

Possible Distinctions Between Depressive Grief and Clinical Depression

Normal Grief	Clinical Depression
Responds to comfort and support	Does not accept support
Often openly angry	Irritable and may complain but does not directly express anger
Relates depressed feelings to loss experienced	Does not relate experiences to a particular life event
Can still experience moments of enjoyment in life	Exhibits an all pervading sense of doom
Exhibits feelings of sadness and emptiness	Projects a sense of hopelessness and chronic emptiness
May have transient physical complaints	Has chronic physical complaints
Expresses guilt over some specific aspect of the loss	Has generalized feelings of guilt
Has temporary impact upon self-esteem	Loss of self-esteem is of greater duration

Source: Wolfelt, A.D., (1988) *Death and Grief: A Guide For Clergy*, Accelerated Development, Inc. Publishers, 3400 Kilgore Avenue, Muncie, Indiana 47304 (317-284-7511).
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