

Untreated Prolonged Grief Disorder (PGD) over the Years

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Abstract: *Prolonged grief or complicated grief has always been difficult to diagnose, one is prone to express grief and sadness over the loss. It usually takes about 6-12 months to diagnose prolonged grief. Most of the time this disorder goes undiagnosed or is not addressed. Prolonged grief if goes untreated may have great consequences.*

Keywords: prolonged grief; sadness; Complicated Grief; therapy

1. Introduction

Grief is an emotion experienced by all, but imagine a persistent feeling of grief over years and years; this is *Prolonged grief*. In this study, we will be talking about untreated Complicated grief. The usual association of prolonged grief is done with the death of a loved one. Still, one experiences it due to some other traumatic events such as Ending a romantic relationship or friendship, loss of a job, sudden poverty, prolonged physical illness, surviving a natural calamity, war, or a disastrous event. Prolonged grief can sometimes be confused with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and Clinical depression due to their similar symptoms and causes.

2. Symptoms

A person suffering from Prolonged Grief Disorder enters a state of numbness and detachment from their surroundings, one may feel complete numbness. Loss of interest can be seen in people having this disorder, a person loses interest in activities that they used to enjoy, and one may lose their will to do their job or studies. One can experience a sense of pain throughout their body. A person suffering from PGD is prone to sudden burnout, one may feel irritated all the time. Mood swings can be observed in people suffering from this disorder, they may seem happy from time to time, but the pain and grief remain constant. It's difficult for anyone suffering from PGD to explain their Grief, hence the name *Complicated Grief*.

Physical Signs of untreated PGD: If PGD goes untreated for years, it may result in poor physical health. It may cause multiple problems one after another. It may result in heart problems such as *Angina pectoris, High blood pressure, and Cardiac arrest*.

One may experience problems related to the digestive system like *Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), Peptic Ulcers, Constipation, and Gastrointestinal Reflux Disease (GERD)*.

PGD may also result in an abnormal increase in the rate of cell division, which may result in *Cyst formation, Tumors, and in some cases, it may be a factor in the development of Cancer*.

One may see these problems if PGD goes untreated, these problems may occur years after the traumatic event and will

stay persistent over a long period of time. One may recover from a certain condition, but is at high risk that will experience some other type of problem soon, and in some cases, problems are prone to come back. One may experience multiple problems at once, this happens when PGD combines with other problems either mental health problems or physical health problems.

Another traumatic event: If a person suffering from PGD encounters another traumatic event while having PGD, their symptoms might get worse. A person may end up crying constantly, they start having flashbacks from both traumatic events. A person starts recalling memories quite often. Even the slightest similarity to those memories ends up hurting them way more than before. A person might encounter a cardiac arrest on hearing the traumatic event.

Coping Mechanism: A person with untreated PGD after a certain point starts to explore coping mechanisms subconsciously. One may enter different activities and different methods of dealing with emotions. One starts to enter different faiths and beliefs to handle their grief, they change it when it doesn't help them anymore. Other activities can be fitness, painting, photography, etc., basically any hobby. But, these all activities are short-lived.

People with PGD uses various kinds of methods of controlling their emotion or coping mechanisms such as *putting up mental blocks, distracting themselves, acting like a different person or the person lost (which may get mistaken as multiple personality disorder) setting harsh boundaries, and Entering toxic relationships*.

Treatment: Untreated PGD can be difficult to treat after years of it being diagnosed, but still there is hope, it may take time, but it can be treated. For this type of PDG one may have to try several treatment options, there can be medications and therapy, and the very rare chance that one might undergo surgery (if any gets introduced in the future).