



WHEN IS GRIEF MORE THAN GRIEF?

Recognizing when grief may need additional care and support.

GRIEF IS NOT A PROBLEM TO SOLVE.

There is no single timeline or correct way to grieve. Pain can come in waves, and difficult days do not necessarily mean something is wrong.

1

Daily life feels increasingly unmanageable

Basic care, work, school, parenting, or other responsibilities remain difficult or are becoming harder to complete.

2

The intensity is not beginning to shift

Grief still feels consuming most of the day, nearly every day, with little room for connection, rest, or moments of relief.

3

Longing or preoccupation dominates

Thoughts of the person or the circumstances of the death feel relentless and make it difficult to engage with the present.

4

Avoidance is narrowing your life

You avoid people, places, memories, belongings, or conversations so extensively that your world is becoming smaller.

CONSIDER THE PATTERN, NOT ONE DIFFICULT DAY

Duration matters, but so do intensity, daily functioning, cultural and spiritual context, available support, and whether symptoms are improving, staying the same, or worsening.



CG THERAPY

WHEN ADDITIONAL SUPPORT MAY HELP

5

Life feels empty or meaningless

It is difficult to imagine a future, reconnect with purpose, or understand who you are without the person who died.

6

Isolation or numbness is deepening

You feel detached from others, emotionally shut down, or unable to receive comfort even from people you trust.

7

Other symptoms are becoming concerning

Hopelessness, severe guilt, loss of interest, major sleep or appetite changes, risky behavior, or increased substance use persist.

8

You feel unsafe

Thoughts of death, self-harm, or suicide require immediate support from emergency services, an emergency room, or a trusted professional.

ABOUT PROLONGED GRIEF DISORDER

A clinician may consider this diagnosis when intense grief persists, causes significant distress or impairment, and exceeds cultural or religious expectations. The death must have occurred at least 12 months earlier for adults or 6 months earlier for children and adolescents. Only a qualified professional can diagnose it.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL GRIEF BECOMES A CRISIS

Therapy can be helpful at any point - for a steady place to tell the story, understand difficult reactions, reconnect with daily life, and carry the loss without carrying it alone.

CG Therapy offers compassionate telehealth support for teens and adults throughout Michigan navigating grief, loss, and major life transitions.

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Educational information only; not a diagnosis or substitute for individualized mental health or medical care. Seek immediate emergency help for safety concerns.

Clinical guidance: American Psychiatric Association and National Institute of Mental Health.