

CancerCare

If you or someone you know is struggling with loss, grief or bereavement, we can help

Please get in touch with our Therapy Coordination team to see how we can help you. Email: tct@cancercare.org.uk Phone: 01524 381820

Additional Support Groups

Compassionate Friends

A national organisation which has local groups. You can contact them on 0345 123 2304 or email helpline@tcf.co.uk

St John's Hospice Lancaster

Provides bereavement support when someone dies who is known to the hospice. Call them on 01524 382 538

St Mary's Hospice Ulverston

Provides bereavement support when someone dies who is known to the hospice. Call them on 01229 580305

Facebook Groups

There are multiple groups online based in local areas. They are a great place to discuss things with people having similar experiences.

Child Bereavement UK

A national charity providing support for children and teenagers faced with bereavement. Contact them on 0800 02 888 40 or email support@childbereavementuk.org

Widowed and Young

A charity supporting men and women under 50 whose partner has died. Head to www.widowedandyoung.org.uk

Grief, Loss & Bereavement in Adults



**What is normal?
How can you help?
Warning signs and when to seek help**

An adult's grief

Grief is a normal and natural process that takes work to get through. It is not easy to cope with the loss of close relationships that have existed in our lives. Dealing with the emotions that occur in the grieving process takes much time and energy, and is usually both physically and emotionally demanding.

People grieve in very different ways. Some people do it openly, while others hide their feelings of distress. It may be a fast or slow process. There is no "right way" to grieve. Each individual comes up with a method of grieving that fits them and their particular loss.

There are a number of conditions that can make it harder for a person to successfully make it through the grieving process:

- The way in which a person died
- Whether the death was anticipated
- The history you shared with a person and intensity of attachment to the person
- The amount of support the grieving person can draw upon

The more that friends, family and community are present and supportive, and the more that the grieving person is able to accept offered support, the better the outcomes tend to be. Isolated people tend to have a harder time.

The "fairness" of the loss is also important. Losses that challenge a grieving person's ability to believe that the world is predictable, are harder to manage. The experience of grief is not something a person ever recovers from completely, but, in time, the feelings usually reduce in intensity.

What is normal?

In the aftermath of a death, it is perfectly normal to move between many different emotions. Feelings of sadness, frustration, anger, denial, guilt and even relief can all be typical of those who are grieving.

Emotions are often surprising in their strength or mildness, and they can also be confusing, such as when a person misses a violent or painful relationship.

When should I get help for myself or a loved one?

After a bereavement, it is important to give yourself time to grieve. However, there may come a time when you need to seek help.

The following are some indicators that this may be the case:

- Your grief is interfering with your ability to return to routine activities
- Feelings of intense sadness and difficulty engaging in happy memories
- Preoccupation with the person who has died or with the circumstances surrounding the death
- Lack of desire in pursuing personal interests or plans
- Trouble eating or sleeping, where previously you did not
- Overriding belief in the need to be strong, not burden others which causes fear about "losing it" or not "being out of control"
- Struggle to respond to other people's feelings and emotions
- Avoidance of reminders of the person who has died
- Thoughts of suicide

How can counselling help me?

Bereavement counselling can provide a confidential safe space in which you are supported to understand your own grieving process and explore the above.

A therapist might help you find different ways to maintain healthy connections with the deceased through memory, reflection, ritual, or dialogue about the deceased and with the deceased.

Therapy is an effective way to learn to cope with the stresses associated with the loss and to manage symptoms with techniques such as relaxation or meditation.