

## Health Wise

This month, I would like to share with you some information on the process of grief and healing....stressing “how can I find relief?”.

Some people see the process of grief and healing as a journey through a gigantic maze. There are seven common turns people take when walking through the maze of healing. Through each of these stages, though, the most important part of healing is knowing that God’s love for you will never leave you.

How to Heal includes:

1. Having the experience. This is the entry point.
2. Owning the experience as a loss. This means not denying it, pretending it doesn’t hurt, or minimizing its importance.
3. Willingness and readiness to walk the path of healing. The timing of healing is a very individual thing.
4. Hurting. There is no quick fix and no path that allows us to avoid the pain. We must face the pain and experience it.
5. Expressing and not repressing the hurt. That means finding a support system or a friend who is willing to let us experience and share our feelings. This is not always easy. Many times our family and friends want to fix it by finding us a shortcut. There are no shortcuts to grief.
6. Assessing and reevaluating ourselves and the situation. Early in grief, it feels like we will never survive long enough to find the end of the maze. But then, somewhere down the path, we find ourselves having our first good belly laugh and feeling guilty about it. Later, we may find ourselves laughing without even thinking about it, or going the whole day without thinking about the pain. That’s because we are moving into the final stages of healing and nearing the end of the maze.
7. Learning to live with a redefinition of self. This final step requires finding ways to reinvest our emotional energy, rather than having all of our energy stuck in re - experiencing the loss.

### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS:

1. Take the losses seriously.
2. Take time to feel.
3. Confide in someone.
4. Ritualize the loss in a personally significant way.
5. Allow yourself to change.
6. Use faith resources.
7. Reconnect with God’s gifts.
8. Maintain a daily routine.
9. Exercise.
10. Release anger.
11. Avoid chemicals (do not try to drown the pain with drugs or alcohol)
12. Help the body and mind work together (break down tasks so they aren’t overwhelming, breathe deeply, take a walk, watch a sunset, go out for dinner, ask for help from God and from other people).

“The more we love, the more we are hurt when we lose the object of our love. But if we are honest with ourselves, would we have it any other way” ( C.S. Lewis )

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