

GRIEF: WHAT YOU MIGHT EXPERIENCE

No one experiences grief in the same manner. Sometimes we have unrealistic expectations about how we, or other, should grieve.

Dr. Theresa Rando, author of **Grieving: How To Go On Living When Someone You Love Dies**, developed a list of common experiences/expectations.

You may expect that:

- ◆ Your grief will take longer than most people think.
- ◆ Your grief will take more energy than you would have ever imagined.
- ◆ Your grief will involve many changes.
- ◆ Your grief will show itself in all parts of your life: psychological, social and physical.
- ◆ You will grieve for what you have lost already and for what you have lost in the future.
- ◆ Your grief will entail mourning for all of the hopes, dreams, and unfulfilled expectations you held for and with that person, and for the needs that will go unmet because of his/her death.
- ◆ The loss will resurrect old issues, feelings and unresolved conflicts.
- ◆ You may experience identity confusion as a result of the loss.
- ◆ You may have a combination of anger and depression, such as irritability, frustration, annoyance or intolerance.
- ◆ You may experience acute surges of grief that occur suddenly with no warning.
- ◆ You may have trouble thinking and making decisions.
- ◆ You may feel like you are going crazy.
- ◆ You may begin a search for meaning and may question your religion, spirituality and/or philosophy of life.
- ◆ You may find that there are certain dates, events, and experiences that resurrect grief.
- ◆ You may find that the saying "time heals" has truth.

Information courtesy of Brian Pickering, Alberta Health Services, Grief Counselor, RockyView Hospital, May 2011.