

Grief Reactions and Interventions Differ by Age/Cognitive Development

Adults

Common Belief of this Age Group	Fears	Suggested Intervention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of grief responses is mostly due to how previous losses have or have not been resolved. • Although adult cognition allows an older person to reason abstractly, the degree to which personal support systems (i.e. friends, family, religion, etc.) are firmly in place can determine the nature of their grief. • Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of death particularly those who have experienced loss, relocation, death, war, or natural disasters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived need to remain “in control” often causes adults to circumvent the natural grief process. • Potentially unhealthy responses include such behaviours as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • over-activity • avoidance of grieving • indecisiveness • suppression of all feelings • development of the deceased’s symptoms • increased isolation • increased frequency of real physical disease • self-defeating behaviour • depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create environment that is supportive and caring of others • Colleagues should be watchful of severe grief-response and share concerns with the Crisis Response Team or administrator. • Ensure those people deeply affected are receiving appropriate support. • Encourage adequate rest and food in order to cope with the stress of a loss.

It may be helpful to reprint this page for staff.

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