



## **Working Through Grief**

There are many types of grief, many ways in which you experience grief, and many ways to process grief. Nancy Santamaria, MS, Hol.Spir., Spiritual Care Advisor at Saint John Vianney Center offers some helpful suggestions:

### **A Few Things to Know about Grief:**

1. Grief is different for everyone and takes different lengths of time to cope.
2. Families may experience a difference in grieving, or dissonance, which can be upsetting.
3. Grief comes in waves. We never know when a wave will hit.
4. Physical symptoms of grief may not surface until 9-18 months after the acute loss.
5. Grief is sacred, beautiful even, and can impact our lives positively, but it can be a very dangerous emotion if suppressed or avoided. Grief is good; depression is not.

### **What to do about Grief - A Few Things to Try:**

1. Talk about your grief, write in a journal, read a good book about grief, and pray about your loss.
2. Join a Grief Support Group.
3. When the time feels right, take a small step out to be with others. Try something new.
4. Movement is medicine. Get out for a walk, a bike ride, join a sports team, or take a fitness class.
5. It's time to take good care of yourself when you are vulnerable. Watch for good nutrition and good sleep hygiene. It's okay to laugh.
6. Memorialize the person you grieve. Celebrate their birthdays, anniversaries, or do something they liked to do.
7. Be open to God's surprises. God is with us in our grief. Be attentive to the invitations. New life is on the way.