

Dealing with Change and Grief

Perspectives on Grief

The information in this document is a Western approach to grief. Each culture has its own ways of making sense of grief and loss. This [resource](#) explores grief from a number of cultural perspectives. It focuses on palliative care, but is relevant because many of the principles of grief and loss are related to the loss of loved ones.

The changes we are facing as a result of COVID-19 can cause anxiety, confusion, fear, uncertainty and a large amount of scrambling to meet new and changing needs and concerns. These changes can make us feel lost, overwhelmed, frustrated, numb and even quite emotional - common feelings that we have when we experience significant change, loss or grief.

Why are the changes from COVID-19 creating feelings of grief?

While we might think of grief only in relation to the loss of loved ones, we can feel grief when things change in any of our 'normal' activities, including work. Because work is often central to our lives and identities, even positive changes can be difficult because we still must release our grasp on old, familiar routines. With COVID-19, we may be experiencing many losses, from work or work routine, isolation from our social networks, financial losses and even the loss of loved ones who became sick. This can lead us to feel grief, some loss of control, as well as some sense of a loss of social status or self-worth.

What impact does grief have on us?

Individuals experience loss and grief in different ways. Some of the reactions to loss and grief include:

- sadness and/or depression,
- anger and irritability,
- increase in anxiety or fears, and
- physical symptoms like interrupted sleep, aches and pains, weight changes, or fatigue.

City of Edmonton Employee Resources

Whether dealing with your own grief or helping co-workers manage theirs, many supports are available to City employees. All City employees have access to free, short-term counselling with [LifeWorks](#), and our [City Chaplain](#) has extensive experience in the care and support of those going through crisis, stress and grief. Additional information can be found on OneCity through the [Employee Wellness and Supports](#) website.

- [Mental Health Support for City Employees](#) - list of resources available to all City employees.
- [Caring for Yourself and Others in Times of Uncertainty](#) - tips to help you maintain your wellness.

Additional Reading and Resources on Grief

If you are experiencing grief, learning more about these common feelings and seeking additional support is important. You are not alone, and talking with someone about the losses you are facing can help. Explore the resources below for further information.

- [Grief: Stages and Strategies for Employees and Supervisors](#): Learn more about the stages of grief and strategies to support you through the grief process.
- [AHS - Grieving Together](#): This Alberta Health Services site provides Alberta-specific resources and services available to help you or someone you know who may be affected by loss. Supports for children and older adults are also provided.
- [Canadian Mental Health Association](#): This brochure answers questions about grief, what you can do about it and how to support loved ones.
- [Kids Help Phone](#): Resources for helping kids cope with grief, loss and change.
- [Cultural Perspectives on Grief](#): Living My Culture explores grief from a number of cultural perspectives.
- [Centre for Loss and Life Transition](#): This is an organization dedicated to helping people who are grieving and those who care for them. COVID-19 specific grief resources are available.

Resources:

Linkedin: [How Change and COVID-19 Social Distancing are Creating Anxiety and Why Self-care is Crucial](#)

Harvard Business Review: [That Discomfort You're Feeling is Grief](#)

McKinsey & Company: [The hidden perils of unresolved grief](#)