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*“No one ever told me that grief  
felt so like fear.”*

*-C.S. Lewis, A Grief Observed*

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Adapted from materials of the  
National Catholic  
Bereavement Ministry

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If you or a loved one is grieving,  
please contact the parish office to  
see what resources are available to you.



CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE *of* RALEIGH

# You and Your Emotions

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CATHOLIC GRIEF SUPPORT SERIES

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**Bereavement Ministry Leader Support**  
ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

# You and Your Emotions

## Feelings aren't good or bad; they just are.

Even when a major loss is expected, we are rarely able to anticipate the full impact it will have on our lives. Often, it leaves your life in complete upheaval. Emotions and feelings are helter-skelter. Tears are mixed with anger. Sadness and loneliness seem overwhelming.

Know that it is okay to cry. After all, Jesus wept when his friend died. Know that it is okay to be angry. Jesus, too, was angry when he threw the money-changers out of the Temple. Feelings aren't good or bad; they just are. It's how you deal with your feelings that is most important.

## Guilt

If you are feeling guilty about something you did or didn't do, now is the perfect time to sit down and write a letter (even to one who is no longer living), say a prayer, or speak with a trusted friend or a clergy person.

## Coping with your Emotions

Not expressing your emotions allows them to have control over you. Besides, you can waste a lot of your energy trying to keep them bottled up. Here are some suggestions for coping with your emotions and dealing with the stress of change:

1. Exercising offers a physical and mental release of tensions. Try a walk around the block, a game of golf, or whatever exercise you enjoy.
2. Crying. Science has shown that tears contain hormones that are a natural pain killer which help calm and sooth us.
3. Talking about your feelings with a trusted friend, counselor, or pastor.



## Key points to remember:

- We will experience a wide range of emotions.
- We may feel overwhelmed by the emotions.
- It is okay to feel sadness, anger, guilt.
- Expressing our emotions is a healthy way is most important.
- Finding ways to express our emotions will help us deal with the stress of grieving.
- Don't bottle up your emotions.

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*There is a sacredness in tears.  
They are not the mark of weakness but of power.  
They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues.  
They are messengers of overwhelming grief,  
of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love.*

*Washington Irving*

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4. Writing your thoughts on paper and expressing your feelings to the person who died, to a doctor, to God, etc. Then you may choose to destroy your writing or place it in a secure place.



5. Praying for God's help as you cope with the necessary adjustments you face. Or, you can pray for your loved one.
6. Meditating and relaxing can offer you a brief respite from your emotions and obsessive thoughts and allow your body to heal.
7. Drawing, dancing, singing, or any other type of creative expression can help. Make up a song and sing it as loud as you can or paint the emotions inside of you.
8. Watching a funny movie can offer a diversion from your grief work for a while, and laughter allows for the release of tension.
9. Thanking God for the support you have received, for friends, for books, etc. An attitude of thankfulness can be difficult at the beginning, but it will be an important aspect of living later.