

HEARTLINKS GRIEF CENTER

8 TIPS FOR SELF CARE FOR TEENS



1. **Breathe.** When we get tense, we tend to hold our breath or have short, shallow breaths. First, just notice that you are breathing and then try slowing it down, breathing more into your belly, and exhaling a little longer than you inhale. For some exercises on mindfulness breathing, check out this website:
<http://mindfulnessforteens.com/guided-meditations/>
2. **Move your body.** This doesn't have to be a sport (but it can be) - take a walk, do a push-up, dance, or try cleaning. It's strange, but it can help! If you're looking for indoor exercise options, check out YouTube or the App Store to find hundreds of at home workouts.
3. **Express yourself.** Write, draw, organize, listen to or play music, or anything else that lets you express yourself without having to talk to someone. Now is a great time to hone in on your creativity!
4. **Make room for whatever feelings are coming up.** If you try to push them away, they will probably just push back harder. Feelings change and they won't last forever. Grief has no timeline, but it really does change over time.
5. **Be kind to yourself.** Grievers tend to give themselves a really hard time for not doing grief right - whatever that "right" might be. Remind yourself you're doing the best you can in the moment and that it's okay you're having a hard time.
6. **Be a good friend - to yourself.** Experiment with telling yourself you can do this, even if you don't know what you're doing. You might be feeling emotions you've never had before or doing things in life for the first time and all of it is happening with the person who died.
7. **Ask for help.** We know, this one can be hard and scary to do. Keep it simple and remember that people usually want to help, they are just waiting to be asked. If you think you need to talk about with a professional, try calling The National Suicide Hotline at 800-273-8255 or text 741741 for help if you are thinking about hurting yourself. If you just need to talk to someone call the Boys Town National Hotline at 800-448-3000. This line serves both girls and boys and is open 24/7/365 to talk about a variety of problems. If you live in St. Clair County and are in crisis, call Chesnut Health Systems-Crisis Line 618-877-0316. If you live in Madison County and are in crisis, call Centerstone Crisis Line 855-608-3560. You can also reach out to Heartlinks. While we are not physically at our office, we are available by phone 8:30 to 4:30, Monday-Friday. Just call us at 618-277-1800 or email us at support@myheartlinks.com to schedule an appointment.

8. **Take time to celebrate whatever is going well.** When you're grieving it can be hard to make space for feeling good. You might feel guilty if you find yourself laughing or having a good time. Taking a break from grief doesn't mean you love or miss the person any less.

For more information, please call Heartlinks at 618-277-1800.

