What Are Anniversary Reactions?
Anniversary reactions are when feelings and distress associated with a loss, death, and/or trauma are re-experienced or intensified.

- They are a normal part of experiencing and coping with such events.
- These reactions most commonly occur around the anniversary of the loss, death, and/or trauma but they can also occur around other meaningful dates, times, and associations to the loss or trauma.
- The intensity of the reactions may range from mild to extreme and they may last from several hours to several weeks.
- Anniversary reactions are painful but they are also an opportunity to work through the loss or trauma further.

What Can You Do To Feel Better?

- Recognize and acknowledge your feelings and reactions.
- Take care of yourself emotionally and physically.
- Talk to others about what you are feeling or experiencing, which may include making an appointment with a counselor at the University Counseling Center.
- Spend time alone reminiscing or doing something meaningful related to the loss or trauma.
- Spend time with others.
- Balance out these emotions by living the other aspects of your life fully.
- Distract yourself as needed.
- Honor the anniversary with a meaningful ritual or tradition.
- Express your emotions through writing, art, poetry, cooking, or any other way which gives voice to your feelings.

How Can You Help Others?

- Acknowledge the anniversary in some way.
- Ask how they are feeling about the anniversary.
- Listen to their thoughts and feelings.
- Know the power of your presence and empathy.
- Let them know about the University Counseling Center and that services are available to them, if needed.

Anniversary reactions should ease with time. If they do not, consider talking to a professional about them as this helps work them through.

Adapted from http://www.pace.edu/counseling-center/