

Tips for Navigating Anticipatory Grief

1. Acknowledge the reality of grief before and during major life transitions.

- Find resources and people you can trust to express how you are feeling.
- Learn to describe yourself as grieving. Thinking of yourself as grieving will help you be both self-compassionate and honest about how challenging your current circumstances are.

2. Learn to live with the experiences of grieving.

- Name and express your feelings so you can begin to see them for what they are- facets of your love for whatever and whomever you may be losing.

3. Explore the memories and thoughts associated with what you may be losing.

- Become aware that you are living in three times:
 - Worried about the future, struggling with the present and thinking about the past.
 - How can you bring your focus back to the present when you start spiraling?

4. Searching for Purpose - as Life is Changing

- Identify your purpose, both in the life that is changing and the future, which will be.

5. Reach out for and accept support from others.

- Grief is an inner experience, but mourning is outward, and involves other people.
- You may find support in family and friends, spiritual advisors, support groups or therapists. You will want to develop a network of support.

6. Living, loving, and mourning at the same time

- There was Before and After and right now you are “In-Between.”
- “In-between” in a transitional or liminal space which is uncertain and unsettled.
- Find activities which help you stay present in the moment - spend your time more fully in the now.

7. Set your Intentions.

- Identify one or two things each day that you can control.
- How will you respond when things that are not planned happen?
- How can you relinquish your illusions of control over the big stuff?
- How can you cultivate equanimity and acceptance during times of turbulence?