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Common Myths About Grief

1. MYTH: Grief and mourning are the same thing.

Grief is actually your internal reaction to loss—your feelings, your physical symptoms, and your mental reactions. Mourning is how you show your grief on the outside. Mourning is important because it puts your grief into words and actions.

2. MYTH: Grief occurs in stages.

Each person will grieve in his or her own way. There is not any certain way to grieve, and there are no defined stages.

3. MYTH: It is best to avoid crying, talking about feelings, or discussing grief.

The only way through grief is “through it.” You must give yourself permission to experience this loss, and you must find someone who will allow you to talk.

4. MYTH: After the death of someone you love, your goal is to “get over” your grief.

A healthier and more realistic goal is to learn to deal with your grief. You have lost a very important person, and your life will never be the same.

5. MYTH: Tears are a sign of weakness.

Tears actually relieve tension, and communicate a need for comfort.

*-Adapted from the work of
Dr. Alan Wolfelt, Ph.D.*