



**BEACONS OF HOPE WITH  
KIDNEY DISEASE: GRIEF,  
JOY, AND HEALING**

# Meeting Norms

- Assume positive intentions
- Openly share your own experiences as you feel comfortable
- Confidentiality
  - *What is said, stay*
  - *What is learned goes*
- It is okay to sit in discomfort, especially when hearing new information
- Jokes are to make things light and not to make fun of anyone or anything

# Introduction



BAAKP: Kidney Patient Stories ([Waiting for the "Gift" - Bay Area Association of Kidney Patients](#))

Humor is the best medicine.

"Always laugh when you can.  
It is cheap medicine."

– Lord Byron

Humor is the best medicine.

What is the coldest city in the world?

Burr-lin!

Humor is the best medicine.

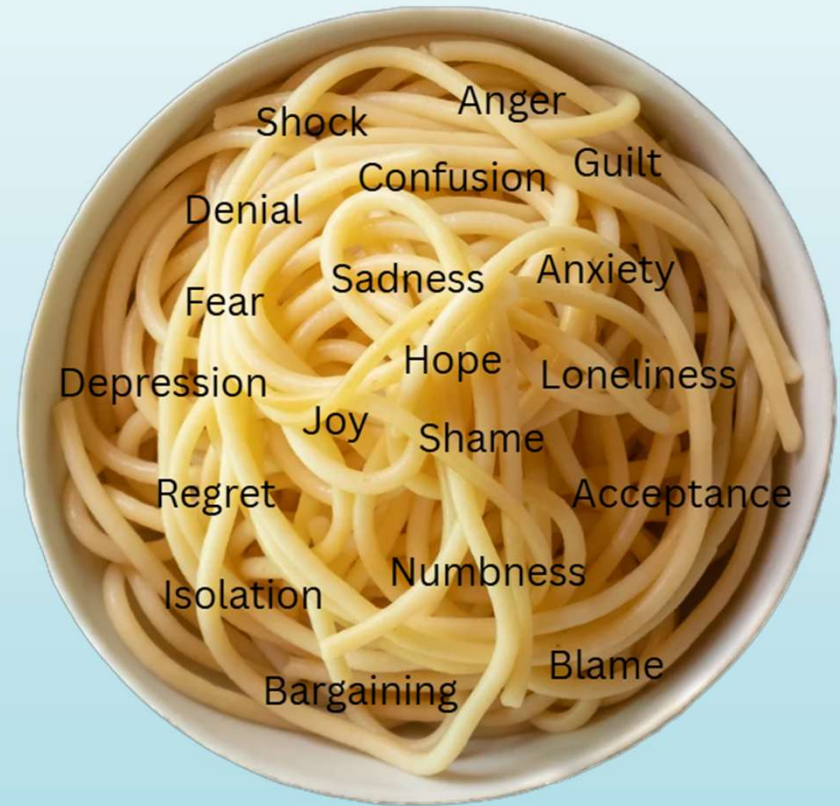
What do you call a celebrity who's also a baker?

Star-ving artist!

# Understanding Grief

Grief is the natural, multi-faceted emotional and physical response to loss. While most often associated with the death of a loved one, it can also result from any major life transition, such as a breakup, job loss, or chronic illness.

# 5 Stages of Grief



# Types of Grief

- Normal Grief
- Anticipatory Grief
- Complicated Grief
- Prolonged Grief
- Complicated Grief
- Disenfranchised Grief
- Ambiguous Grief
- Cumulative Grief
- Traumatic Grief
- Collective Grief
- Absent Grief
- Secondary Grief

# Grief in Kidney Disease:

- Shock of the diagnosis
- Loss of spontaneity
- Anger and frustration about “why me?”
- Identity changes
- Financial strain
- Disconnection from normal life
- Feeling alone
- Others

# You are not alone

About 35.5 to 37 million people in the U.S. are estimated to have chronic kidney disease (CKD), which is more than 1 in 7 (14%) of American adults.

<https://www.cdc.gov/kidney-disease/media/pdfs/CKD-Factsheet-H.pdf>

It is the 10th most common cause of death for men and the 8th for women.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr74/nvsr74-10.pdf>

# Humor is the best medicine.

Why did the 85-year-old get a new computer?

Because they wanted to find  
their soulmate in the cloud!

Humor is the best medicine.

What do you get from a pampered cow?

Spoiled milk!

# Grief Coping Strategies for Patients

1. Allow yourself to grieve
2. Find routines that work
3. Take back some control
4. Treat yourself
5. Reach out for help

# Grief Coping Strategies for Patients

6. Seek professional help
7. Join support groups, communities
8. Stay informed
9. Be patient, kind and compassionate with yourself
10. Find what can give meaning to you and what gives you joy

# Grief Coping Strategies for Patients

## 11. Practice self-care and mindfulness

- Prioritize sleep
- Getting some sun
- Deep breathing promotes relaxation and lowers anxiety
- Meditation or guided meditation for a few minutes daily
- Books, journals, or podcasts to stay mentally engaged
- Gentle exercise releases endorphins, reduces stress and pain
- Hobbies (taking care of plants, crocheting,
- Playing games (chess, cards, board games, etc.)
- And many others

# Grief Coping Strategies for Caregivers

1. Acknowledge your feelings
2. Recognize your limits of endurance and strength
3. Ask for help and accept it when offered
4. Take time away from caregiving for your own health, spirit, and relationships
5. Take pride in your accomplishments
6. Taking care of yourself is not selfish—you can only help your loved one if you care for yourself first
7. Practicing self-compassion
8. LAUGH! Humor is protective

# Journaling

Prompts:

- Today, I feel...
- Today, I am grateful for....
- Something I miss doing that I can still do is...
- Things I still hope for, even while living with kidney disease, include..."
- Even in the middle of all this loss, one thing that still brings me a moment of peace is..."



# Start with a “Safe Space” Sanctuary in your home

1. Keep it clutter-free
2. Add soft lighting, cozy textures, pleasant scents (like lavender), or soothing sounds
3. Bring in Joy-Creating Elements (flowers, plants, books, art)
4. Re-painting walls
5. Opening windows/curtains

# AI (Artificial Intelligence)

1. You can use it to get information
2. Don't use it as a replacement for therapy!

Humor is the best medicine.

What is a marsupial's favorite drink?

Coca-Koala!

# Final Message

Acknowledge loss, grief, and frustration as necessary—but don't let those feelings monopolize your thoughts. By combining medical adherence, emotional support, lifestyle changes, and positive coping skills, you can live the best life possible.

"The power of community to create health is far greater than any physician, clinic or hospital."

— Dr. Mark Hyman

# Resources

1. Websites: Grief.com
2. Podcasts
  1. [All There Is](#)  
by Anderson Cooper
  2. [What's Your Grief](#)  
by Eleanor Haley and Litsa Williams
  3. [Good Grief](#)  
by Blake Kasemeier
  4. [Grief Out Loud](#)  
by The Dougy Center
  5. [Grief/Relief](#)  
by Moe Provencher
  6. [Coming Back: Life After Loss](#)  
by Shelby Forsythia
  7. [The Mindfulness & Grief Podcast](#)  
by Heather Stang

# Resources

## Books:

1. The Grief Collective: Stories of Life, Loss & Learning to Heal by Dr. Marianne Trent
2. The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion
3. The Grieving Brain: The Surprising Science of How We Learn from Love and Loss by Mary-Frances O'Connor, PhD
4. The Sweetest Therapy by Chase Cassine
5. Good Grief by Brianna Pastor (Best for: Anyone who finds hope in poetry)
6. Nothing to Fear by Julie McFadden, RN
7. Finding Meaning by David Kessler
8. The Museum of Ordinary People by Mike Gayle

# Feedback



**Give feedback to Toni**

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<https://talk.ac/tonirodolfobenson>

and enter this code when prompted

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THANK YOU!