



GriefCare for Families
Module 2: Helping your family adapt after a loss
Topic 5: Living with reminders

Reminders of your loss are likely to be pervasive. Living with reminders is a way you come to understand what it means to you that a loved one died. Doing things that remind you of your deceased friend or family member allows you to keep them alive in your heart and mind. Despite these benefits, reminders can trigger strong, painful emotions.

People are naturally reluctant to do things that stir up painful feelings. You may think it's better if you don't do things that remind you of your loss. Your friends and family may also want you to avoid things that upset you. However, the advice to stay away from painful reminders is not always helpful. It may be holding you back. You need to find ways to move forward in your life, free of restrictions on what you can do.

Things that trigger emotional pain often also hold memories you may treasure. This is another reason not to avoid them altogether. By learning to live with reminders, you'll gradually become freer to move about as you wish. You'll become better able to manage your grief-emotions, which will allow positive, bittersweet memories and a stronger sense of connection to your deceased loved one.

Reflection activity

Take some time to reflect on what you think about living with reminders. Does it make sense that it would be better to do things you have stopped doing? Take some time to consider this question and any other reactions you might have had reading this part of GriefCare for Families. Message our team if you have any questions or comments.