

Cultural/Spiritual/Religious Dimensions of Mourning/Grieving

Different cultures experience mourning and grieving in distinct ways. Reflect on the questions below regarding your spiritual/religious/and/or cultural experience of healing from loss:

- Within your ethnic/racial group(s), what are some traditions for grieving and mourning? If you have practiced them, what has that experience been like? If you have not practiced them, what kind of responses did you receive from others?

- If you affiliate with a religion(s) or spiritual practice(s), what are some ways you have coped with your loss according to these belief systems? If you have not used these strategies, what kind of responses did you receive from others?

- If you are not religiously or spiritually affiliated, have you used another type of belief system such as a philosophy to manage your grieving and loss experience? If so, what has that been like?

However, regardless of our cultural background, many of us experience an “existential ache” (Rupp, 1988, p. 13) when we experience a loss. Specifically, we can feel anxious, profoundly alone, disconnected, and thus long for a sense of belonging.

-How have you coped with this type of pain if you have experienced it?