GRIEF AND LOSS:
UVA Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Grief is a natural response to the loss of someone or something important to you. Everyone grieves in their own way, based on personal experiences, cultural background, religion, and many other considerations. Grief is also a non-linear process; therefore, you might need different kinds of support at different times. Trying to make sense of losses and fluctuating feelings (e.g. numbness, sadness, anger, guilt, shame, disbelief, or confusion) are common occurrence when working through the grief process.

How to Cope with Grief and Loss
Seek support from your community (e.g. friends, family, mentors, RAs, university staff, or faculty).
- The most effective means of coping with grief and loss is to talk about it with someone who cares. Spend time together and value your most meaningful relationships.

Maintain your routine.
- Attend class, go to work, and attend to responsibilities as best as you are able. It is important to maintain normalcy when things feel abnormal.

Exercise
- Go to the gym, take a walk or jog, go swimming, lift weights, practice yoga, etc. Both aerobic exercise and low-impact exercise can help you process stress.

Take breaks from thinking about your worries.
- While it is important to talk with others about how you are feeling, it is equally important to take breaks from thinking about your worries.
- Find a mindless activity that can help distract you temporarily such as watching a movie, playing video games, or reading a book.

Tend to your inner self.
- Practice mindfulness, meditation, or prayer. If you seek comfort in the environment, then spend time outside alone or with others.

Express your feelings in a tangible or creative way.
- Write about your loss in a journal.
- Create a scrapbook or photo album celebrating the person’s life.
- Visit a memorial.
- Get involved in a cause or organization that was important to your lost loved one.
- Write a letter saying the things you never got to say.

Online Resources about Grief and Loss
- Helping a Student who has Lost a Friend or Family Member to Suicide: http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/bethatone/studentscopingsuicide.html
• National Students of Ailing Mothers and Fathers Support Network: Non-profit organization supporting grieving college students: [https://www.guidestar.org/profile/06-1778006](https://www.guidestar.org/profile/06-1778006)

**Books about Grief and Loss**

- *Grieving Mindfully: A Compassionate & Spiritual Guide to Coping with Loss* by Sameet M. Kumar
- *How To Go On Living When Someone You Love Dies* by Terese Rando
- *Remembering with Love: Messages of Hope for the First Year of Grieving and Beyond* by Elizabeth Levang
- *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* by Rabbi Harold S. Kushner
- *How to Survive the Loss of a Loved One* by Peter McWilliams, Harold Bloomfield, and Melba Colgrove

**Helpful Resources**

- *Office of the Dean of Students* - Professional staff is available to help navigate many academic or personal concerns and can help connect you to on-grounds resources. You can stop in at their main office located on the second floor in Peabody Hall or call 434-924-7133 to schedule an appointment.
- *Hospice of the Piedmont* – Licensed healthcare professionals provide bereavement services including individual counseling and support groups: [http://www.hopva.org/grieving-a-loss/](http://www.hopva.org/grieving-a-loss/)