



# Grief & Community Healing

*Navigating the Stages of Loss and Embracing Compassion*

## Grief

Grief is a normal response to loss. Most people think grief happens after the death of a loved one, but it can also happen after the loss of one's job, marriage, or leaving one's homeland.

**The Process of Grief:** This process can take days, weeks, years, and a person can go in and out of the different stages and emotions. There is no right way to handle grief, but there are normal things we feel when we grieve

- **Shock-** A person feels numb, like they can't feel or think about anything. This feeling can last minutes, hours, or days. A person might not be able to even decide what to eat, what to wear, or what to do at work or even talk about how they are feeling.
- **Suffering-** When the person accepts the loss, they can have many different feelings:
  - **Sadness-** crying, not having hope, feeling like they can never be happy again
  - **Anger-** feeling powerlessness, angry at God
  - **Guilt-** wondering why they're still alive, feeling they could have done more to stop the loss
  - **Anxiety-** worried something might happen again, worried someone else close to them will die, feeling others are going to harm them
  - **Physical-** tired all the time, trouble sleeping, not wanting to do anything or eat anything
- **Recovery-** When the person is better able to accept the loss, they are then able to take care of themselves, other people, or other things in their lives. This does not happen at the same time for everyone. Some people might recover in a few days or weeks, while for others it might take months or years. The most recent loss might cause a tidal wave of emotions for a person because they have suffered other losses in their lives.

**“If I can see pain in your eyes  
then share with me your tears. If  
I can see joy in your eyes then  
share with me your smile.”**  
— Santosh Kalwar

## Community Healing

Be compassionate for each other's pain, fear, guilt, sadness, tears, anger, and actions. Try not to judge them when they cry, are scared to come back to the Gurdwara, or don't appear as sad or in as much pain as you do. We do not know what is going on in their hearts or minds and sometimes a kind word or a willingness to listen will help a person.

If you are interested in seeking help or talking with someone about your feelings of grief, then trained counselors are available to speak with you. They will help you manage your grief in a safe and confidential place.



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If you have any symptoms, questions or concerns, consult with your healthcare provider. If you have a psychiatric or medical emergency, please contact 911 or seek immediate care. This is not medical advice and does not replace care provided to you by your physician. If you need additional support, you may contact Sikh Family Center at 866-732-7392. This educational information may be reproduced or distributed with attribution and without alteration or permission. Additional educational resources are available at [saldef.org](http://saldef.org). The content of this video or document was developed by the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF) in partnership with the Sikh Healing Collective (SHC). This project was funded through a grant from The Asian American Foundation (TAAF). Learn more at: [saldef.org](http://saldef.org).

