OASIS
Support for People with Vision Loss

Living with Vision Loss

Understanding Your Emotions

When you receive a diagnosis of vision loss, you may feel a range of emotions, such as anger, denial, helplessness. These may be similar to bereavement. You may ask yourself, "Why is this happening to me?" Other common feelings can include shock, fear, anxiety, depression, grief and a loss of your identity.

You may wonder how you will be able to maintain your independence, social activities, hobbies, employment, pay for any needed care, and the impact of your vision loss on family and friends.

These emotions are normal feelings; and you can feel a loss for the life you had, and experience a time of adjustment for the life you are living now. This grieving process is different for everyone and should lessen as you learn to adjust to the changes in your life and find positive ways to cope and thrive with sight loss.

You may want to talk with someone outside your immediate family or friends about your feelings and emotions, such as a counselor, a local social service department, or an organization serving those with vision loss. Perhaps your eye care professional can provide a referral.

Tips for Coping with Grief and Vision Loss

- **Be patient with yourself:** Give yourself time to navigate through all your feelings. Take as much time as you need, one day at a time.

- **Learn about your vision condition and diagnosis:** Prepare a list of questions for your eye care professional to review any instructions or terms you may not understand.

- **Don't isolate yourself—talk to family or friends.** Tell others what you need from them. They may not always anticipate what you may need.

- **Check out vision-related podcasts from the comfort of your home:** Learn from professionals and peers who offer helpful seminars and topics of interest to you as you adjust to living with your vision loss.

- **Stay in touch with your eye care team, and seek professional counseling for anxiety and depression, if needed:** Non-profit organizations and eye care professionals can connect you with counseling services or support groups for coping with your vision loss, based on your individual requirements.

- **Connect with peers—you are not alone!** Consider joining a support group, such as Oasis for the Visually Impaired, and explore Facebook groups, social groups, and articles and books by people who are going through similar vision loss.

Resources for People with Vision Loss

Learning to cope and thrive with vision loss may be overwhelming at first. However, a wealth of information and resources are available to help you stay healthy, active, maintain your independence and enjoy life!

Whether you are new to vision loss or have lived with blindness or low vision for years, you may want to learn more about assistive technology, tools, and other helpful news. You can find organizations that offer the resources to meet your specific needs. Please see our web-page, ***Organizations that Support the Blind and Visually Impaired***, for a list of organizations offering support and resources, including those shown below:

- **Hadley**
- **VisionAware**
- **Second Sense – Beyond Vision Loss**
- **Spectrios Institute for Low Vision**
- **The Chicago Lighthouse**

OASIS is here to help you. Contact us for more information.

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