

Bereavement, the loss of a loved one as a result of death, causes a broad range of reactions, and people experience their grief in many and varied ways. Mourning, the adaptation to loss, is an essential process in order to re-establish equilibrium and carry on with living. Mourning can take a long time and there is no fixed time in which you should expect to feel better. You may experience some of the following reactions when someone close to you dies:

Feelings

Sadness and loneliness

The loss of a loved one leaves you feeling sad and lonely. You may suffer deep sorrow that you are without the love and understanding of that person.

Anger

This is a frequent experience after the loss. The anger comes from a sense of frustration that there was nothing yourself, family doctors or God could do to prevent the death. You may also feel angry with the deceased for leaving you.

Guilt and self-reproach

These are common responses to loss. You may feel guilty about things done or left undone, unresolved quarrels, words said or left unsaid. Usually people blame themselves for something that was neglected around the time of the death.

Anxiety and Fears

Feelings of anxiety are common and stem from two sources. You may fear that you will not be able to take care of yourself on your own and your awareness of your own mortality is heightened by the death of a loved one.

Fatigue

Fatigue is frequently experienced and may take the form of apathy or listlessness. To a person who is usually very active this can be both surprising and distressing.

Despair and Helplessness

You may feel you cannot bear the pain any longer. The sense of helplessness engendered by death makes bereavement a stressful experience.

Shock

You may feel numb, bewildered, stunned and unable to think clearly. Shock occurs most often in the case of a sudden death.

Longing and Searching

You may have a sense of longing to see, hear, hold and talk to the person who has died.

Relief

It is normal to sometimes feel relieved after death of a loved one who suffered a lengthy or particularly painful illness.

Thoughts

Certain thoughts are common in the early stages of mourning, and usually fade after a short time. Sometimes they persist and can lead to anxiety and depression.

Disbelief

This is often the initial response after hearing of a death. You feel that what has happened is unreal, you can't believe it happened. It is a common thought, which might persist for some time.

Confusion

You may feel unable to concentrate, can't seem to order your thoughts and tend to forget things.

Preoccupation

You may be obsessed with thoughts about the deceased, be preoccupied about how to recover the lost person and have intrusive thoughts or images of the deceased suffering or dying.

Sense of presence

The counterpart of the experience of longing and yearning are thoughts that the deceased is somehow still in the current area of time and space.

Understanding “the facts of death”

Knowing what to expect, and knowing your options helps express your feelings – talk, weep, be angry. You are not alone, all grieving people need such outlets.

And many more....

Few people are able to cope alone with the pain of bereavement, and there is no shame in needing help. At the right time, seeking help is simply one more way of coping – a sign of strength and self – knowledge, not weakness.

If you are bereaved and find yourself in need of more assistance than friends and family can provide, contact one of the many community organizations, like your local Family Life Centre or Mental Health Association, which can help you find the support you need.

In our hearts we all know that death, though painful, is an integral part of life. Proper grieving will bring maturity, strength and a new understanding.

Coping effectively with bereavement is a skill we can all learn, and one we will all need someday.

Coping with death is really coping with life.

Coping...putting your life back in your own hands.

VITA HOUSE IS HERE FOR YOU THROUGH THE FOLLOWING SUPPORTS

Rainbows for Children and Teenagers

“It does not need to hurt forever.”

Rainbows is a peer support group programme for children who have suffered a significant loss in their lives e.g. parental separation or death, and is led by a team of trained, caring adults.

Prism is a support programme for bereaved and separated parents held **at the same time as Rainbows**. It helps you become attuned to your own and your child's grief process, learn single parenting skills and re-create family again.

A Time to Grieve

The death of someone close can be a devastating experience. We need time and space to grieve, to re-evaluate and to heal.

This programme offers an opportunity for bereaved persons to come together in a supportive environment, gain some understanding of the grief process, take time and space to grieve, thus enabling them move to acceptance of their loss in a healthy way. **Tuesdays @ 8.30pm**

One to One Support for People Touched by Suicide

If you have been bereaved by the suicide death of a family member or friend, it may be helpful to revisit the thoughts, feelings and emotions that may at times interrupt the flow of life.

Call Vita House for an Appointment.

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING/PSYCHOTHERAPY SERVICE

Is Counselling/Psychotherapy for Me?

It is natural and healthy to seek help from carefully chosen, trustworthy people when we can't sort out things on our own.

Seeing a counsellor does not mean you are self-indulgent, weak or that you are going crazy! Counselling/psychotherapy can help small problems from becoming more serious and can strengthen relationships.

The pain of living is often expressed in family breakdown, behavioural problems, stress and anxiety. Individuals, couples and families go through different stages of development and may experience difficulty in relationships.

Marriage - communication problems, conflict resolution

Family - parenting difficulties, child's/teenager's behavioural and emotional problems, leaving home, conflict in the home

Change - bereavement, separation, loss of health/job, etc.

Stress - depression, anxiety, panic attacks, violence, abuse, etc.

Coping When Someone Close Dies



Bereavement Support at Vita House



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Mission Statement

Vita House is to be a welcoming place that contributes to the dignity of every person, enabling us all to discover our true potential by responding to each other's needs in partnership with families and community.