

How To Survive **EARLY GRIEF**

@refugeingrief

8 SIMPLE RULES FOR IMPOSSIBLE TIMES

1

STAY SAFE

Do it for yourself if you can.
Do it for others if you must.
If you're driving while crying
too hard to see straight, pull over.
Distracted driving is dangerous.

2

TEND SOMETHING

Water the plants.
Brush the animals.
Send a care package.

Focusing on others for
a little while can help.

3

GET OUTSIDE

Being outside in a non-human world
is a relief. The trees will not ask,
"How are you really?" The wind
does not care if you cry. There's a lot
to be said for being in places that
don't need anything from you.

4

DRINK WATER

Crying for months on
end is really dehydrating.
Please drink water.

Your body needs it.

The first weeks and months after someone you love dies are a world unto their own.
Your usual survival tactics won't work. Words of intended comfort just grate.
Encouragement from others doesn't feel good.

POSITIVE THINKING AND PLATITUDES CAN'T HELP. THEY JUST CAN'T.

5

SHOWER

Really. You will feel just the tiniest
bit better clean. The same goes for
sweeping the floor or any other
seemingly tedious or irrelevant task
of hygiene.

6

MOVE

In whatever ways your body
can move, move.
It won't solve anything,
but movement can help
soothe your mind.

7

SAY NO - SAY YES

You can't afford any big drains on
your energy, and you can't afford
to miss too many ways to replenish it.
Say no to things that are too much
for you. Say yes to things that bring
even a tiny bit of goodness.

8

EAT

Some people eat under stress.
Some lose all interest in food.
Some experience serious, lasting physical
challenges due to their "grief diet." Small
doses of healthy, nutrient dense food
might be more easily tolerated by your
mind & body than full meals.

The core parts of you, the ways you find solace and connection -
these have not completely changed, though they may feel irrelevant.
Grief pares things down.

YOU MAY JUST NEED TO EXPERIMENT A BIT.

Adding to this list, or creating a whole
new one of your own can provide a road
map inside this wholly disorienting time.

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