



*From Grief to Growth is a place to heal, grieve, and grow after the sudden and unexpected death of a loved one.*

You Have Found the Help You Need

### ***Tips for Coping with Grief in the Midst of COVID-19***

**1. Your experience with grief and the unknown can help with your COVID fears.**

Most people experience feelings of sadness, emotional pain, physical discomfort, fears of the unknown and waves of emotions as they grieve. Many of these grief experiences may be similar to your COVID-19 fears. Use the coping techniques and skills you have developed for your grief to cope with your COVID–19 fears.

**2. Focus on the things you can control and actions you can take.**

If you feel overwhelmed with uncertainty or fears of the unknown, try making a list of what you do know in a way that is factual and without judgement. Focus your energy on what you have the power to change and see if you can learn to tolerate the things you cannot change.

**3. You cannot care about everybody.**

Recognize that you do not have the emotional bandwidth to care for everybody. If you are feeling depleted, focus on caring for yourself and those you love. Try and develop an imaginary bubble or protective shield around the people you love the most. Once inside, you can channel your energy, love, and empathy to those within your bubble. It may help to know that others you worry about are being cared for inside someone else’s bubble.

**4. Schedule time and activities for your grief.**

If you are feeling disconnected from you grief designate a specific time each day or each week to connect to your grief. You can do this by journaling, looking through pictures, listening to music, writing letters or talking with family and friends about the loved one no longer with you. It can also be helpful to have a

specific place in your home to focus on your grief. Some people like to sit outside, in a favorite chair or go to the cemetery to be present with their loss.

**5. Do not react to the panic or fears of others.**

Panic can be contagious, and it can be easy to get caught up in the fears of others. There are a lot of emotional techniques available to help manage panic and anxiety including exercise, meditation, deep breathing and guided imagery. A daily routine and structure is imperative to creating some sense of normalcy which can reduce panic and fear.

**6. It is important to have something to look forward too.**

We are not meant to constantly be in pain. During times like this scheduling distractions and pleasant events are important so that we have something to look forward too. Schedule phone calls with friends, favorite TV shows, exercise and pleasurable meals each day so you have something to distract yourself from your current situation.

**7. See care is a must!**

Self-care is essential to surviving grief and fears related to COVID-19. Remember that self-care comes in all shapes and sizes. Each day it is important to care for your physical body and emotional needs. This includes getting enough sleep and eating a healthy diet along with socialization with friends and family. New hobbies, creativity and being outside are also good forms of self-care during this difficult time.

**8. There is good in the world.**

When you are living with grief and fears related to COVID-19 it can be easy to forget that there is good in the world. Make sure you seek out stories of the amazing people and organizations giving of themselves during this time. Surround yourself with images (cute babies and animals?) that make you smile and laugh to brighten your spirit and outlook.

**9. You are resilient.**

It is important to remember that human beings are resilient and programmed to survive even the darkest of times. Think of the past struggles that you have endured and the tools you used to get you through as a reminder that you will get through this difficult time.

**10. There are opportunities to grow in every trauma.**

The field of post traumatic growth focuses on how humans can not only survive a trauma but emerge stronger than they were prior to the onset. Research has shown that we can grow stronger when we take new opportunities, deepen our relationship with others, connect to our personal strength and develop a greater appreciation for our life. To learn more about post traumatic growth visit [ptgi.uncc.edu/what-is-ptg](https://ptgi.uncc.edu/what-is-ptg).

**Jennifer R. Levin, MFT, PhD**  
jennifer@fromgriegtogrowth.com  
www.FromGriegtogrowth.com