



Common Reactions to Death

It's very common for a grieving person to need to talk about what happened repeatedly. We often tell clients that they need to tell their story "a hundred times", and suggest they tell friends and family that they have this need and ask them to listen. Think of this repetitiveness as practicing the acceptance of the death much like one has to practice any new skill or ability.

It's also not unusual for some to have a very intense need to know exactly what their loved one was experiencing in their last moments. In our practice, folks who have this need often report that knowing every detail helps them in coming to terms with the reality of such a life changing and often tragic event. For a grieving person, the reality of the death is so difficult to fathom - even in the face of the facts - that these details seem to provide a way to absorb it, and a path to accepting what feels so unacceptable.

Others prefer not to know any details at all. For these folks, it seems that the details weigh them down and keep them stuck in their sadness instead of guiding them along. Still others want to know some but not all of the details. We often emphasize that there is no right or wrong way to grieve – it's unique to each person and each relationship.

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