



Bereavement Café Newsletter

A safe space to talk and listen

Written and compiled by
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JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF: WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT GRIEF AND THE GRIEVING PROCESS

“We will all go through grief at some point in our lives, so why are we so bad at talking about it”?

We don't talk enough about how heavy it feels to grieve someone who is still alive.

To mourn the version of them you once loved, and to let go of the hope that they'd ever become who you needed them to be.

GRIEF IS SO HUMAN,
AND IT HITS EVERYONE
AT ONE POINT OR
ANOTHER. AT LEAST, IN
THEIR LIVES. IF YOU
LOVE, YOU WILL GRIEVE,
AND THAT'S JUST GIVEN.

- Keri Russell Jamison



Grief is universal. But just as our experiences of death are different, so, too are the emotions that follow. Your grief is as unique as you are -as unique as your relationship was with the person you've lost – and whatever you are feeling is valid and true. (Clare Mackintosh).

- Grief needs no invitation to come calling; it arrives!
- Grief is an invisible wound.
- Death brings a hurt we cannot defend, a pain we cannot forget, and an injury which will never fully heal.
- Grief has its own timetable. It's different for each person. Grief will not be rushed.



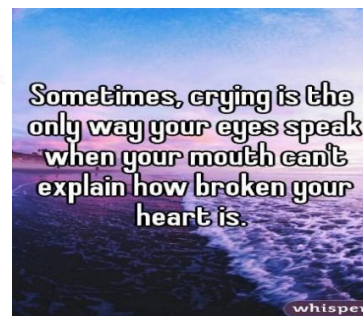
Feelings are meant to be felt. When the emotion comes, acknowledge it (Gary Roe).

Grief is a strong, sometimes overwhelming emotion for people, regardless of whether their sadness stems from the loss of a loved one or from a terminal diagnosis they or someone they love have received [Mayo Clinic].

There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep sadness, and of unspeakable love (Washington Irving).

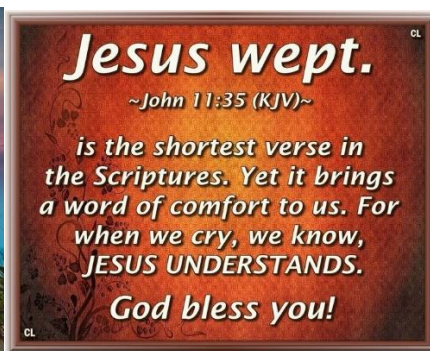
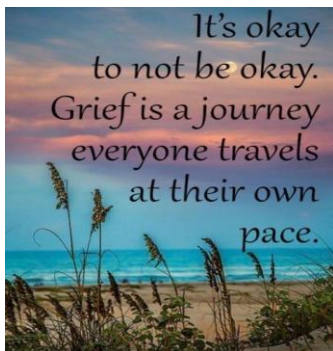
A Thought on Grief

We know that grief can be overwhelming especially after the funeral of your loved one and you are left to face a new life on your own. You might experience loneliness and your emotions are out of control.



Don't feel guilty; it's ok to not feel ok. God understands our sorrows. One writer says it like this; "we're in good company because even David, a man after God's own heart, felt the same way we do". Jesus Himself wept [John 11:35] after speaking with Lazarus' grieving sisters, Martha and Mary, and seeing all the mourners.

- God knew we would mourn our losses because He said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted". (Matthew 5:4).



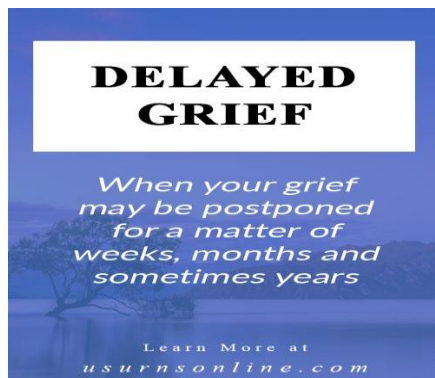
When Mary stood at the foot of the cross, witnessing the unimaginable suffering and death of her son, Jesus, she didn't turn away but faced the pain head-on, sustained by her deep

trust in God's plan. Her experience reminds us that in times of loss, it's natural to feel sorrow, but we can also find strength in our faith and the belief that our loved ones are in God's hands".

Grief can be a very lonely and isolating experience. One of the hardest things about grieving is that no one else can do it for you.

Grief can Manifest in Various Forms, including:

- Normal/common grief
- Delayed grief
- Anticipatory grief
- Complicated grief
- Disenfranchised grief
- Masked grief



The Grieving Process

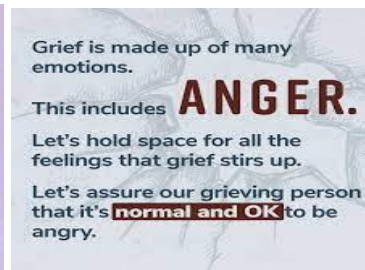
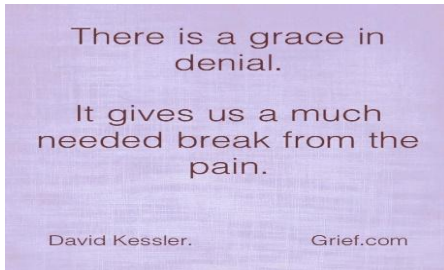
Grief Model

Research has suggested that, in some people, grief comes in stages or as a cycle. The grief cycle as a whole is sometimes referred to as 'mourning' and describes how people adapt to loss.

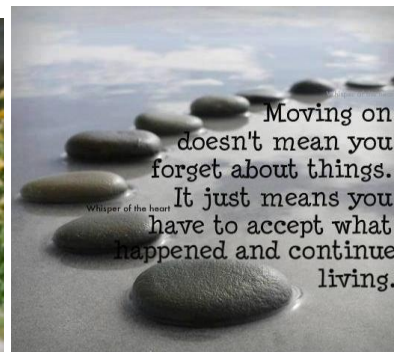
It is completely an individual process but can be influenced by things such as culture, customs, rituals and social expectations. (Bereavement -Mind 2019).

Stages of Grief

- Denial: "This can't be happening to me.
- Anger: "Why is this happening? Who is to blame?"



- **Bargaining:** “Make this not happen, and in return I will ____.”
- **Depression:** “I’m too sad to do anything.”
- **Acceptance:** “I’m at peace with what happened.”

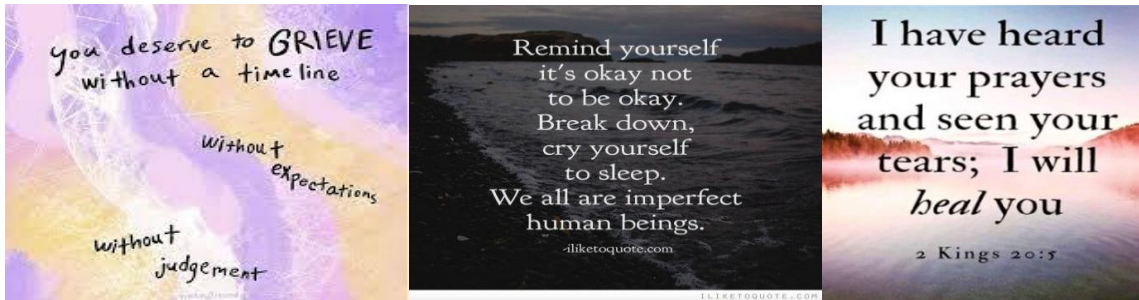


Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, in her writing, makes it clear that the stages are non-linear – people can experience these aspects of grief at different times and they do not happen in one particular order. You might not experience all of the stages, and you might find feelings are quite different with different bereavements [cruse.org.uk].

The Four Tasks of Grief

The Psychologist, J. William Worden provides a framework of four tasks that help us understand how people journey through grief. Healing happens gradually as griever address these tasks, in no specific order, going back and forth from one to another over time.

- Task 1: To Accept the Reality of the Loss
- Task 2: To Process the Pain of Grief
- Task 3: To Adjust to a World Without the Deceased
- Task 4: To Find an Enduring Connection with the Deceased in the Midst of Embarking on a New Life.



Remember that through it all, God is faithful. There are many Scriptures that remind us of God's faithfulness in times of mourning. He is with us even in the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4). When David sorrowed, he prayed this in Psalm 56:8: "You have kept track of my sorrows; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book?" (ESV).

The touching image of God catching our tears is full of meaning. He sees our grief and does not disregard it. Like Jesus entered into the grief of the mourners in Bethany, God enters into our grief. At the same time, He reassures us that all is not lost. Psalm 46:10 reminds us to "be still" and rest in the knowledge that He is God. He is our refuge (Psalm 91:1-2).



How Long Does the Grieving Process Last?

Since each person grieves differently, the length and intensity of the emotions people go through varies from person to person.

Learning to live with the loss of someone you love can take a long time, and just as everyone's grief is different, so each person feels differently as time passes after bereavement [Sue Ryder].



According to the writer, Lucy Hone, [PhD] there are no “right” or “wrong” ways to experience grief. It is said that there is no secret method that will take your grief instantly away. There are no rules; there is no set timetable. Grief isn't a test, a race or a competition. It might be hard to believe, but it does slowly get easier to handle.

Remember that, “Grieving is painful, and it's important that those who have suffered a loss be allowed the time they need to express their grief”.

PLEASE NOTE!

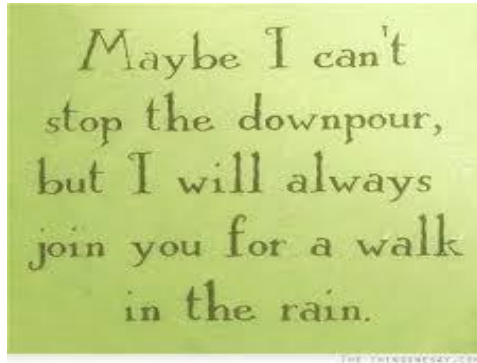
*Sometimes coping with the death of a loved one can feel like too much to handle. You could be having feelings of suicidal thoughts, struggling to move forward due to emotional challenges, self-blame and guilt, anger and fear, loss of identity, loneliness, and isolation. If this is the case, please do not sit in silence, seek support by talking to a trusted friend, your Pastor, GP or a counsellor



What to Say to Someone who is Grieving:

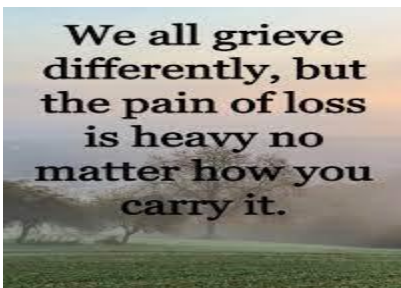
- **Express Sympathy:** "I'm so sorry for your loss," or "My heart goes out to you" are good starting points.

- **Acknowledge Their Feelings:** "I can only imagine how difficult this must be," or "It's okay to feel [sad, angry, numb]".
- **Be a Good Listener:** Allow them to talk about their feelings and the loss, without judgment or interruption.



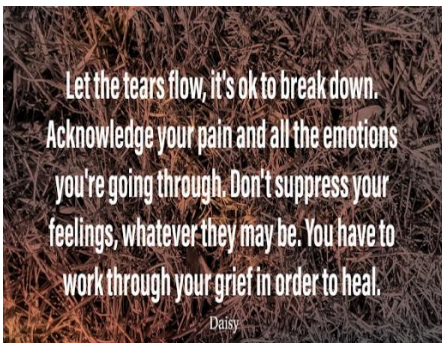
What Not to Say to those who are grieving:

- **"I know how you feel.":** Everyone experiences grief differently, and your own experiences don't necessarily reflect theirs.
- **"They're in a better place.":** This can sound dismissive of their pain and can be hurtful.
- **"Everything happens for a reason.":** This can be particularly hurtful if the loss was unexpected, as it can imply that there is some deeper meaning to the tragedy.



Healing from Grief

- **Acknowledge and allow your feelings:** Accept that grief is complex: It can manifest in many ways, including sadness, anger, guilt, numbness, and even joy (at times).
- **Don't suppress your emotions:** Allow yourself to feel whatever you're feeling, whether it's sadness, anger, or confusion.



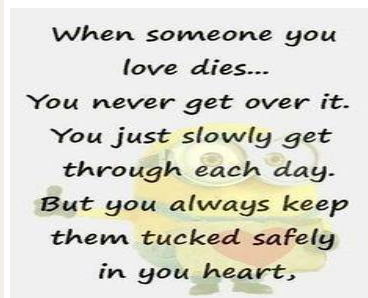
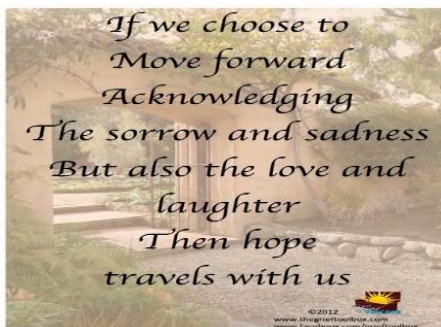
When
someone
you love
becomes
a memory,
the memory
becomes a
treasure



Mourning is the public expression of grief: It can involve rituals, ceremonies, or traditions that honour the deceased.

Share memories and stories: Talking about the person you lost can help to keep their memory alive and to process your grief.

Remember that, “moving on doesn't mean you forget about your loved one. It just means you have to accept what happened and continue living”

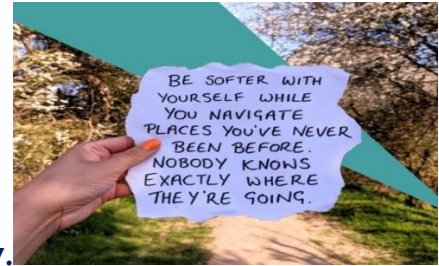


Please Seek Professional if You:

- You are unable to perform your normal daily activities
- Feel like life isn't worth living
- Having suicidal thoughts
- Wish you had died with your loved one
- Blame yourself for the loss or for failing to prevent it.

Practice Self-Compassion

Remember that it takes times to heal on your grief journey.



The Bereavement Café Support Group

Our support group is here to help you on your grief journey. We provide a safe environment for those who are living with grief either through the loss of a loved one or any other significant loss. We believe that sharing can help you feel connected with others who are going through a similar experience, and benefit those who are new to the experience of grief to feel understood.

As a Support Group, we thrive to cultivate an attitude of acceptance, empathy and listening in a non-judgemental manner.



- ✚ Resources used in this Newsletter are taken from Books on “Grief” and various websites .
- ✚ Our prayer is that you will find this month’s Newsletter helpful on your on your grief journey.

Blessings: The Bereavement Support Team.

