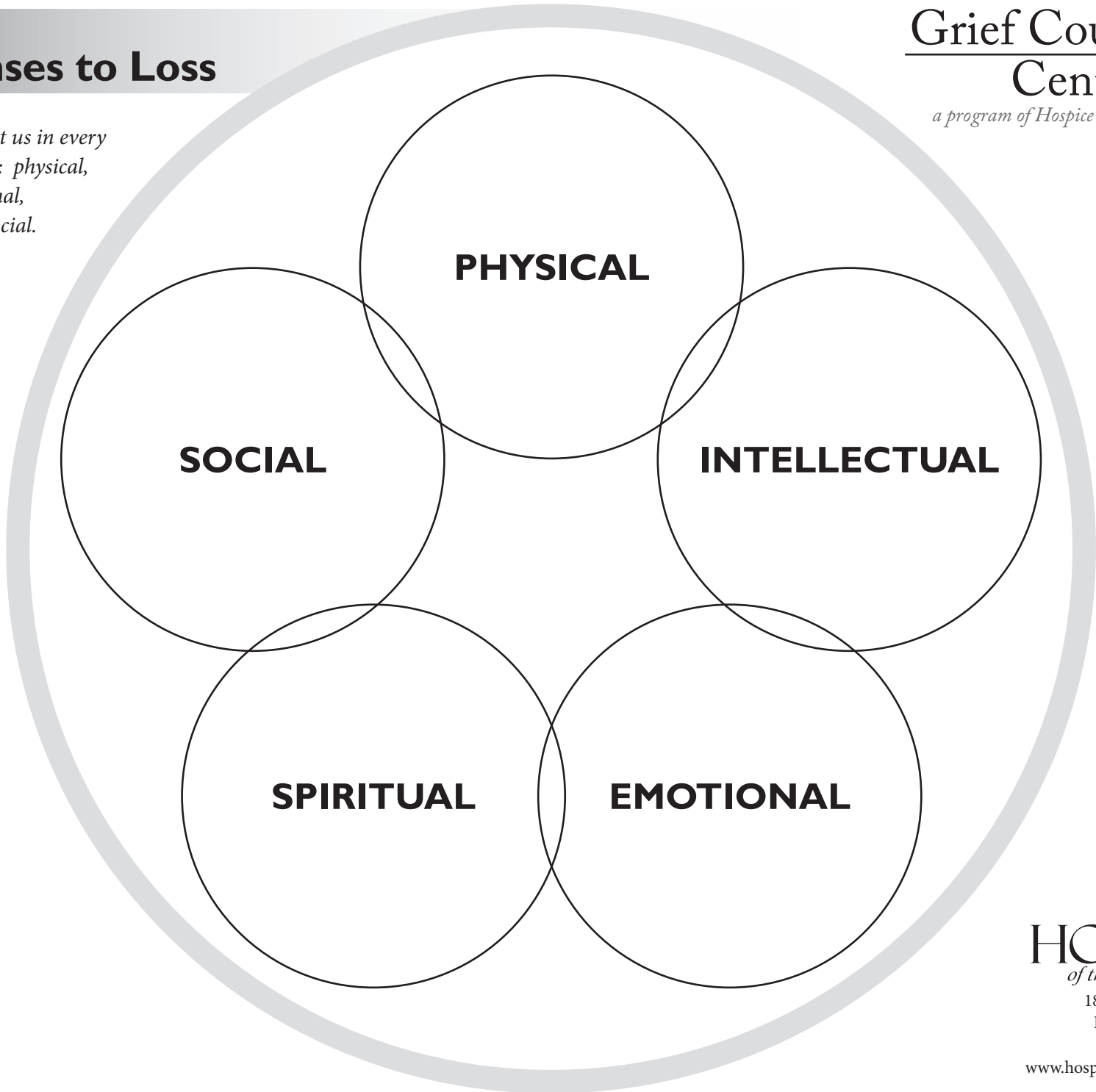


Responses to Loss

Grief can impact us in every area of our lives: physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social.



Grief Counseling Center

a program of Hospice of the Piedmont

HOSPICE
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Responses to Loss

Place a check beside any response you are experiencing following the loss of your loved one.

PHYSICAL

- Sleep changes: trouble sleeping or sleeping more
- Appetite changes: loss of appetite or eating more
- Fatigue: feeling tired or low energy
- Excessive energy or feeling jittery
- Numbness
- Muscle and joint pain or tension
- Stomach upset: nausea, diarrhea, or constipation
- Emptiness in chest and arms
- Tightness in chest or throat
- Chest pain
- Trouble getting a deep breath
- Sensitivity to noise or lights (startle easily)
- Heart palpitations
- Headaches
- Menstruation changes in women
- Flare up of existing medical problems
- Lowered immunity (frequent colds, etc.)
- Major illness or accident following death

INTELLECTUAL

- Difficulty concentrating and focusing
- Feeling disoriented
- Disbelief
- Difficulty making decisions
- Forgetful and absent-minded
- Confusion: "I'm in a fog"
- Feeling like my mind is blank
- Feeling like I'm on autopilot
- Thoughts or images that I can't get out of my head
- Constant thoughts of my loved one
- Upsetting dreams
- Feeling detached from others and the world
- Seeing, hearing, or smelling things that are not there
- Wondering if I'm "going crazy"
- Trouble understanding ideas or instructions

EMOTIONAL

- Disbelief and shock
- Less joy and excitement in life
- Emptiness
- Despair
- Sorrow and yearning
- Fear, nervousness, or panic
- Shame or embarrassment
- Anger (irritable, impatient, and frustrated)
- Resentful of others who are not suffering
- Bitterness
- Feeling betrayed
- Feeling abandoned
- Guilt, remorse, or regret
- Relief
- Loneliness
- Hopelessness
- Helplessness
- Less self-confident
- Lowered self-esteem
- Moments of peace and comfort

SPIRITUAL

- Decrease in faith
- Increase in faith
- Questions about God and universe
- Questions about suffering in world
- No longer believe that "good things come to good people"
- Questions or doubts about an after-life
- Increased faith in an after-life
- Belief that you will be reunited with your loved one
- Sense of guardian angels or a loving force
- Feel your departed loved one is spiritually close
- Feel your loved one is far away
- Upset over lack of fairness in world
- Increased awareness of mortality in self or other
- Increased focus on death in general
- Increase in drinking or drug use
- Increase in tobacco
- Increase in eating, spending, gambling, sex, work, exercise, pornography, etc.
- Deeper sense of compassion for others
- Reexamining your purpose and meaning
- Changes in your self-identity and self-concept ("Who am I now?")
- Deeper appreciation of mystery of life and death
- Finding comfort and meaning in service to others

SOCIAL

- Loss of interest in social activities
- Desire to withdraw and avoid others
- Avoidance of new relationships
- Changes in old relationships
- Disappointment in others who are not there for me
- Feeling abandoned, invisible, or misunderstood by others
- Difficulty relating to others who have not suffered a similar loss
- Feeling different from others
- Loss in self confidence
- Changes in desire or frequency of romantic intimacy
- Loss of interest in world events
- Difficulty accepting that family members grieve differently
- Changes in family relationships and communication
- Dread of major milestones (holidays, birthdays, & anniversaries)