

# Relationship

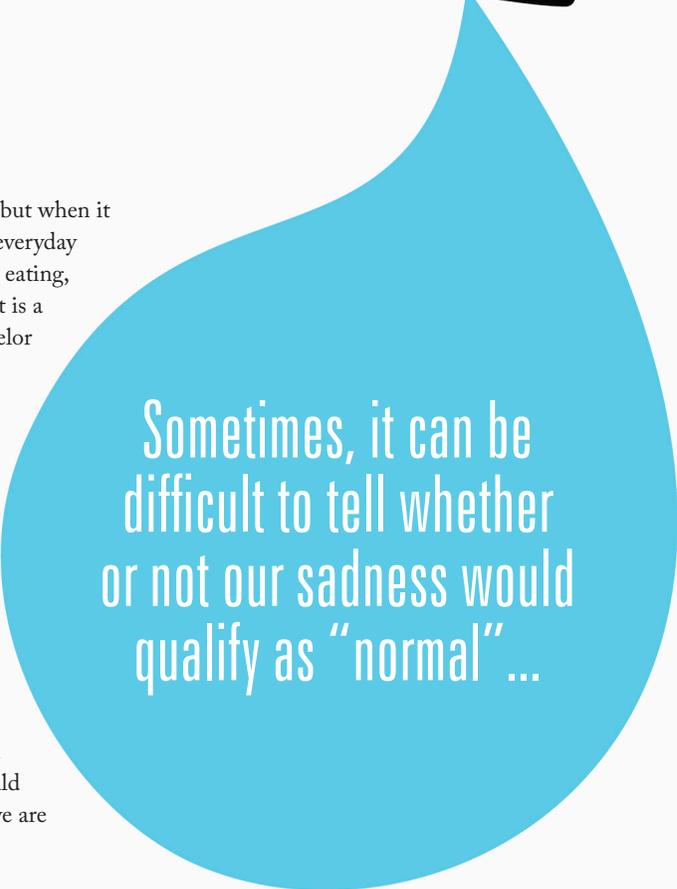
# Q & A

**Q.** I'm a junior in college and three months ago my mom passed away. I feel unmotivated to return to school and just want to be left alone. A friend suggested I get counseling, but I'm not sure I need it. What's the difference between being sad and being depressed? I would love to know about coping strategies and where I can get help.  
- Signed Blues Clues

**A.** Dear Blues Clues, Grief is a normal process, but when it starts to get in the way of your everyday activities, such as going to class, eating, or spending time with friends, it is a good idea to meet with a counselor for some additional outside assistance. When dealing with bereavement, major depressive disorder may be an issue if the symptoms continue for more than two months or are causing marked functional impairment, a preoccupation with feelings of worthlessness, suicidal thoughts, or psychotic symptoms. Sometimes, though, it can be difficult to tell whether or not our sadness would qualify as "normal," or if what we are experiencing is depression.

Ask yourself the following questions.....

- Is there a logical reason for your feelings of sadness?
- Do you have trouble "snapping out of it," even when friends or family are trying to make you feel better?
- Have you lost interest or pleasure in activities you normally enjoy?
- Are you depressed most of the day, nearly every day?
- Have you had a significant change in weight (loss or gain)?
- Have you had trouble sleeping or are you sleeping too much?
- Do you feel fatigued or are you experiencing a loss of energy?
- Do you experience feelings of worthlessness or guilt?
- Are you having difficulty concentrating?
- Do you have thoughts of suicide?



If you can answer "yes" to any of these questions and have been having these feelings or experiences for weeks, it would be a good idea to contact a counselor. If at any time you are having thoughts of suicide, do not hesitate to seek immediate assistance. For anyone suffering from grief, depression, or any other issues, please call the Andrews University Counseling & Testing Center at 269-471-3470, located in Bell Hall 123.

Remember loss can be seen as a chance to grow because: "Out of every crisis comes the chance to be reborn, to reconceive ourselves as individuals, to choose the kind of change that will help us grow and to fulfill our lives more completely."

*Answers provided by the following first-year doctoral students in the Counseling Psychology PhD program: Melina Sample, Donalea McIntyre and Angie Horner. • e*