

Working with Sadness & Grief



AUTUMN - METAL ELEMENT Five Element Yoga®



In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) autumn season Metal Element corresponds to the Lung and Large Intestine energy channels and organ systems. Each season has a unique influence on our health and emotions, and grief, loss and sadness can be particularly stimulated and relevant to the Metal element and autumn season. It is a natural time of the year to feel feelings of grief, loss, and sadness.

Grief is a natural response to loss, change, and transition. It can be loss of a loved one, pet, job, way of life and more. This can manifest in many different ways, both emotionally and physically. Working with grief is a deeply personal and individual process.

Here are some steps and strategies to help you work with the emotions of Autumn:

- **The Lungs and Grief:** The Lungs are associated with the emotions of grief and sadness. The Lung's function is to take in the pure essence of the air we breathe, and filtering and dispelling toxins out of the body. When the Lung energy is imbalanced or weak, it can manifest as feelings of sadness, grief, or an inability to let go of past emotional wounds.
- **Harvest and Letting Go:** Autumn is a time of harvest, as the season encourages us to reflect on what we've grown and gained in our lives. This process of transition can bring up feelings of grief and sadness as we part with the old and make room for the new.
- **Emotional Self-Care:** Self-care practices are essential for managing grief and sadness during autumn such as yoga, breathing, yoga nidra, mindfulness in daily activities, journalling, spending time in nature, and engaging in activities that promote emotional release and healing.
- **Acknowledge Feelings of Sadness and Grief:** The first step in dealing with sadness or grief is recognizing and accepting it. Understand that grief is a normal and healthy response to life and loss.
- **Allow Yourself to Feel:** Notice the range of emotions, including sadness, anger, guilt, and even relief. It's essential to give yourself permission to feel and notice these emotions without judgment. Suppressing feelings can prolong the grieving process.

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- **Express Your Feelings:** Find creative ways to express your emotions. Writing in a journal, creating art, or engaging in other creative outlets can be therapeutic. Some people find solace in rituals like lighting candles or creating a memorial to honor the person or thing they've lost.
- **Seek Support:** Reach out to friends, family, or a therapist. Talking about your feelings with someone you trust can be immensely helpful. Support groups can also provide a safe space to share your experiences with others who are going through similar situations.
- **Take Care of Your Physical Health:** Grief and sadness can take a toll on physical well-being. Try to maintain a healthy diet, get regular exercise, daily fresh air, and ensure you're getting enough sleep. Physical self-care can help you better cope with all emotions.
- **Give Yourself Time:** Grieving is a process that doesn't have a set timeline. Everyone heals at their own pace. Be patient with yourself and understand that it's okay if it takes time to come to terms with your loss.
- **Practice Self-Compassion:** Be kind and gentle with yourself. Avoid self-criticism or unrealistic expectations about how you "should" be feeling. Remember that grief is natural as well as unique to each individual.
- **Maintain Routine:** While it may be challenging, try to maintain routine in your life. Structure can provide a sense of stability during a turbulent time.
- **Memorialize and Remember:** Find ways to commemorate the person or thing you've lost. This could include creating a memory box, planting a tree, or participating in events that honor their memory.