

# Grief

## **What Is Grief?**

Grief is our reaction to a loss or bereavement. It is a natural response when someone or something you love is taken away, although it can occur when something was never given in the first place like the loss of childhood, affection or care. Grief associated with death is familiar to most people, but we all grieve in connection with a variety of losses throughout our lives, such as unemployment, ill health or the end of a relationship.

## **How Can It Affect Me?**

Grief can give rise to a variety of feelings including: numbness, disorientation, sadness, crying, tiredness, exhaustion, anger and guilt. You may find yourself feeling lots of things at once or nothing at all. You may find yourself distracted and forgetful at times. All of these feelings are perfectly normal.

It is generally agreed that there is a process to grieving that involves accepting the loss, working through the pain, adjusting to life without the thing, person or pet you have lost, and beginning to put energy into other parts of your life as you recover.

## **How Can I Help Myself?**

Writing a journal can help you to get your feelings out.

Relaxation can help to give you some time out.

Exercise regularly as this helps with sleep disturbance and helps you relax.

Talking about your loss and your experience of loss can be helpful. This may be with a friend or a counsellor who can help you to work through your grief.

On anniversaries or special occasions that remind you of your loss, try to plan the day in advance and allow yourself the time and space to grieve.

## **What Do I Do If It Gets Too Much?**

If you are finding it difficult to get out of bed, you are neglecting yourself, feeling like you cannot go on without the other person, you are having trouble sleeping or you are turning to drugs or alcohol to cope you should make an appointment to see your GP. They can talk through options with you including medication, counselling or a combination of these therapies, all of which can be very effective.

If you choose to use a private counsellor make sure they are BACP or NCS registered. The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and the National Counselling Society hold the voluntary registers for counsellors and psychotherapists so you know that anyone registered with them has the appropriate training and qualifications to treat you.

**Make an appointment today**

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