

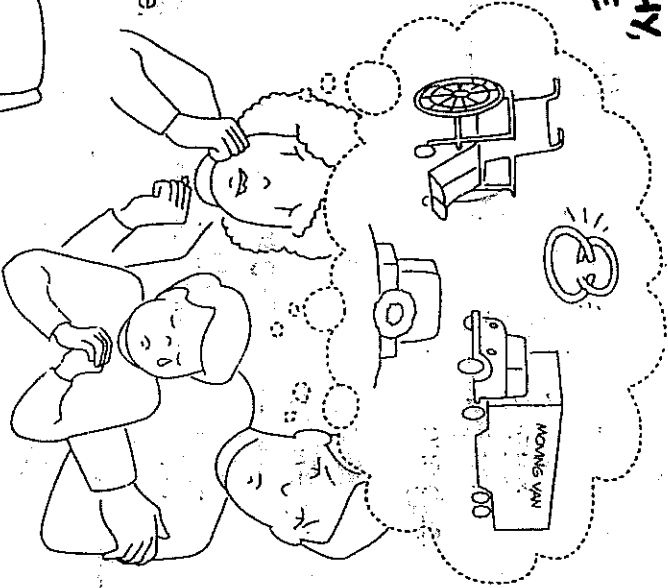
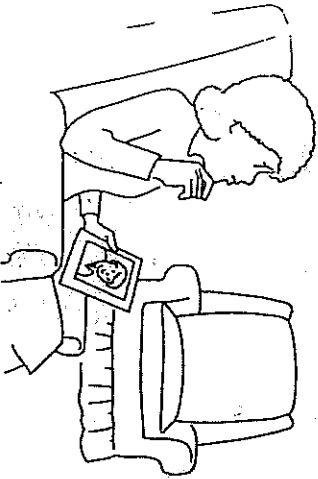
**IS
GRIEF?**

It's a natural reaction
to any important
change or loss.

**GRIEF IS A HEALTHY,
HUMAN RESPONSE**

to situations such as:

- the death of a loved one
- separation or divorce
- miscarriage
- injury or disability
- the loss of a job, property or pet
- children leaving home.



**OFTEN, THE
GREATEST LOSS
WE EXPERIENCE**
is when a loved one dies.

Grief is a painful experience,
but the pain does subside.

Because everyone
experiences loss or
change at some time in life.

**WHY
SHOULD I
UNDERSTAND
GRIEF?**

Understanding grief can help you:

FACE THE REALITY
and deal with feelings
of fear, loneliness,
despair and helplessness.

**RECOVER
AND GROW**
to be a stronger person.
Accepting your loss can
help you live a happy,
full life again.



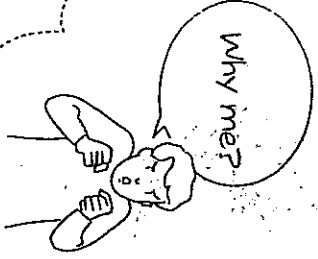
Grief is part of the healing process.

LIKE NO PEOPLE SHARE CERTAIN FEELINGS

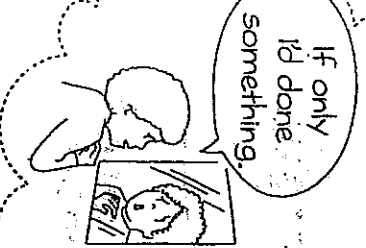
This isn't really happening!



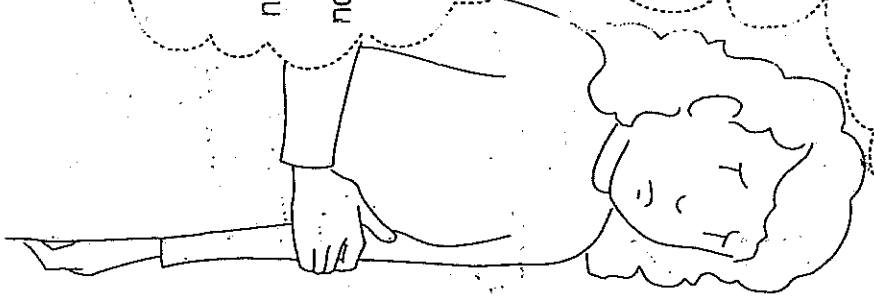
SHOCK AND DENIAL
Your first reaction may be to deny your loss or to feel emotionally numb. Eventually, you'll be able to face the reality of your loss.



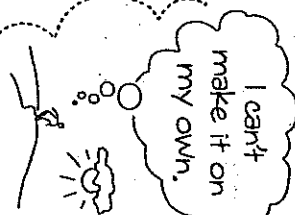
ANGER
Your loss may seem unfair. You may feel angry with yourself and others for not preventing the loss. But you can work through your anger.



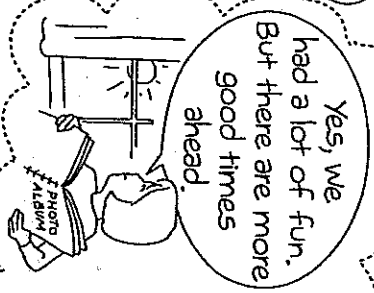
GUILT
It's not unusual to blame yourself for something you did or didn't do prior to your loss. Remember, you are only human -- there are events you just can't control or undo.



DEPRESSION
You may feel drained and unable to perform even routine tasks. Eventually, you will become involved in life again.



LONELINESS
Increased responsibilities and changes in your life can make you feel lonely and afraid. As you meet new challenges and develop new friendships, these feelings will fade.



HOPE
You will reach a stage where you can focus on your future with hope.

No matter how difficult life may get, you can pull through!

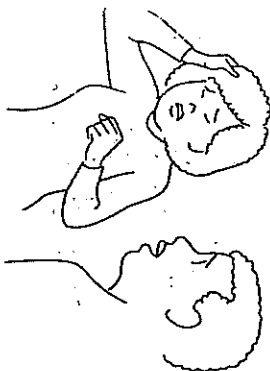
LIVING WITH LOSS

Take care of your emotional needs:

Take care of your physical needs:

EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS

Holding painful feelings inside can create more problems.



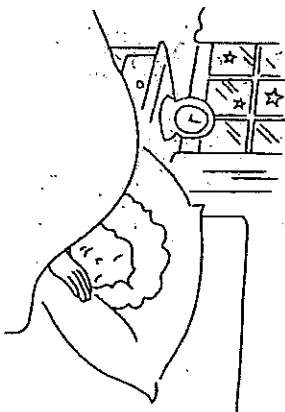
ACCEPT HELP

Friends and relatives can make difficult moments easier. For many people, participation in and support from their spiritual community can be a great comfort.



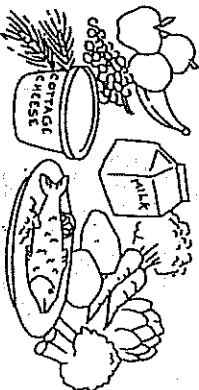
GET PLENTY OF REST

You'll have more energy to handle problems and to get involved in activities.



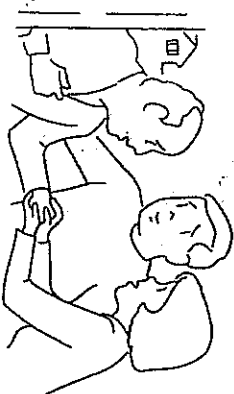
STAY HEALTHY

Eat a variety of foods, and exercise regularly (after consulting your health-care provider). Avoid alcohol, tranquilizers and other potentially harmful substances.



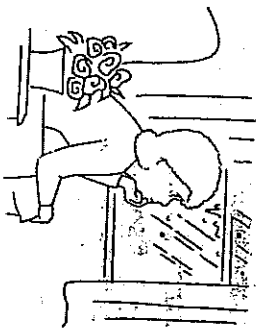
ASK FOR HELP

Relatives and friends want to help but often don't know what to do. Professional help is also available if feelings of despair and worthlessness persist.



BE KIND TO YOURSELF

Some days will be more difficult than others, but you will recover. Avoid making any major decisions until you fully recover from your loss.

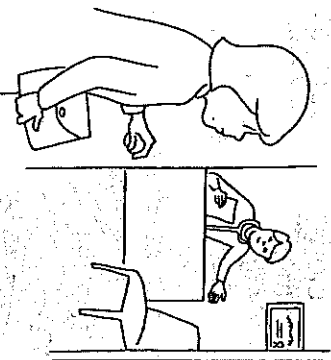


BE ALERT FOR PROBLEMS

These include headaches, nausea, dizziness, heartburn, shortness of breath, weight loss, difficulty sleeping and lack of energy.



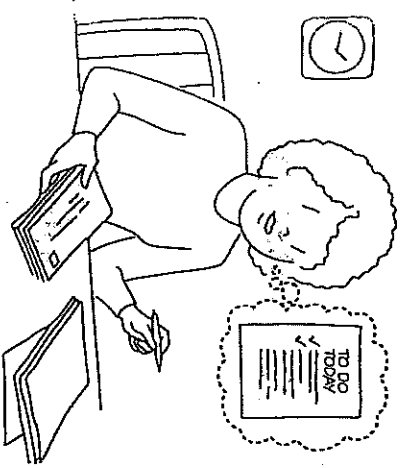
Contact your health-care provider promptly for advice if you have any signs of health problems.



SET GOALS AND WORK TO REACH THEM

START WITH SHORT-TERM GOALS

- List some fairly/short, quick activities, such as writing letters, visiting friends or preparing a favorite meal.
- Set time limits for completing activities.
- Recognize your progress. Give yourself a pat on the back for your hard effort.
- Take things one day at a time.



Above all, don't give up!

THEN DEVELOP LONG-RANGE PLANS

- Write down goals you may have for the future -- for example, getting a new job, taking a trip, continuing your education or trying a new hobby.
- Again, set time limits for reaching your goals.
- Check your progress periodically. You can always reexamine your goals and adjust your plans.



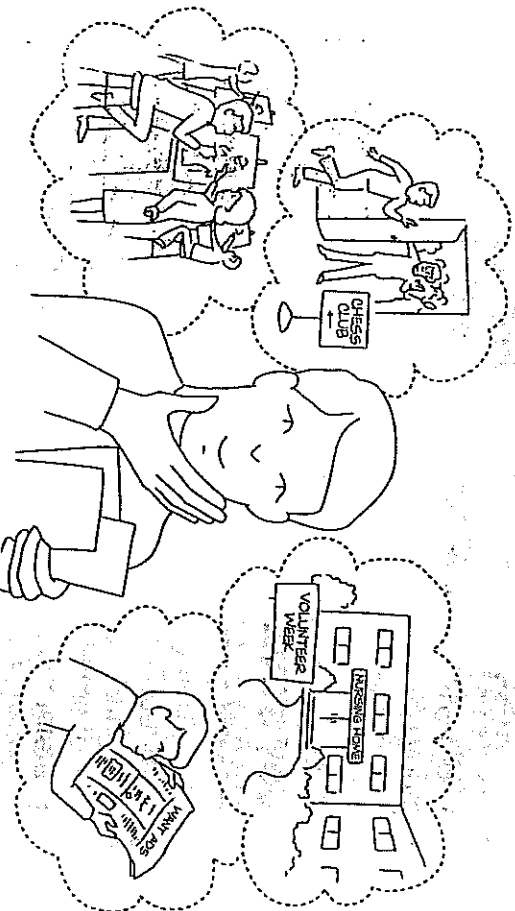
TRY NEW ACTIVITIES

JOIN A CLUB OR ORGANIZATION

Being with people who have similar interests can be rewarding and fun.

TAKE A NEW COURSE

Check on adult education and college programs in your area. Choose a subject or skill you've always wanted to explore.



DO SOME VOLUNTEER WORK

When you help others, you also help yourself.

EVALUATE YOUR CAREER GOALS

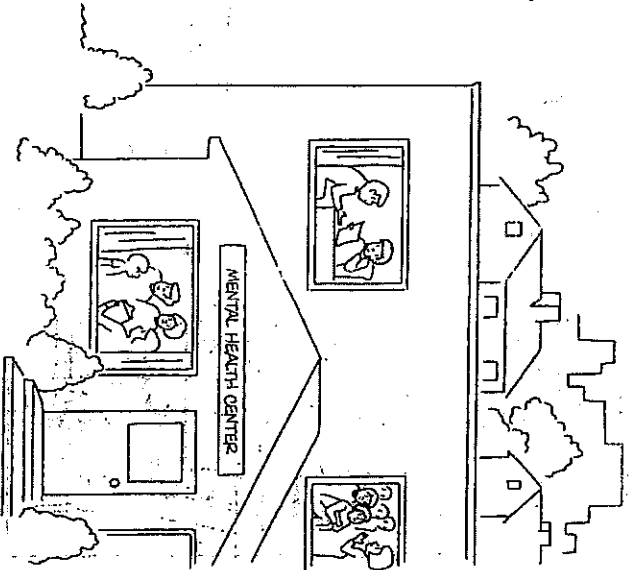
You may find yourself thinking about making a career change. Give yourself time to explore new career interests.

SOURCES OF HELP AND INFORMATION

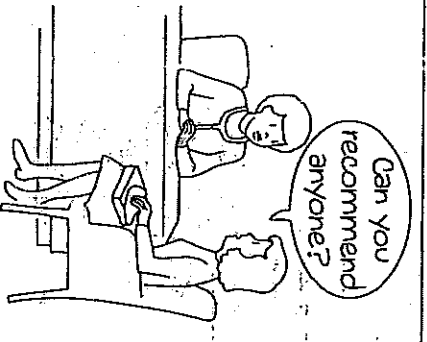
COUNSELORS

help people understand their feelings, create new goals and adjust to their loss. Types of counseling include:

- individual counseling -- working one-on-one with a therapist
- group therapy -- members help each other by sharing experiences
- family counseling -- family members work through their grief together.



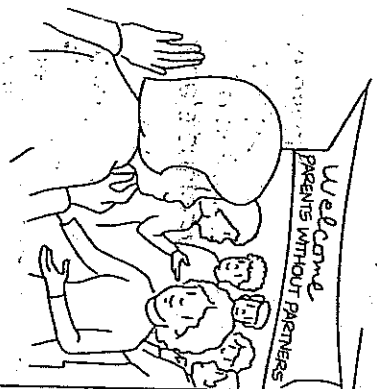
IF YOU NEED HELP CHOOSING A COUNSELOR, ask your friends, health-care provider, a religious leader, or social service organizations for advice.



SUPPORT GROUPS

include:

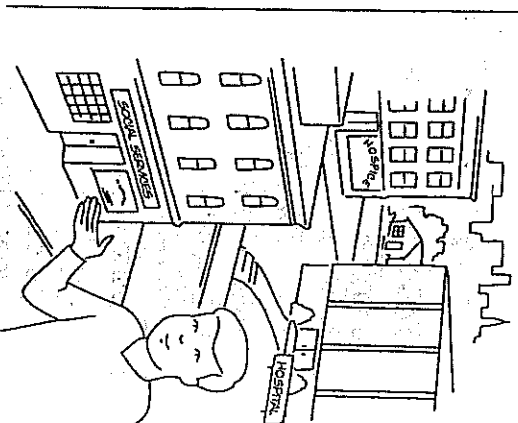
- bereavement groups, which provide emotional and practical help for people coping with a death
- Parents Without Partners, which helps people who are separated, divorced or widowed -- call 1-800-637-7974
- Widowed Persons Service programs -- call the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) at 1-800-424-3410.



OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

that may provide counseling, referral or other services include:

- local mental health associations and centers
- hospices, which help terminally ill patients and their families
- social service organizations and local hospitals.



Check the front section of your phone book for the phone numbers of these and other sources of help in your community.

YOU CAN HELP A GRIEVING PERSON

Offer emotional support:

BE PRESENT IF YOU CAN

Just being near can be a tremendous help. Don't be afraid to give the person a hug or hold his or her hand. (If you can't be there, write, phone, send flowers, etc., to show your concern.)

BE A GOOD LISTENER

A sympathetic listener can be a great comfort.

ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE

A grieving person may need to be reminded that he or she can handle a new way of life.

BE PATIENT

It takes time to accept loss and deal with changes.

Provide practical assistance:

HELP WITH CHORES

Relieve the person of some chores, such as grocery shopping, doing housework, etc.

ASSIST WITH CARDS AND LETTERS

Offer to help write thank-you notes and other correspondence.

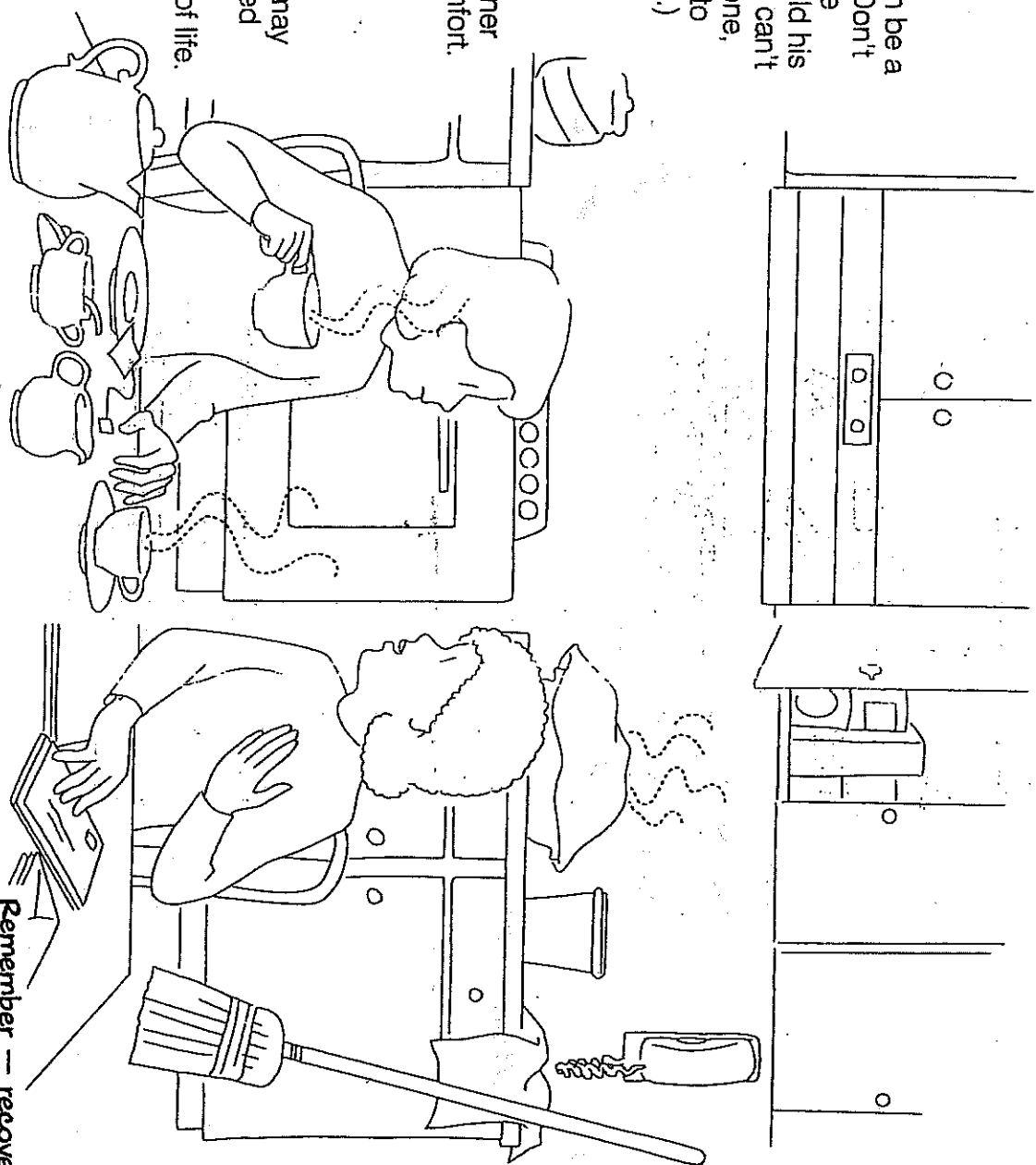
LEND A HAND WITH MEALS

Bring something to the person's home, or extend an invitation for dinner at your home.

ANSWER THE TELEPHONE

Offer to screen phone calls and take messages.

Remember — recovery takes time. Continue your support for as long as it's needed.



SOME MYTHS ABOUT GRIEF

So...

LOSS AND GRIEF ARE A NATURAL PART OF LIFE

Tears are a sign of weakness.

WRONG.

Tears are a natural way to release intense feelings. There is no shame in showing how you feel.

Children should be sheltered from grief.

NOT TRUE.

Children need to grieve. Tell them about the loss in an honest, loving way.

It's best to avoid discussing a loss with a grieving person.

FALSE.

Grieving people are grateful for friends who share memories and talk about the pain created by the loss.

An end to grief means an end to caring about a loved one.

NOT AT ALL.

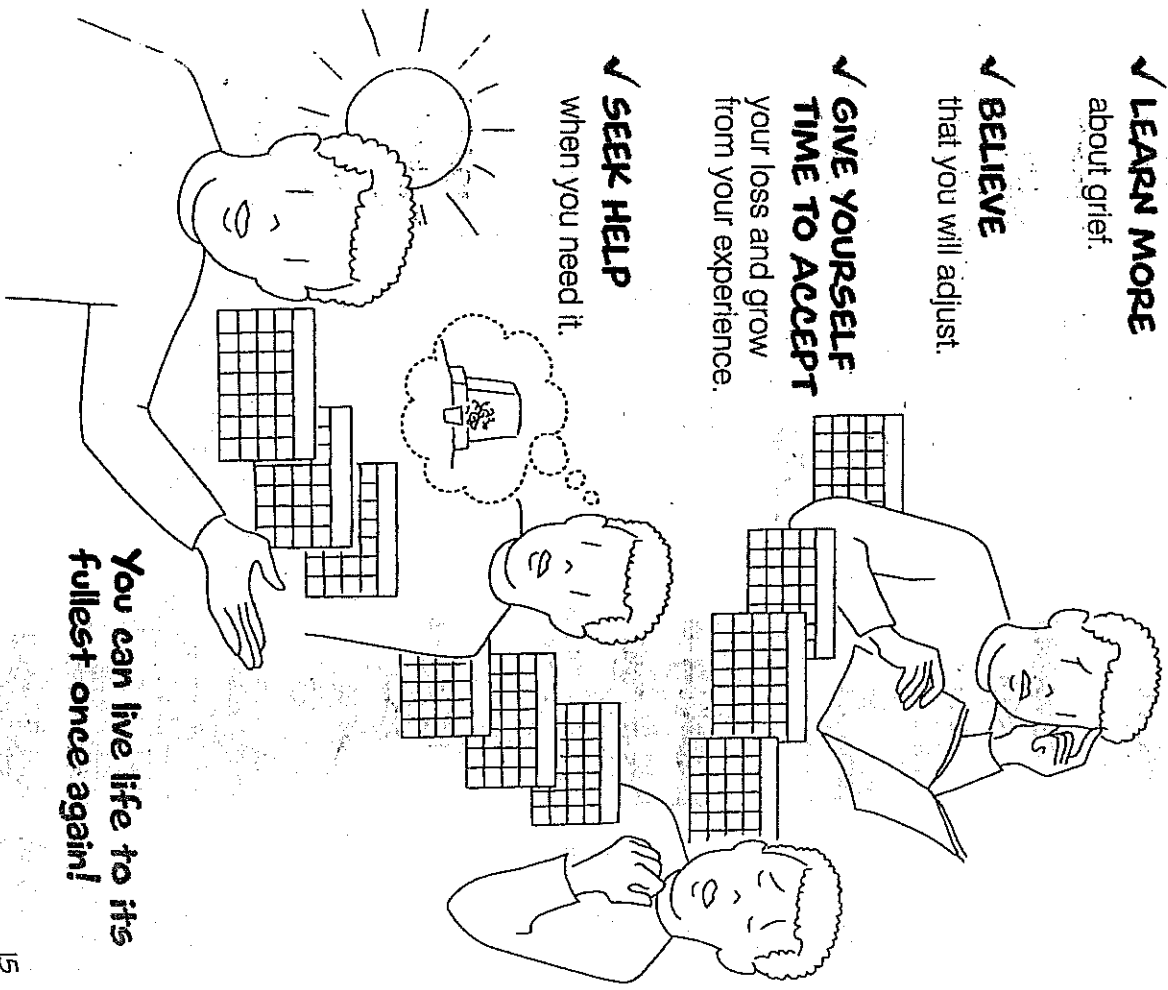
Love lasts beyond grief through a commitment to living life fully.

✓ **LEARN MORE** about grief.

✓ **BELIEVE** that you will adjust.

✓ **GIVE YOURSELF TIME TO ACCEPT** your loss and grow from your experience.

✓ **SEEK HELP** when you need it.



You can live life to its fullest once again!