

Men's healing through activity:

Let's take a look at some examples of action that might help you connect you to your feelings associated with grief. As you "take action," remember to pay attention to the feelings behind the action. This can be a powerful way to heal *if the activity is connected with the pain of grief*.

1. Participating in the funeral or memorial service. At the memorial service consider saying a few words about your loved one, or carry a picture of your loved one in front of the casket, or arrange a collage of pictures of your loved one for the reception.



2. Write a poem, a song, or a letter to your loved one. Try to be aware of your feelings as you write.

3. Make a scrapbook. Put together a picture scrapbook of your loved one and call friends and family together to discuss the pictures and share memories.

4. Visit the grave site. Perhaps bring flowers and speak to your loved one.

5. Express your anger. Men often are able to get in touch with their grief through their anger, really expressing it...loudly, with movement and passion. One man, whose infant son died, took a set of old dishes, went to the city dump, and broke every piece.

6. Create a memorial in honor of your loved one. One man built a pond for his brother who was killed; another planted a flower garden in the shape of a heart for his wife, and another planted a tree over the place where he buried his dog. Also, you can post a memorial on the web: www.griefworksbc.com/HonourPage.asp



"We love and miss you even though you are gone. You are in our minds and in our hearts. Your love keeps us safe and strong. Can't wait till the day we meet again. No more tears or sad songs. I love you now more than ever. You're the only one in my mind when I sit and cry all alone. We love you dad. Love, your son, Andrew."
Written by a son whose fisherman father was lost at sea off the Northern California Coast. This son created a memorial on the Eureka, California pier.

7. Use something that belongs to your loved one. One son, whose father was killed in an airplane crash, fixed up his dad's old truck and drove it to work.



8. Console others who are grieving. Helping others who are grieving will often help a man get in touch with his own grief.

9. Join a grief chat room on the Internet devoted exclusively to men:
www.webhealing.com/honor.html

10. Join a support group. This is a safe place to talk about your sorrow. It often helps men get in touch with their feelings by being in the presence of other men and women grieving their loved ones.

Adapted from "Men and Grief," by Susanna Duffy, "Grief and Men," by Carole Staudacher; and "Swallowed by a Snake: the Gift of the Masculine Side of Healing," by Tom Golden.

Provided by Gerard's House, a grief support center for children, teenagers and their families in Santa Fe, New Mexico. For more information please contact us at (505) 424-1800 or gerardshouse.org.

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