quiet the mental chatter.** Without even realizing it, we have an internal dialog going on in our minds at all times. Build your confidence by switching the negative mental clutter to positive. Instead of thinking of how you can't make the change, force yourself to talk about the ways you CAN.
- **Think about past success.** Instead of thinking of the times where you've tried a change and failed, think about the many things you have accomplished. Think about the changes (no matter how small) you were successful with- even if it was only for a short time.
- **Visualize the change.** Write down all of the benefits of the change. Find pictures of what the change will look like or what reminds you of the change. Post these words and pictures in places you will see them. They will be constant reminders of what you are trying to accomplish.
- **Make a realistic plan.** Goals are easier to stick to if you are honest with yourself. Set small goals and once you reach those small goals, build on those successes and create larger longer-term goals.
- **Prepare for relapse.** No one is perfect, so slipping at one point or another is natural. The best way to cope with that is to learn from the mistake, renew your commitment, and continue with your plan.
- **Reward yourself.** After all your hard work you deserve it! Before you begin your change, think about the activities and objects with which you would like to reward yourself. Give yourself credit for the small and large goals.
- **Get support.** Use the help of others to accomplish your goal. Surround yourself with those who influence your changes in a positive way.

Remember: Making any behavior change is difficult, and sometimes professional help is needed. Call the Employee Assistance Program at 800.272.2727, where counselors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.