

## DRUGS

Sometimes mind-altering drugs are prescribed for newly bereaved people. This is rarely helpful. While I am not a doctor and certainly cannot tell you NOT to take these drugs, I would like to warn you of the negative results that mind-altering chemicals can have on you.

Our society treats grief as pathological; as being a disease. It is not. Grief is the normal reaction to a deep loss. If the loss is extreme, and if the intensity of the reactions are high, coupled with society's inability to cope with the "difference" of a grieving person, causes it to label these actions as "sick."

Drugs didn't help me, or any other grieving person I have talked to. On the contrary, in most cases the drugs actually interfered with the body and mind's healthy way of coping with the painful reality of our loss.

Mind-altering drugs prolong normal grief manifestations. \ These drugs also suppress constructive emotions such as sadness, anger, and guilt, thus causing us to bury these emotions, only to have them surface as destructive emotions later.

Frequent crying bouts and sudden flare-ups of anger and self-blame are not unusual for bereaved people. The lack of concentration, over-sensitivity, extreme fatigue, and difficulty with sleeping or eating are normal for the bereaved and will lessen with time without the aid of drugs.

There are no short cuts in grief work. Generally, drugs complicate the already tremendous task of grieving. It is only by facing the death and by repeatedly talking out your thoughts and feelings with someone who will listen with empathy, and by allowing yourself to give vent to your emotions, will you get any relief. Drugs dull your ability to do this at the appropriate stage in your grief, thus creating additional problems.