

UNCOMMON GRIEF EXPERIENCES

ANTICIPATORY

Grief that occurs prior to the eventual (anticipated) death of a loved one or other significant loss.

Example: A woman who mourns for the inevitable death of her husband who is living, but terminally ill.

ABBREVIATED

Brief or shortened grief that passes on more quickly than anticipated or expected.

Example: A man shattered by divorce, but who quickly bounces back and finds that he enjoys being single and dating different women.

DELAYED

Grief that is postponed or suppressed. This may occur when a person ignores their grief to maintain control ("stay strong") for a period of time.

Example: An individual who holds it all together in order to make necessary funeral arrangements, but breaks down when there is nothing left to keep them busy.

INHIBITED

Internalized grief that is experienced without obvious signs of mourning in persons who attempt to suppress it indefinitely.

Example: A woman who doesn't acknowledge the devastation she feels after a miscarriage. She acts like it didn't happen, never speaking of it, but starts drinking a 12-pack of beer and smoking a joint every night to numb her pain.

DISENFRANCHISED

Grief that is minimized or taken less seriously by others (i.e., mourning the loss of mobility), leading to feelings of invalidation and loneliness.

Example: An individual who grieves for their beloved dog, but is told it's "just a dog" and to get a new puppy.

TRAUMATIC

Intense grief in response to significant loss that's violent, sudden, and/or accidental, leading to increased distress and strong grief reactions.

Example: A woman who experiences symptoms of both post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and grief after she witnesses her child getting hit and killed by a car.

PROLONGED

Lasting grief that leads to significant distress and impairment at work/school and/or in relationships.

Example: A man who continues to grieve for his deceased husband years after his death. He feels depressed most days and his performance at work has deteriorated significantly.