Helping Yourself Through Grief

"There is no grief that time does not lessen and soften." ~Cicero

1. Provide Gentle Self-Care when Grief is Fresh. Ask for help with everyday tasks, drink plenty of fluids, take a walk, and, at bedtime, soak in a soothing bath or drink a cup of warm milk to help you sleep.

2. Accept Your Feelings. Common emotions are disbelief, numbness, fear, anger, relief, guilt, loneliness, and exhaustion. Know there is no right or wrong way to feel or grieve.

3. Find an Outlet for Your Feelings. A range of intense emotions can be generated after a loss, and these feelings need release. So cry, walk, write what's on your heart, paint, or talk to a friend.

4. Care for Your Whole Being—Body, Mind, and Spirit. Get regular exercise, replace self-critical thoughts with positive ones, and accept that sorrow is not a sign of spiritual weakness.

5. Seek Ongoing Support. Grieving is a lengthy journey and support is needed from those who understand this reality. Consider joining a Grief Support Group to meet others.

6. Make Needed Adjustments. Your routines, roles, and relationships have been altered as a result of the death. Keep a flexible attitude with a willingness to adapt and change.

7. Manage the Stress of Change. Cultivate an inner calm when you cannot change a situation. Slow down, relax your standards, and engage in a life-giving activity each day.

8. Embrace the Memories. Death ends a life, but it doesn't end a relationship. Retain special keepsakes, create a memory book, or give to a charity in your loved ones name.

9. Search for Meaning. You may wonder what purpose your life has now. Stay present in the activities of each day and a sense of meaning and purpose will gradually reemerge.

10. Prepare for Special Occasions. Plan ahead for anniversaries, holidays, and other special occasions when grief can be especially intense, and do what feels right for you.

From *The Nature of Grief: Photographs and Words for Reflection and Healing,* by Rebecca Hauder. Available at www.resourcesforgrief.com