

## ***Managing Life and Work While Dealing with Grief from Losing a Loved One***



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Grief is an intense [emotion](#) that people feel when they've lost something. The loss can be from a breakup, losing a pet, or losing a job. However, grief can also be associated with the loss of a loved one. Everyone experiences grief, but each person experiences it in a different way.

### **The Process of Grief**

One expert has named [four tasks](#) that a person must complete in the grieving process as he or she moves forward in life. These aren't meant to be completed in any particular order, and you may need to revisit tasks throughout time. The first task is to accept the reality of the loss. Some people do this by having a funeral or memorial or by beginning to speak about the deceased in past tense. This step also involves accepting the reality of the significance of the loss.

The second task is to work through the pain of the grief. Grief can lead to feelings of sadness, anger, loneliness, fear, guilt, blame, and more. You need to acknowledge your feelings, talk about them, and understand them. Denying and avoiding grief and the feelings it brings doesn't prevent the pain from occurring. It only prolongs the inevitable.

The third task is to find a way to adjust to the environment in which the deceased is missing. Typically, this occurs over an extended period of time and involves adjustments on an internal, external, and spiritual level. The fourth task is to find an enduring connection with the deceased while embarking on a new life. For example, you can speak about and think about your loved one in a positive way while also finding new hobbies and making new friendships and memories.

### **Life Outside of Grief**

While going through all of these tasks takes time, life will continue to go on around you, and many responsibilities require your participation, even if you're still on task one. One of these responsibilities is work. There is no legal requirement that employers are required to offer paid bereavement time off; however, most businesses allot some sort of bereavement leave whether it be paid or not paid. So how do you handle [going back](#) to work while you're still processing your grief?

Check your company's employee handbook so you're aware what benefits may be available to you. Some co-workers may treat you as though nothing happened, others may privately offer condolences, and some may ask questions. While they mean well, the questions can make you feel uncomfortable or too emotional. Share what you're comfortable sharing. If you want to limit details, prepare short answers. For example, you may say, "Thank you for your questions, but I can't answer them right now."

Find a trusted friend at work to stay up to date on how you're feeling and what you need. Also, give yourself mini-breaks throughout the day. Grief is exhausting, and work is tiring too. Take a few minutes to go for a short walk or practice breathing exercises. It's also a good idea to find somewhere to go when you need to be alone if you feel a sudden rush of emotions. It can be your car, the stairwell, or any other place. Having tissues handy is a good idea as well. Taking care of your [mental, physical and emotional health](#) is crucial during this time.

Many people who are grieving find it difficult to focus and become forgetful. The quality of your work may temporarily decline when you first return to your job. To combat this, write everything down and create detailed checklists. Double check all of your work and consider asking your manager to check over your work as well. Be honest with your manager about how you are feeling.

### **Resources**

When you've lost a loved one, look for bereavement resources to help you [find peace](#) in your life. Some people lean on support from family and friends, and others reach out to their religious or faith group. There are many support groups for those in grieving that meet in person or have chat rooms online. You can also contact your family physician or a mental health professional to help you through the grieving process.

The process of grief has no timeline. It takes each person different amounts of time, and everyone will have different symptoms and struggles. Working through the four tasks attentively can be beneficial. Also, returning to work with a plan helps reduce stress and worry. While the grieving process is difficult, it's an important part of moving forward in life after losing a loved one.

### **About the Author**

Ms. Julie Morris is a life and career coach who strives to help others live the best lives that they can. She believes she can relate to clients who feel run over by life because of her own experiences. She spent years in an unfulfilling career in finance before deciding to help people in other ways. Check out Julie's blog: [juliemorris.org](http://juliemorris.org).

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