



Death is never easy, but for families and friends affected by a sudden death of a loved one, grief is especially traumatic. Deaths caused by accidents, homicide and suicide typically seem premature, unjust, and wrong. Completely wrong.

It's common to have obsessive thoughts and feelings about what the death must have been like for the person who died, and what might have been done to prevent it.

Strong feelings of anger and regret are also common. Understanding and expressing these feelings helps survivors, over time and with the support of others, come to reconcile their loss.

### What is Sudden Death?

Sudden, unexpected death is just that: death came without warning. It may happen in a few seconds or minutes, such as in an accident or from a heart attack, or a random, seemingly senseless act of violence.

Sudden unexpected deaths also happen when the person is not expected to die in a certain way or place. He or she may not even be expected to die at all.

Some people, not knowing the person was ill, may think of their death as sudden and unexpected. A person who was expected to take many months to die may also die a death that is seen as sudden. They may be expected to get worse slowly but then die in a short period of time. Death may also seem sudden when people are expecting a different outcome. The person may die in a few weeks when they were expected to live for months or even years.

### What Thoughts Arise in Those Left Behind?

The sudden loss and death of a person may cause shock and confusion at first. They may have more need to go over and over the events around the death. They may think that mistakes were made, and feel guilty or angry.

The police, courts, media, and insurance companies may get involved with the death. People may feel they need to help resolve the practical issues involved in the situation, instead of facing their grief, and moving through it.

**The following may be some of a survivor's feelings or actions after the sudden unexpected death of a loved one:**

- They may tire easily and be physically inactive
- They may instead become manic and way-too-busy
- They may tenaciously hang on to clothing or other belongings.
- They may have really poor concentration, not able to think clearly, or have trouble making decisions.
- They may have no appetite at all, or eat too much...or any combination of the two.
- They may sleep too much or not get enough sleep

Grief is a cycling process, and all of these symptoms may wax and wane, come and go, with the “seasons” of grieving.

### **If You Lost Someone You Love Suddenly**

The following may help you cope with the sudden unexpected death of a loved one:

- Rest is important. Do not try to do everything all at the same time. Do only what is needed and let other things wait until later. Ask your family, friends, or caregivers for help.
- Share your feelings. Try saying what you really feel or share stories of the one who just passed away. Often just talking things out with someone you trust is a big help.
- Take good care of yourself. Do not forget to look after yourself and other family members or friends. You should eat healthy food and keep yourself healthy.
- When the time is right, try to get out of the house a little each day. Go for a walk or meet with a friend. Be sure to spend time with your family or friends. But, remember, it is also important that you have time to yourself each day.

### **The Essential Lesson Within**

Here's the truth of things: if your loved one died from a sudden death, you have been brought face-to-face with the realization that tomorrow is promised to no one. This awareness can help you keep in mind what is important in life, so you don't get lost in trivial matters and lose sight of those things that are most important to you.

It is an ironic but one consequence of sudden death is that it can make you appreciate life more than you ever would have if you had not undergone such a traumatic experience.

Now we know that no one in their right mind would seek out such a loss in order to teach themselves a lasting life lesson, but it does let you pull something meaningful out of such a tragedy.

## Need Assistance?

Everyone needs help from time to time.

*Fortunately*, should you require help in the final care of a loved one; we're here for you, **24/7**.

Should your question or concern be less than urgent, feel free to use our contact form. We promise to respond in a timely way.

However, if you require immediate assistance, please call **+1 (830) 758-1500**.



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