

5 TIPS FOR MANAGING STRONG EMOTIONS



Find an Outlet.

Test out a few outlets for expressing strong emotions like: writing a letter, screaming into a pillow, crying in the shower, using a punching bag, or playing loud music. The purpose here is to find a way to release strong emotions that is safe for you and others. Test out a few options to see what works best for you.



Set a Timer.

Allowing yourself to lean into strong emotions can be scary. If you are feeling very sad or mad or anxious, allow yourself to just sit in that feeling for a period of time. Set a timer and focus on feeling each emotion until the timer sounds. When the timer goes off have a plan to call a friend or go for a walk. Processing strong emotions a little bit at a time decreases the worry that your feelings will overcome you.



Listen to Your Body.

When your mind or heart is on overload, your body responds. Pay attention to the way you feel physically, and remember that your heart and mind can speak to you through any symptoms (like headaches, body aches, neck/back, insomnia) that you may experience. Once you've identified a physical symptom, respond with self-care.



Download Your Feelings, Again.

Grief is the catalyst for a variety of strong emotions. You may feel one emotion for a long time or ten in ten minutes. Returning to a feeling you've had before is normal. Remember that you will need to download and process a variety of emotions over and over again. Lean on the skills that you learn each time you ride an emotional wave to help you through the cycles of emotions you will experience.



Ask Questions.

When you experience a strong emotion explore the way your body, mind and heart responds. If you are afraid, identify your specific fear. If you are angry or sad ask yourself why. Seeking these answers will be valuable in two ways. First, by learning more about why this emotion is coming up, you have the chance to provide specific self-care to support you through the processing of that emotion. Secondly, making space for your feelings by paying attention to them in the moment helps you gain tools and insight for use when that emotion resurfaces.

Programs, resources and
community for widowed people
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