


Grief and Resource Guidebook

Cumberland County, New Jersey





*“A great soul serves everyone
all the time. A great soul never
dies. It brings us together again
and again.”*

-Maya Angelou

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This information provided in this grief guide is supplied in good faith. Listed resources are not exhaustive and may change without notice. The County of Cumberland does not endorse or recommend any resource, opinion or any other information that may be mentioned in this guide. **This grief guide is not a substitute for professional mental health advice.** Any reliance on this general guide shall be solely at the risk of the recipient in that the guide is not intended as a specific plan of action for any individual.



Introduction

In the profound and often isolating landscape of grief, this resource guide extends a comforting hand, offering a compass for those navigating loss. Grief is a universal human experience, yet its path is uniquely personal. Within this guide, discover a collection of supportive resources to help navigate these challenging times. May this guide serve as a source of solace and guidance as you navigate the delicate terrain of grief, reminding you that you are not alone in this challenging journey.

The 5 Stages of Grief

DENIAL

It is not unusual to respond to the strong and often sudden feelings by pretending the loss or change is not happening.

Denying it gives you time to more gradually absorb the news and begin to process it. This is a common defense mechanism and helps numb you to the intensity of the situation.

BARGAINING

During grief, you may feel vulnerable and helpless. In those moments of intense emotions, it is not uncommon to look for ways to regain control or to want to feel like you can affect the outcome of an event. In the bargaining stage of grief, you may find yourself creating a lot of “what if” and “if only” statements.

ANGER

Where denial may be considered a coping mechanism, anger is a masking effect. Anger is hiding many of the emotions and pain that you carry. Anger may mask itself in feelings like bitterness or resentment. It may not be clear-cut fury or rage.

DEPRESSION

Depression may feel like a quiet stage of grief. It may feel like the inevitable landing point of any loss. However, if you feel stuck here or can't seem to move past this stage of grief, you can talk with a mental health expert. A therapist can help you work through this period of coping.

ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance is not necessarily a happy or uplifting stage of grief. It does not mean you have moved past the grief or loss. It does, however, mean that you have accepted it and have come to understand what it means in your life now. You may feel very different in this stage.

Healthy Ways of Coping

It is important to remember that mourning and grieving takes time looks different for everyone. It is not linear, and you will feel many emotions going through this process. This is completely normal.

Do things to take care of yourself.

Try to eat healthy, exercise regularly, and get a good amount of sleep nightly.

Find and do activities that you enjoy. This can include hobbies such as reading, hiking, journaling, or anything else that will improve your well-being.

Talk about the death of your loved one to family and/or friends. You don't want to avoid thinking or speaking about your loved one because it can lead to isolation.

Celebrate the lives of your loved one! Some dates and holidays may be difficult after a loved one has passed, but celebrating their life may be a good way to honor them!

Don't hesitate to reach out for help or support. Whether you need professional help or extra support from your supervisor at work, communicate this!

Talk to others who are going through similar losses. Having someone who can relate to you and your situation can be very beneficial and help a lot in your grieving journey.

Grief Support Resources

- Grief Recovery Method: In-Person Grief Support Group
 - Contact: Kristy Kakoda
 - kristyka@cumberlandcountynj.gov
 - 856-453-0486 x 11159
- My Sister's Kids
 - <https://www.mysisterskids.org/programs>
- The Compassionate Friends- Meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7pm
Victory Assembly of God
258 W Landis Ave, Bridgeton NJ
 - Contact: Maria Siegel
 - mariasiegel@gmail.com or 856-889-8112
- Emotions Anonymous
 - www.emotionsanonymous.org
- Helping Hands (Infant Loss & Miscarriage Support)
 - 856-507-2768
- Samaritan Life-Enhancing Care, Grief Support Groups in Southern NJ
 - <https://www.samaritannj.org/resources/grief-support-groups-south-nj/>
- Support After a Death by Overdose Grief Support Groups
 - <https://sadod.org/support-group-directory/>

Mental Health Resources

- 988-Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
- Mental Health Virtual Wellness Center
 - www.mhanj.org/united-by-wellness
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)/Cumberland
 - 856-691-9234 / 856-794-9987
- Fresh Hope
 - Chestnut Assembly of God
 - Contact: Audra (609-501-8526) or Tina (609-560-0138)
- Complete Care
 - 856-451-4700
- Inspira
 - 856-575-4111
- It Takes a Family
 - 856-378-7292
- Oaks Integrated Care
 - 856-537-2310
- The Guidance Center
 - 856-825-6810



Youth Mental Health Resources

- 2nd Floor Text or Talk 24/7
 - 1-888-222-2228
 - <https://www.2ndfloor.org/get-help/mental-health/>
- A Step Ahead (Ages 3-17)
 - 856-575-4195
- Family Crisis Intervention Unit (Mobile Response)
 - 877-652-7624



Legal

Probate

<https://www.cumberlandcountynj.gov/content/22602/23182/23384/default.aspx>

South Jersey Legal Services

415 W. Landis Ave, Vineland NJ

856-691-0494

Victim/Witness Hotline- Servicing Victims of Crime

856-451-3177 ext. 158

Cumberland County Bar Association- Lawyer Referral Service

856-696-5550

Legal Services of New Jersey

www.lsnj.org

888-576-5529

Records

Order vital records by:

- Sending requests online here:
 - <https://www.nj.gov/health/vital/order-vital/online-requests/index.shtml>
- Medical Examiner
 - 1175 DeHirsch Ave, Woodbine NJ
 - 609-861-3355
- Calling VitalChek
 - 877-622-7549
- Visiting the walk-in center
 - 140 E. Front Street, Trenton NJ
- Visiting the Local Vital Records Office in the municipality where the event occurred
- New Jersey Medicaid Program and Estate Recovery
 - 609-588-2900

Book Recommendations

For Children:

- *Badger's Parting Gifts* by Susan Varley
- *Merle's Sweatshirt* by Chuck Wilson
- *The Memory Box: A Book About Grief* by Joanna Rowland
- *A Kids Book About Grief* by Brennan Wood

For Teenagers:

- *What's Your Grief?: Lists to Help You Through Any Loss* by Eleanor Haley and Litsa Williams
- *Chill & Spill: A Place to Put it Down and Work It Out* by Steffanie Lorig and Jeanean Jacobs
- *Straight Talk About Death for Teenagers: How to Cope with Losing Someone You Love* by Earl A. Grollman

For Adults:

- *It's OK That You're Not OK: Meeting Grief and Loss in a Culture That Doesn't Understand* by Megan Devine
- *Losing Jonathan* by Robert Waxler
- *Life Between Falls: A Travelogue Through Grief and the Unexpected* by Julie Lange
- *When A Child Dies from Drugs* by Pat and Russ Wittberger
- *Living When a Loved One Has Died* by Earl A. Grollman
- *My Daughter's Addiction: A Thief in the Family - Hardwire for Heroin* by Marie Minnich

Virtual Resources



Scan here for helpful resources and links on overdoses.



Scan here to go to the Human Services landing page to see their calendar of events.



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“The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not ‘get over’ the loss of a loved one; you’ll learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same nor would you want to.”

-Elisabeth Kubler-Ross



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**CUMBERLAND COUNTY
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services