



# Helpful rules to live by

1. Recognize and accept life and death as natural parts of creation. There is “a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to pluck up that which has been planted.”
2. Work toward understanding yourself and your own experience of grief.
3. Give yourself time to grieve. Your grief must follow its own natural course. Don't let others hurry you.
4. Think of yourself as a unique person, one of a kind, able to look at your own needs and wishes and find your own best healing. There is no one else in this world exactly like you.
5. Resist boredom and self-pity. Change your routine. Find new interests. Accept help from others, but recognize yourself as a person of worth who can seek out and find your own new ways of living and caring.
6. Live your own life. Love your family, care for them, and draw strength from them. But don't live your life through theirs, second-hand. Build a new life all your own that includes, but doesn't depend on, theirs.
7. Make decisions in confidence and faith. Don't let a 'substitute' make them for you. It is YOUR life, no one else's.
8. Forget about who you were or used to be. You are becoming a new person . . .the same as before in some ways, but with some new differences and qualities. In working to heal your grief you've become better and stronger, capable of living and loving again. You *will* be whole.
9. Help others who haven't prepared for the future loss of a loved one. Remember how it felt to be unready. Encourage them to attend to the practical matters of wills and finances before it becomes necessary. Encourage them to avoid over-dependence on their spouse and to share in the decision-making. Encourage them to develop a secondary support system of friends, interests and activities.
10. Above all, share your strength, hope and experience with others who have lost a loved one. Remember how it felt to start walking that lonely road alone. Remember what a comfort it was when someone reached out to you, unasked, to take your hand.

