

## My Grief Rights<sup>1</sup>

The following may help young people dealing with grief:

**1. I have the right to have my own unique feelings about the loss**

I might feel mad, sad or lonely. I might feel scared or relieved. I might feel numb or sometimes not anything at all. No one will feel exactly like me.

**2. I have the right to talk about my loss whenever I feel like talking**

When I need to talk, I will find someone who will listen to me and love me. When I don't want to talk, that's okay too.

**3. I have the right to show my feelings of loss in my own way**

When they are hurting, some kids like to play so they'll feel better for a while. I can play or laugh, too. I might also get mad and misbehave. This does not mean I am bad; it just means I have scary feelings that I need help with.

**4. I have the right to need other people to help me with my loss**

...especially grown-ups who care about me. Mostly I need them to pay attention to what I am feeling and saying - and to love me no matter what.

**5. I have the right to get upset about normal, everyday problems**

I might feel grumpy and have trouble getting along with others sometimes - it won't last for long. If I do get grumpy and angry, I must remember the important 3 rules...  
*When angry - I must not hurt myself. I must not hurt others (or animals). I must not hurt valuable property.*

**6. I have the right to have "grief-bursts"**

Grief-bursts are sudden, unexpected feelings of sadness that just hit me sometimes - even long after the loss. These feelings can be very strong and even scary. When this happens, I might need a hug and someone to talk to - I might even need my own 'space'.

**7. I have the right to have my own spiritual beliefs**

Praying might help me feel better and somehow closer to the person who has gone.

**8. I have the right to try to figure out why the loss happened**

But it's okay if I don't find the answer.

"Why" questions about life and loss are the hardest questions in the world.

**9. I have the right to think and talk about my memories of the person who died or went away**

Sometimes those memories will be happy and sometimes they might be sad. Either way, memories help me to keep alive my love for the person who has gone.

**10. I have the right to move toward and feel my loss and, over time, to heal**

I'll go on to live a happy life, but the memories will always be with me.

I will always miss the person who has gone. I will be thankful for all that I have learned.

---

<sup>1</sup> Adapted by Cherene Wessell, from "Healing Your Grieving Heart, for Kids" by Alan D Wolfelt