

Recommendations for a Grieving Family System

1. Recognize the hurt: identify, predict, and accept the validity of the unique issues and problems the family faces:

Be gentle with each other.

2. Be realistic about expectations as parents:

We cannot protect our children from everything.

3. Identify problem areas and communicate about them in light of grief process:

Never underestimate the impact of grief on the family.

4. Discuss differences in grieving styles and do not judge the responses of other family members:

Do not expect the grief of other family members to be like yours.

5. Men, open up to your pain/grief, learn to cry and express anger/stress appropriately: women, learn to express your anger appropriately:

Learn to share your grief with one another constructively.

6. Assist children to grieve by allowing expression of feelings, giving factual explanations, and being careful of expectations:

Don't expect children to act or understand like adults.

7. Pace yourself with the recognition that grief resolution will take a long time and will require reworking throughout life:

Recognize and prepare for anniversary reactions.

8. Establish personal and family methods of recognizing important times relative to the deceased:

Create family grief rituals.

9. Give yourself and family members permission to set aside grief and enjoy life:

Have fun together.

10. Be realistic regarding the resolution of grief:

Accept that things will never be the same and turn off the "if onlys".

