

Types of Grief

Uncomplicated grief

This used to be called “normal” grief. With this, your grief symptoms are most intense for 6 months after a loss. But they lessen with time.

Anticipatory grief

In this type of grief, you experience loss before it occurs. This can happen when you learn a loved one has a terminal illness, for example.

Inhibited grief

This can happen when you don't take time to recognize or process your feelings of grief. It can lead to physical problems, such as panic attacks or trouble sleeping.

Complicated grief

In some cases, grief doesn't get better. You may not be able to accept the loss. This is called “complicated grief.” Talk to your doctor if you have:

- Trouble keeping your normal routines
- Feelings of depression
- Thoughts that life isn't worth living
- Thoughts of harming yourself
- Any inability to stop blaming yourself

Delayed grief

With this type of grief, you don't process your feelings at the time of your loss; instead, you feel and process them weeks, months, or years later. This may happen because the shock of your loss interrupts your ability to deal with grief. Or maybe you're so busy with practical matters that you don't have time to feel grief until a later point in time.

Absent grief

This is when you don't show any outward signs of grieving. But you may be working through complex feelings internally.

Cumulative grief

This happens when you're processing multiple losses at once. Maybe you're grieving the loss of marriage and job at the same time. Cumulative grief makes the grieving process longer and more complicated.

Traumatic grief

This kind of grief happens when you have prolonged difficulties after a loss, making it hard to get on with everyday life. It makes it hard to have any positive memories of the loved one you lost. This type of grief can affect you no matter what age you are. But when it happens to children, it's called Childhood Traumatic Grief.

Collective grief

This is when you grieve far-reaching losses as part of a group. Examples are natural disasters, school shootings, and pandemics.

Prolonged grief disorder

Also known as complicated grief, it's very similar to traumatic grief. As this type of grief is intense and lasting, it interferes with your daily life. Your grief doesn't diminish over time. You may need to seek professional help to deal with your feelings and symptoms.