

# Different Styles of Grieving

“Grief can’t be shared. Everyone carries it alone, his own burden, and his own way.” Anne Morrow Lindbergh

We all cope with life’s challenges in different ways. Learning to cope with the death of someone you love is one of the biggest struggles you will ever face. Grief is hard work, and sometimes you just want to know that you’re doing it right. You are struggling to feel “normal”, but you don’t even know what it is anymore. Some have said that after the death of a loved one, you develop a new normal. Everyone grieves differently – even members of the same family will probably grieve in different ways, at different times and at different levels of intensity. Understanding the **different styles of grieving** may make this very difficult time less confusing and more comforting. It used to be that people thought that men would grieve one way, and women another, but research has shown that grief is more accurately defined by styles vs. gender. These two styles are **Intuitive and Instrumental**. Most people will grieve in their own individual way which will likely be some combination of both styles.

## **Intuitive Grievers** Tend to:

- be more “feeling” centered
- will share emotions openly
- be interested in attending grief groups
- talk more about the illness, the death and/or the person who died
- reminisce with friends and family

## **Instrumental Grievers** Tend to:

- be more “action” or “thought” centered
- grieve privately
- assume responsibilities that require organization and planning
- desire facts and education
- spend time on practical matters, find comfort in creative activities

Martin, T. & Doka, K. (1999)

For more information, contact Cedar Valley Hospice office or visit [cvhospice.org](http://cvhospice.org). Waterloo: 319.272.2002