



WOKING & SAM BEARE  
HOSPICES

# Bereavement



Most of us, at some point in our lives, will be faced with the death of someone we care deeply about. Although we all react in different ways we have tried to describe some of the feelings and experiences most frequently felt by bereaved people

[www.wsbhospices.co.uk](http://www.wsbhospices.co.uk)

## **Accepting the reality of the loss**

At first you may feel numb, strangely calm and detached, or confused and unable to take in what has happened. For a while it may seem impossible to believe that someone has died. It is quite common to think you can hear or see the person. You may look for them in a crowd, listen for them when the phone rings, or see them in a favourite chair— even though you know they will not be there. At times you may have the feeling that you are searching for something but are never able to find it.

## **Disorganisation, emptiness, despair**

This period may be the longest part of grieving. You may feel that you no longer have a reason for living, that nothing interests you; you may even feel that you are ‘going mad’.

Perhaps you will feel guilty for the things you did or didn’t do. Many bereaved people find themselves feeling angry—with God, family, friends, the hospital and medical staff, themselves, or with the one who has died. It is not unusual to have difficulty in remembering simple things or doing normal tasks.

Feelings of anxiety, helplessness, fear and tremendous loneliness are felt by many people during this stage. You may very well think that you will never feel normal again.

## **Health**

It is quite normal to feel tired and be unable to sleep, eat or concentrate properly. You may begin to have pains you normally don’t have. For the most part these are things that happen to many bereaved people, but if they persist you should see your doctor.

## **Wanting to escape**

You may feel that you could cope better if you moved house and disposed of the things that are reminders of the person who has died.

Bereavement IS painful. It is much better to make important decisions, like moving house, when you are able to think more clearly and objectively. Try to wait until you feel better before making decisions you might regret.

## Beginning to live again

In time you will become aware that you are beginning to have good hours and days. You will find that you can listen to the 'special' piece of music or remember something that you once shared with the one who has died without feeling sad. Gradually you will begin to take up new interests and renew some of your old ones. At this time you may sometimes feel you are being disloyal to the person who has died but you should try to remember that, while the past will always be with you, there is a present and a future you can enjoy.

## Helping yourself

Grief is individual and each of us reacts to it differently. No one can completely understand what another person's grief is like, but it is an experience most of us go through and there are people willing to listen and understand as much as they can.

If you have feelings of guilt, panic, anger, fear or self pity, don't try to hide them: they are part of your grief. Try to share them with an understanding listener.

If friends seem to be avoiding you it is possible they are embarrassed because they feel helpless or feel unable to say or do the 'right thing'. They too may be grieving.

Allow yourself to express your feelings— good and not so good—with someone you trust. Allow yourself to cry, to laugh, to be angry. You have lost someone you feel deeply about and it hurts—allow yourself to experience the pain so that you may work through it.

If you have already heard from us and feel it would be helpful to talk to someone about your feelings and experiences, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. Our counsellors are especially trained to help with the feelings and problems which are so often the result of bereavement.

For more information please contact

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