



# GRIEF & LOSS

## What is Grief?

Grief can be described as the painful emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual reactions to a wide variety of losses, including but not limited to the death of a loved one or pet, or the end of something important such as a relationship, job/career, health, or plans. When experiencing grief, you may feel like peers or others do not understand what you are going through. Research has shown that 35-48% of college students have experienced a significant loss within the last 2 years (Walker & Baker, 2010), or about 1 in 3 undergraduates. You may wonder how to move forward without your loved one, career, plan, or at all. Ongoing difficulty managing emotions without support could result in a decline in academic performance, social anxiety, sleep disturbances- and if not addressed, depression or other mental health concerns.

## You May be Experiencing:

- Sadness, tearfulness
- Anger
- Frustration
- Relief
- Ambivalence
- Loneliness
- Guilt
- Sleep disturbance
- Body aches
- Questioning of spirituality

## How to Cope:

- Allow for a range of emotions; there is no right way to feel
- Remember that everyone processes loss differently
- Share your feelings with a friend, support group, or a faith community
- Take time alone as needed without guilt
- Make an effort to connect with others for relaxing or fun activities
- Spend time with animals, preferably those that are “hands on”/pet-able
- Engage in art (painting, coloring), journaling, or music (listen, dance, create)
- Let your instructors know what you are coping with this semester
- **Get Connected.** Contact the Counseling and Testing Center by calling or visiting our website to learn more about the many services available.