

# Unrecognized grief

## Taking steps to build strategies

### First steps

- Acknowledge whatever feelings you have about the situation and what you've lost.
- Remind yourself that your feelings and your grief are valid.
- Remember that you're worthy of the time and space needed to grieve.
- If there is a ritual or gathering from which you're excluded, create something of your own.
- Carefully consider whether there are people who actually can support you in some way.
- Take a break from people who are not supporting you.
- Use available print, audio-visual, or web materials to learn more about unrecognized grief. (This is sometimes called "disenfranchised grief.")
- Seek out others who have experienced a similar loss. This can help to validate your grief.
- Talk to your doctor if you have health concerns or need time away from work.

### Next steps

- Explore ways that your own beliefs about loss and grief may be rooted in your family history and broader societal values and rules.
- When you feel able, speak up about your loss, grief, and experience of being unrecognized.
- Take time to explore and express your grief in new ways (e.g., journaling, art, photography).
- Look for hope and opportunities to nourish yourself and do things you enjoy even in small moments (e.g., spend time in nature, with children, or around animals).