

Bereavement vs. Traumatic Grief

BEREAVEMENT	TRAUMATIC GRIEF
Accept reality & permanence of death	Difficulty accepting person has died due to association of death with traumatic circumstances
Experience & cope w/ difficult emotional reactions	Intense distress triggered by reminders leading to avoidance or numbing
Adjust to changes in their lives and identity that result from death	Changes that lead to unpleasant reminders of way person died, possible over-identification, feeling overly responsible
Develop new relationships or deepen existing ones	Feelings such as guilt, anger, revenge interfere with new relationships
Maintain continued, healthy attachment to deceased through remembrance activities	Difficulty or avoidance of positive memories because linked to distressing images, thoughts, feelings
Find some meaning in death & learn about life or oneself	Inability or resistance to moving past terrifying, distressing aspects of death, negative feelings about self
Continue through normal developmental stages	Emotional reactions & behavior: withdrawal, anger, and distrust interfere w/ ability to engage in positive age-appropriate activities & relationships