



Coping with Bereavement

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Grieving is a highly individual experience – there is no right or wrong way to grieve and how you grieve depends on many factors – your personality, faith, support network and how significant the loss was to you.

Grief becomes part of us and shapes our lives; although it is painful, in time you will adapt to a different way of life.

There is no particular timeframe for grief; again this is a totally individual experience. Give yourself time to accept what has happened. Be patient.

Bereavement is a difficult journey and something we get **through**, not **over**.

Avoid stressful situations and decisions. Don't make financial decisions which can be postponed for a while.

Don't be afraid to ask for help from friends and family members, and to express how you are feeling. Although they may be feeling the same pain as you, it's better to face it together than alone.



Try to keep your routine as normal as possible, simple things like walking the dog, going shopping, getting up at the same time



Find others who have experienced grief and ask how they coped, or read books on those who coped with loss. Suggested reading includes:

- You'll Get Over it: The Rage of Bereavement, by Virginia Ironside
- The Empty Bed: Bereavement and the Loss of Love, by Susan Wallbank
- Swimming in a Sea of Death, A son's memoir, by David Rieff



Try to eat healthily and sleep well, and avoid things like alcohol to 'numb' the pain. This can just create more problems.



Find a way of remembering the person you have lost. Many people find comfort in thinking of ways to keep their loved one's memory alive, for example memory boxes or photo albums. Don't be afraid to talk about the person who has died.



Allow yourself to cry and feel sad. It's a healthy part of the grieving process.



Death ends a life but it doesn't end a relationship. If you are used to sharing your day with the person who has died you can continue to do so, by talking or writing it down.



Seek professional help if you find you are doing any of the following:

- Drinking too much or taking drugs
- Having suicidal thoughts
- Acting recklessly
- Becoming violent



Don't be afraid to laugh. Laughter is excellent medicine and sharing a laugh with someone is not being disloyal to the person you have lost.

'Grief is as individual as a snowflake'