

TRY IT ON

WHAT FITS MY GRIEF?

The Grieving of Abraham

Some features to help you determine if you want to **TRY ON** the grief because the circumstances are similar to your own:

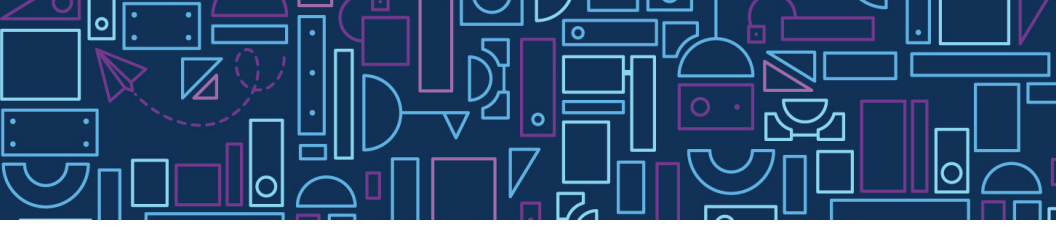
- Anticipated death
- Death of an elderly person
- Death of a spouse
- Difficulties in a strange place
- Lack of burial necessities

Some feelings to help you determine if you want to **TRY ON** the grief because the emotions are similar to your own:

- Sadness
- Uncertainty
- Foreignness
- Lack
- Loneliness
- Shock

A summary of what happened:

After many years together, Abraham's elderly spouse, Sarah, died while they were visiting the 4 Cities near Hebron. Abraham did not have any land for her grave nor a way to bury Sarah's body. He couldn't bury her according to the traditions of his homeland. After wailing and weeping, Abraham went to a nearby city to ask for help. He shared with them about his wife's death, how they were foreigners, and that they had nowhere to bury her. When he was invited to join them, Abraham bowed to show respect and gratitude. As he sat with them, he learned about a cave. He then asked the owner to buy the cave. When the owner offered to give him a field and a cave without immediate cost, Abraham bowed again to show respect and gratitude. However, this loan would have put a burden on Abraham's children who would have been expected to pay later with interest. Rather than take advantage of the offer, Abraham discussed how much the field and cave were worth, and then paid that amount with witnesses watching. Then Abraham buried Sarah.



Some of the actions of Abraham you can *TRY ON* to see if any fit you well:

- **Wail** - Use your voice to cry loudly. You can speak words loudly or make loud noises.
- **Cry or Weep** - If tears surface in your eyes, let them fall. Sit with sadness and do not feel like you must distract yourself from the feelings that come.
- **Ask for help** - If you know of something you need, tell someone. Asking for help takes courage and strength. It is not an indication that you are weak or a burden.
- **Show respect and gratitude for those helping you** - Write a thank you note or engage in another form of respect tied to your culture.
- **Pay for provisions** - People may want to help and offer you services for free or later payment. Let people know if you would rather pay upfront.
- **Bury your person** - Memorialize your person to the best of your ability and current resources - give space for the burial to look differently than your expectations or traditions and prioritize the memories and closure over certain traditions.

Some of the phrases of Abraham that you can **TRY ON** to see if any feel right for you:

- I am a stranger.
- I am living among strangers.
- I want to bury my dead.
- Please help me.
- Please hear me.
- Please let me pay for what I need.

Ideas to try this on with a child.

- **Wail together:** You can come up with phrases together and then speak, shout, or sing them loudly.
- **Empower your child to ask for help:** Model and normalize asking for help with your child
 - *"I feel lonely today and need help _____. I'm afraid/ uncomfortable to ask for help because I don't want to bother you, but it takes courage and strength to ask for help. Will you help me _____?"*
 - *"I asked _____ for help today. If you ever need help, you can always ask me. Do you have other people you would feel comfortable asking to help you? Who are they?"*
 - *"Sometimes I need help doing tasks, like laundry and yard work. I usually ask _____ to help me with yard work. Do you have tasks you need help with (homework maybe)? Who do you like to ask to help you with that?"*
 - *"Sometimes I need help because I feel lonely, sad, angry, or depressed. I usually talk to _____ when I feel lonely." Who do you talk to when you feel lonely?*
- **Show respect and gratitude:** Discuss ways the child might want to give thanks for those who have been helping you and the child (like a gift, a drawing, a call, an outing, etc.).

- **Visit a gravesite:** Invite the child to join you in a funeral, memorial or burial, whether formal or informal (giving the child opportunities to express what would be meaningful for the child).

A summary of what happens next:

Abraham remarried and had other children. Sarah's son, Isaac, married and had two children and many descendants who honored Sarah's legacy and continued to follow in the faith she had in God. Over the centuries, many have believed and continue to believe that Sarah will be raised from the dead when God brings a new heaven and a new earth.

Where to find the *Grieving of Abraham*:

Genesis 23