

Shattering Eight Myths About Grief

advice from Hospice Foundation of America

In order to effectively cope with loss, and to help others who are struggling, it is important to get past some of the common misconceptions about grief. In discussing grief and bereavement during HFA's National Bereavement Teleconference, Cokie Roberts, of ABC News, commented, "Over time, people learn to live with the loss, but it's not something you get over. The grieving process is a series of ups and downs, and often it's more intense in the early years. The thing that we need to remember is that you never have to like a loss. You just have to learn to accept it and deal with it."

A more accurate understanding of the way grief affects us can facilitate healing.

Myth 1: We only grieve deaths.

Reality: We grieve all losses.

Myth 2: Only family members grieve.

Reality: All who are attached grieve.

Myth 3: Grief is an emotional reaction.

Reality: Grief is manifested in many ways.

Myth 4: Individuals should leave grieving at home.

Reality: We cannot control where we grieve.

Myth 5: We slowly and predictably recover from grief.

Reality: Grief is an uneven process, a roller coaster with no timeline.

Myth 6: Grieving means letting go of the person who died.

Reality: We never fully detach from those who have died.

Myth 7: Grief finally ends.

Reality: Over time most people learn to live with loss.

Myth 8: Grievers are best left alone.

Reality: Grievers need opportunities to share their memories and grief, and to receive support.

*For more information about grief and available resources,
please contact HFA at 1-800-854-3402,
www.hospicefoundation.org*

