

Subsequent Temporary Upsurges in Grief (S.T.U.G.)

“Grief comes in and out like waves from the ocean. Sometimes when you least expect it, a huge wave comes along and pulls your feet right out from under you.”
Therese Rando

Months or years after a death, you may experience a brief, but extremely powerful period of grief. This can be frightening because of the intensity and seemingly unexplained reason for it. You might also be discouraged if you felt you were gaining better control of your emotions. Try to remember that grief is often times a roller coaster ride of emotions that come and go without warning. As long as you are allowing yourself to experience your feelings in a safe and healthy manner, you will be fine. It is said that the only cure for grief is to grieve, and S.T.U.G.'s are a normal part of that experience. You may notice that your feelings are stronger when one of the three types of Subsequent Temporary Upsurges in Grief occur.

Cyclic: These are triggers that generally occur in a yearly cycle: birthdays, anniversaries, wedding, date of death, holidays, change of seasons

Linear: These occur over time, throughout months, years or decades. The triggers are generally events that occur where the deceased's presence is noticeably absent. When you reach the age of retirement and your spouse is not there to share special events.

Stimulus-Cued:

These are generally triggered by something that stimulates the senses, such as: Hearing a song that reminds you of the deceased. Taking in the scent of your loved one's clothes, perfume or cologne. Seeing someone who resembles your loved one. Hearing a story, or looking at photographs.

Adapted from: Treatment of Complicated Mourning by Therese Rando

For more information, contact Cedar Valley Hospice office or visit cvhospice.org. Waterloo: 319.272.2002