

Signs of Healing

You don't heal from the loss of a loved one because time passes, you heal because of what you do with the time.
--Carol Crandell

As you move along your journey of grief, healing doesn't just happen. It comes about gradually as you do the following:

- Talk about your loss.
- Write about your loss.
- Cry about your loss.
- Work through all the emotions associated with your loss.
- Think about your loved one.
- Remember what your loved one meant to you.

As you move through your grief, you may see the following signs of healing. You don't have to see all of them for healing to be happening; this is an ongoing, gradual process. If you are early in your journey, you may not see any of them yet. You may want to place checkmarks by what you are seeing now, and come back to review the list again in twelve and eighteen months.

- A recognition of the reality and finality of death.
- A return to stable eating and sleeping patterns.
- Having thoughts about the person who died, but not being preoccupied by them.
- The capacity to enjoy experiences in life that are normally enjoyable.
- The establishment of new and healthy relationships.
- The capacity to live a full life without feelings of guilt or lack of self-respect.
- The drive to organize and plan one's life toward the future.
- The serenity to become comfortable with the way things are rather than attempting to make things as they were.
- The versatility to welcome change into your life.
- The awareness that you have allowed yourself to grieve, and you have survived.
- The awareness that you do not "get over" your grief; instead, you have a new reality, meaning, and purpose in your life.
- The acquaintance of new parts of yourself that you have discovered in your grief journey.
- The adjustment to new role changes that have resulted from the loss of the relationship.
- The acknowledgement that the pain of loss is an inherent part of life resulting from the ability to give and receive love.

