

The following is taken from “**Overcoming Grief: Ten Suggestions**”
by **Arnaldo Pangrazzi**

The loss of a loved one through death often requires adjustment in our way of looking at the world and our plans for living in it; it is a major disruption in our life.

In a very real way, whenever we choose to love someone, we are also choosing to be hurt. The time comes when we have to say good bye, let go. That is when our grief begins. As it takes time to love, so it also takes time to let go. It is what we do with time that can heal.

Here are **10 guidelines** about how to use your time to find your way to hope, freedom and healing:

1. Take time to accept death.

The only way to deal with death is to accept it, not fight it. We can only embrace death, no matter how painful that might be. Yes, our loved one has died. But that doesn't mean we have to die, too. We have to pick up the pieces and go on.

2. Take time to let go.

One of the most difficult human experiences is letting go. Yet from birth to death, life is a series of letting go – sometimes temporarily; sometimes permanently.

3. Take time to make decisions.

People who have been very dependent on the deceased find themselves lost in the world. They are afraid to give themselves direction, to make mistakes, to ask, to try. Yet making mistakes is the way in which we learn and develop trust in ourselves.

4. Take time to share.

Sharing our memories and feelings with people who are grieving themselves is especially helpful. We learn to understand our experience as normal, become aware of different ways of coping and realize that the answers to our pain and our life lie within us as we become free to give and receive in an open, caring way.

5. Take time to believe.

To survive is to find meaning in suffering. Meaning doesn't just happen. It takes time, openness and faith to find positive values in our suffering. At times our grief can shake up our faith. Our faith doesn't take away our grief, but helps us to live with it.

6. Take time to forgive.

We might feel guilty about what we did or didn't do, about the clues we missed, about the things we said or failed to say. As we think about our life and relationship with the deceased there will always be things which are less than ideal. We need to find strength to forgive ourselves, others and life for hurting us and forgive death for taking our loved one.

7. Take time to feel good about yourself.

Bereaved people are not sentenced to unhappiness. We learn to be happy by the way we adjust to life and use the opportunities life gives us. We need to be patient and give ourselves time to learn and time to make mistakes.

8. Take time to meet new friends.

Loneliness will be present in grief and it might be nature's way of mending our broken heart. In the grief process, healing occurs when we take the step to move out of our safe boundaries and interact with others.

9. Take time to laugh.

In life there are as many reasons to laugh as there are to cry. In grief, there is a time when our tears come with less frequency and intensity and we learn to remember without crying. Laughter, on the other hand, helps us survive; it helps us re-enter life.

10. Take time to give.

The best way to overcome our loneliness and pain is to be concerned about the loneliness and pain of others. Getting involved with others gives us the feeling that life goes on, and takes us away from self-pity.

Healing takes place when we turn our pain into a positive experience, and we realize that helping others is the key to helping ourselves.

The road to recovery from grief is to take time to do things which will enable us to give a renewed meaning to our life.

In grief, no one can take away our pain because no one can take away our love.

The call of life is to love. . .again.