

## **Normal Responses to Change**

*Caregivers grieve the change in normal each day. When the condition of a loved one changes...we grieve. When schedules or routines change...we grieve. When hopes or dreams disappear...we grieve.*

*Here are some normal responses to the grief of change. Look these over and give yourself permission to grieve the losses you experience as a caregiver.*

- *Tears at unexpected times*
- *Mood changes over the slightest things*
- *Living in a "fog" each day, "numb" to events, feeling out of place*
- *Difficulty concentrating and focusing*
- *Feeling restless, unable to relax*
- *Forgetting to finish projects, having many projects going at once*
- *Feelings of guilt or regret*
- *Needing to tell and retell stories*
- *Feeling like the changes are just a bad dream*
- *Experience a preoccupation with memories*
- *Feeling abandoned*
- *Feelings of intense anger at everyone and everything*
- *Feeling trapped in a situation, frustrated with everything*
- *Blaming yourself, God, loved ones, others, etc.*

*Do not be disturbed or discouraged if you can identify with many of these responses. These are very normal and typical responses when dealing with changes.*

*Find a safe person who will allow you to express these feelings without judging you. The definition of a "safe person" is someone who will lend you their ears, and not their mouth. Can you identify someone like that in your life?*

### *About Bob Willis, Author of Article*

*As Bereavement Coordinator for Hospice of Oklahoma County since June of 1995, Bob provides grief support and counseling for families, facilitates grief support groups for the community, and is a frequent speaker on grief, loss and caregiving issues. Bob has been an ordained Southern Baptist minister since 1979. He has received training through the Grief Recovery Institute, the Center for Loss and Life Transition, the American Academy of Bereavement, and the Traumatology Institute of Florida State University.*

*Bob is the author of "The Ultimate Caregiver: Words from the Cross to the Caregiver's Heart", to be released in September of 2008. This book provides communication tools and guides for caregivers to express important feelings to their care-receivers during the difficult role of caregiving.*

*He is also an accomplished sculptor with his bronze work in colleges and a children's hospital. He leads sculpture workshops in the Oklahoma City area, and is the designer of the "Healing Heart" sculpture ([www.Godhealshearts.com](http://www.Godhealshearts.com)). He and his wife, Lynn, present the "Gospel in Clay" in churches throughout the Midwest. As Bob sculpts a bust of Christ in clay, Lynn sings songs of His sacrifice, blending Scripture and testimony into this powerful message.*

Disclaimer: Content of Article is from Bob Willis and does not express the opinion or recommendation of FamilyCare America, Inc. and the National Caregivers Library.

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