

## Bereaved Families of Cape Breton

### **Grief....Expectations You Can Have For Yourself**

You can expect that

- your grief will take longer than most people think is should
- your grief will take more energy than you can imagine
- your grief will involve continual changes
- your grief will show itself in all spheres of your life and who you are. It will affect your social relationships, your health, thoughts, feelings and spiritual beliefs
- your grief will depend upon how you perceive the loss
- you will grieve for many things (both symbolic and tangible), not just the death itself
- you will grieve for what you have lost already as well as for the future, for the hopes, dreams and unfulfilled expectations you held for and with that person
- your grief will involve a wide variety of feelings and reactions: some expected, some not
- this loss will resurrect old losses, feelings and unfinished business from the past
- you may have some confusion about who you are; this is due to the intensity and unfamiliarity of the grieving experience and uncertainty about your new role in the world
- you may have a combination of anger and depression: irritability, frustration, intolerance
- you may feel guilt in some form
- you may have a poor sense of self-worth
- you may experience spasms, waves or acute upsurges of grief that occur without warning
- you will have trouble thinking and making decisions: poor memory and organization
- you may feel like you are going crazy
- you may be obsessed with the death or preoccupied with thought of the dead person
- you will search for meaning in your life and question your beliefs
- you may find yourself acting differently
- society has unrealistic expectations about your mourning and may respond inappropriately
- you will have a number of physical reactions
- certain dates, events, seasons and reminders will bring upsurges in your grief
- certain experiences later in life may resurrect intense grief feelings for you.

-- adapted from *Grieving: How to go on Living When Someone You Love Dies*; T. Rando