

One day at a time: the stages of mourning (continued)

Look your pain
straight in the eye

The experience of bereavement

A difficult journey

*A humane
approach*

Reclaiming your life:

At this stage of your bereavement, you are able to step back from your sorrow: you can be proud of yourself and of the road you have travelled.

The strengths you have shown in getting through your bereavement restore meaning to your life. It is a new start.

Transformation and healing:

You are at peace with the deceased; now you are able to let him or her go.

You will not forget: quite the contrary. An intense, deep and positive bond now unites you with the deceased.

We have described these different stages for information purposes only. You may not experience them in order, or you may move straight from one to the next. Every process is different.

The road is long and sometimes tortuous: do not lose hope of healing.

Being plunged into the pain of a bereavement is not easy. Sometimes it is tempting to escape from it, whether through excessive work or through drinking or drugs.

At one time or another in your process, it is normal to feel the need to escape from your sorrow. But living with it and not yielding to the temptation to escape from it is an approach which, while painful, is necessary.

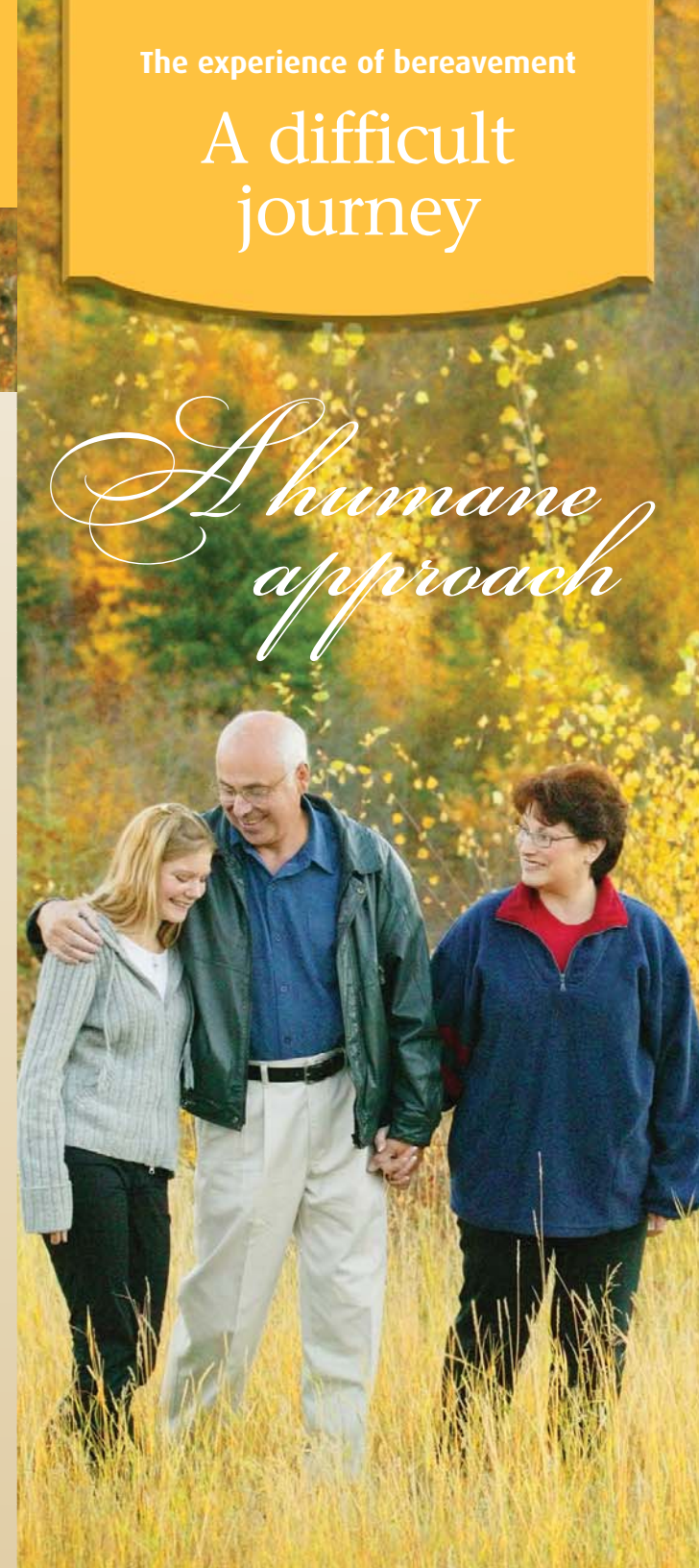
Bereavement experienced with eyes wide open can prove a critical experience, from which you will emerge having grown as a person.

A presentation of your local funeral cooperative



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Bereavement: a difficult journey

Your pain is unique, just as you are

One day at a time: the stages of mourning



The loved one who has just departed leaves an enormous void in your life. In the weeks and months ahead, you will surely experience a whole range of emotions: that is completely normal.

The word “bereavement” derives from an Old English term meaning “deprivation”. The bereavement which is starting for you has deprived you of a loved one, and pain is the inevitable result.

Be indulgent with yourself. Live one moment at a time. Do not miss an opportunity to congratulate yourself for your courage.

Since each human being is different, you will have your own way of experiencing your pain.

No one step you can take is the answer: you will have to find your own strength from inside you.

Most specialists say that the mourning period can last between nine months and two years. But those figures are only approximate indicators: you will be in mourning as long as you need to be.

Some bereaved persons feel the need for support from health professionals. Do not hesitate to seek help from a physician, social worker or psychologist: far from a sign of weakness, this is proof of respect for oneself.

Most people who have lost a family member go through a number of stages before they again feel in control of their life.

To help guide you through your bereavement, here are the stages that are experienced by most persons in mourning:

Denial:

At this stage, stunned by the news of the death, you become numb. Denial generally lasts from a few minutes to a few hours.

Disorganization:

At this stage, daily life reasserts its claims and the absence of the deceased is painfully felt.

This is without doubt the longest and most difficult stage you will encounter.

Reorganization:

At this stage, your emotional equilibrium is still fragile, but you are slowly regaining courage.

The memories that unite you with the deceased come back; they bring tears and laughter, at different times.