



UNDERSTANDING LOSS & GRIEF

As we go through life we will face many losses. Loss means something important has changed or is no longer the same. Grief is all those thoughts, feelings, and behaviors we experience when we are separated from someone or something important to us. Grief is a reaction after someone dies but it can happen with any kind of loss. Know that these and other reactions are normal when we are grieving. It can help to talk with someone we trust about these feelings, or expressing them through creative outlets like journaling or drawing.

Common Types of Loss:

- The death of a person
- Relationship or friendship break-ups
- Parents divorce
- Parent or sibling's incarceration
- Moving to a new home or school
- Losing a pet
- Deportation of family members
- Changes in your (or a loved ones) health and mental health
- Financial struggles - like caregivers losing a job

How Grief Might Feel:

- Trouble sleeping
- Feeling anxious or nervous
- Getting angry easily
- Feeling numb or disconnected
- Eating more or less than usual
- Crying unexpectedly
- Feeling guilty or blaming yourself for death
- Withdrawing or isolating
- Physical symptoms (headaches, stomach aches, fast heartbeat)

"Free Your Feels" is a mental health awareness campaign encouraging Georgia's young people to explore their real **feelings** and **free** them fearlessly.

Follow for more resources!

@freeyourfeelsga



RESOURCES

Click the logos for
online resources



The Coalition to Support Grieving Students offers tools for coping with grief, especially in school settings.



The organization offers resources and support for children and families dealing with trauma and grief.



988 is the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, offering free 24/7 support for mental health emergencies. Click the graphic above for the 988 website.

ACTIVITY

MINDFUL MOMENT

When grief and loss feel overwhelming, take a few moments to calm your body.

Sit or lie down comfortably. Put your hands on your belly and feel it rise and fall when you breathe. Take a deep breath in through your nose like you're smelling a flower... and let it out slowly through your mouth like you're blowing out a candle.

As you breath in, think of a memory or something that makes you feel warm inside, maybe a special person, a pet, or a happy moment. As you breathe out, let your body relax a little more each time. If it feels too painful to think of a memory, just concentrate on a breathe and staying in the moment.



Kate's Club is an Atlanta-based nonprofit that supports children, teens, and families grieving the death of a loved one through free programs that foster connection, healing, and hope. Click their logo to explore their website.

Endings & Beginnings

By expressing your feelings and imagining what comes next, you begin to transform loss into understanding, and grief into the first steps of a new beginning. Below are two activities for finding closure and looking ahead:

Write a letter to the person or thing you've lost or are losing. You don't have to send it – just writing it can help you process your feelings.

Use magazines or drawings to show what you are looking forward to in your future.

