

Bereavement

Bereavement, Loss and Grief: Loss and Grief are complex and personal feelings, which no two people experience the same way. It comes about when we are feeling a sense of loss in our lives, also known as a bereavement. There is no right or wrong way to feel grief or loss. It's not only felt when we lose somebody that we love, other examples include losing a job, moving somewhere new or ending a friendship/relationship.

What can bereavement look like?

While there are no set rules as to what bereavement looks like, some of the more consistent and common traits are:

Anger: Sometimes people can feel angry towards the person they've lost or the thing that they no longer have. This is a complicated feeling which can turn into guilt or shame.

Tiredness and Exhaustion: Bereavement causes our minds to use a lot of energy on emotions and thinking. It's easy to underestimate how taxing that can be on the body

Overwhelming Sadness: The sadness brought on by grief can be difficult to manage. For some people it will present as a lot of crying, for others they may isolate themselves or have a persistent low mood.

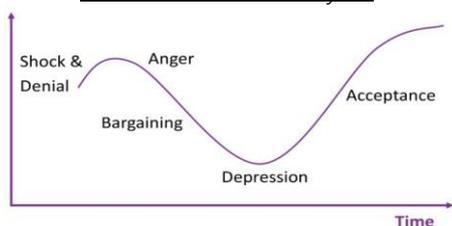
Shock and Numbness: This is usually the first reaction to a loss. It can feel like time is stopping or the world is falling apart around you. For many people they enter a dazed state.

Shame: Unlike guilt, shame is less to do with the actions you've done. Shame is the feeling that you are wrong. People will often feel ashamed about bereavement when they feel they've managed it poorly.

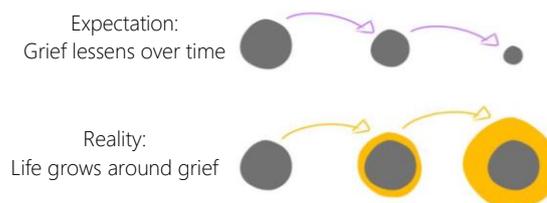
Guilt: Sometimes you may feel there was something you could or could have not done that may have prevented your loss.

Grief can vary between individuals. However, there are still global trends in how people cope with loss. Psychologists and researchers have outlined various models of grief. Some of the most familiar models include the following:

Kubler-Ross: Grief Cycle



Tonkins: Growing around grief



How to manage bereavement?

Working through bereavement, loss and grief is a complex and sometimes life-long process. There are both positive and negative ways to manage it. Below are a few examples of healthy ways to tackle it:

Find someone safe to talk to. They should be a person who is not going to judge you or make you feel worse about your experience of grief, there are lots of services that can provide good positive support for you.

Try to get more sleep (which we know might not be easy). If your body is well rested it will be better equipped to constantly manage the exhausting emotional rollercoaster of a bereavement.

Try to set yourself small achievable goals and try not to focus on the things you cannot change. To get through bereavement it's crucial to keep trying to move forwards. It's not an easy task and it can be easy to feel like it's hopeless - but you can do it!

Useful websites: <https://www.hopeagain.org.uk/>

<https://www.treetopshospice.org.uk/>