

After someone close to you has died, you may well go through a range of different emotions. People react in many different ways; there is no set pattern to grief.

Grief is very painful. It won't go away in a few days, or even a few months. Although your feelings are personal to you, they will often be shared by others in similar circumstances. If you are able, it can be very helpful to talk to someone about your feelings. It will not change things, but it might put them into perspective.

So what are some of the emotions you may feel?

Numbness / disbelief

At first, you may

- **be in a state of "shock";**
- **find it difficult to believe that its really happened;**
- **think you see the person;**
- **carry on as though they were still here.**

This is perfectly normal. Many people feel and act like this.

Anger

- **"Why me?"**
- **"Why him?"**
- **"How could she leave me alone?"**
- **"What have I done to deserve this?"**

This is a very natural reaction and at different times your anger may be directed

towards different people, or even yourself. Your anger will not bring the person you love back. Expressing and acknowledging that this is the way you feel may help you to learn to live with what is happening.

Guilty

- **"If only I had said this..."**
- **"If only I hadn't done that..."**

Guilt when you laugh at something or feeling guilty for being so "down in the dumps".

You may feel you are to blame and so try and punish yourself. Discussing these feelings with someone may help you see them in their true light.

Lonely / isolated

Nobody can share exactly how you feel. Your relationship was unique and nothing can replace your loss. You may feel that you will go on feeling like this forever. Your sadness will change with time.

Panic / fear

How will I cope? During your grief you will need to readjust to living without the person who has died and may need to take on some roles you've never had to before. It is normal to feel worried about this.

Try not to pretend that everything is all right because support is usually there if you can share how you feel.

"Feeling unwell"

Not sleeping, unable to eat, feeling faint, dizzy, "out of sorts" – it is not surprising you feel like this.

Your body has had to deal with a big shock that affects you physically as well as emotionally. If it persists or gets worse, do go and see your family doctor who is there to help.

Wanting to change the situation

By

- **moving house,**
- **disposing of possessions.**

You might think that by doing this straight away it will ease your pain. However, the reality is that it can quite often make the situation worse, as decisions like this require time and careful thought.

These are just a few illustrations of how you might feel. There are many more. You may feel better for a while and then something "big or small" can trigger your feelings off again.

Whatever you feel, it's natural and normal. The important thing is that you talk about it. It doesn't matter who you talk to, but you may feel that you don't want to "burden" your family or friends. If that is the case, there are people available to support and help you.

Support Available

People may need support at very different times and in differing ways.

Some people are more comfortable talking on a one-to-one basis.

For others, a group setting, where they can hear how others are dealing with loss, is beneficial.

Both these settings are available for you.

Individual work would be on a short term counselling basis, for twelve one-hour sessions, over a number of weeks. Longer-term therapy may be available.

For both these activities we would ask to meet up with you for a one hour assessment session. We can then offer you the best support structure for your needs.

Memorial services

If you are under the care of the Palliative Care team, an invitation to a memorial gathering will be sent to you.

How to get help

Contact us yourself, or ask

- your general practitioner (GP),
- the hospital ward,
- or specialist nurse.

PTO 

To contact

Mike Fitzsimmons, Lead Therapist,
Carers' Psychological Support
0207 188 4741
(pager **08700 555500** code 843330)

Other Resources

Cruse Help line
☎ 0870 167 1677
Monday – Friday 9.30–5 pm

LBN (London Bereavement Network)
www.bereavement.org.uk

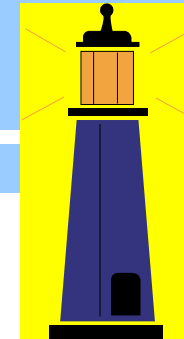
Waterloo Community Counselling Service
☎ 0207 928 3462

Southwark Bereavement Care Association
☎ 0207 735 1344

Samaritans
☎ 08457 909090 (calls at local rate)

Carers' Psychological Support Service
Guy's, King's and St Thomas' Cancer Centre

Bereavement Support



*Your path may be clouded,
uncertain your goal:
Move on – for your orbit is fixed
to your soul.
And though it may lead into
darkness of night,
The torch of the Builder
shall give it new light.*

Guy's & St Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust

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