

# HOW CAN I HELP MYSELF?

As the name suggests, when it comes to **self-care**, you are in the driver's seat. The steps you take and the decisions you make in every aspect of your daily life – nutrition, sleep, exercise, relaxation, even a hobby or a friendship – will help determine how well you respond in your interactions with the world. Below are some key components of **self-care**:

- **Give yourself permission to grieve.** Some days you can handle the feelings that surface, and some days you may “fall apart.” These “ups and downs” are a natural reaction to loss.
- **Go ahead and cry.** Tears are a natural and necessary part of grieving. They are not a sign of weakness; they are a sign you have loved.
- **Express feelings of anger with someone you trust.** Suppressed anger can lead to prolonged depression and poor health.
- **Tell people what you need.** People may avoid you because they are afraid that they will say the wrong thing. When you let others know what you need, they are usually grateful and relieved.
- **Be good to yourself.** Get the **rest/sleep** you need, balanced with **regular exercise** and a **healthy diet**. You may not feel motivated to do these things now, but they are crucial to your physical and mental well-being.
- **Give in ways that you can.** Giving to others will assist you in your own healing. Consider joining a grief support group. As you benefit from the love and courage of the group, your presence and personal story will also be helpful to them.
- **Write in a journal.** Record your thoughts and feelings. Get them “out of your system.”
- **Do not make major decisions too quickly.** Change requires lots of energy. Put that energy into taking good care of yourself.
- **Maintain a support system.** Whether they are family or friends, make sure you have someone to talk to.
- **Believe in yourself.** Think of all the reasons your loved one cared for you. These qualities are still present and help you find strength and meaning in the future.