

LOROS Bereavement Support

Our Bereavement Support offers a safe, confidential and supportive space for those who have suffered a loss. Our aim is to enable individuals to share the range of emotions they are experiencing, help people come to terms with their loss and learn to cope in a way that is right for them.

Volunteers are an important part of the Bereavement Support we offer. The role helps us to provide group and individual support for bereaved people at the hospice, in our Community Hubs and one to one for individuals in their own homes.

They assist with setting up, 'meet and greet' and facilitation of the group as directed by the group lead or seeing/visiting recently bereaved people here at the hospice or in their own homes offering one to one support.

In return they are fully trained and debrief and supervision to ensure their safety and development as a volunteer.

Currently we have Community Hubs at Loughborough, Birstall, Hinckley, Thurmaston, LOROS, Wigston, Stanton under Barden, Ketton, Oakham and Rutland. All our Community Hubs offer a 'drop in' approach which means attendance numbers are variable.



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Bereavement and Grief

Bereavement is the loss of someone close and grief is our reaction to this loss. Grief means different things to different people, and there is no right or wrong way to feel. The death of someone close can be very distressing, and bring unexpected and powerful emotions. Everyone copes with their loss in their own way.

People may feel that those bereft “should” start to feel better within so many days, weeks or months but there is no time limit on your grief. There may be pressure from other people for the person to get on with your day to day life and to be able to deal with your usual responsibilities but it’s important to take whatever time you need to deal with your grief.

A persons’ recovery from grief will probably be gradual and they may not notice it happening. Things tend to become easier over time, but it can be very hard to believe that this will happen when your grief is new and extremely painful. If you have lost someone close you may never “get over” the loss but your grief will change and become more bearable.



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Effects of Grief

Grief can impact on a persons' feelings, thoughts, physical wellbeing and behaviour. Grief is a normal, natural, emotional healing process that occurs after a significant loss. Although grief is unique to each of us it can be helpful to understand some of the normal reactions which people commonly experience in their loss. These reactions can be categorised into feelings, thoughts, physical wellbeing and behaviour. When you compare your experience with that of others, do remember that not everyone will experience all of these reactions. Signs of grief will vary from person to person, as will their order, intensity and duration.



Feelings

Those bereft may experience a lot of complex and overwhelming emotions following your loss. These may include:

Sadness

Sadness is the most common emotion expressed by bereaved people. It may mean that people feel tearful and cry more often than usual.

Anger

Anger is common following loss and it can seem confusing. Those bereft may be angry towards the deceased person for leaving them.

Anger may be directed towards other people such as medical professionals, family members or even God. People may be angry towards themselves feeling that they could or should have done more to prevent the loss.

Guilt and Self Reproach

People may feel guilt over something that happened or that was neglected around the time of death; “Was I kind enough?” or “Could I have done more?”.

Anxiety

This can range from slight insecurity to strong panic. Anxiety usually comes from one of two sources: doubting your ability to cope without your loved one, or a heightened sense of your own mortality.



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Feelings

Loneliness

This is often experienced by bereaved people, especially if you have lost a partner or someone who was closely involved in a day to day relationship.

Helplessness

People may feel a loss of control or that you are helpless in the face of their new situation. This is especially common in the early stages of loss.

Shock

This occurs most often in the case of sudden loss, but can also occur when the deceased person has had a long illness but death has come unexpectedly. It may be accompanied by a sense of numbness or unreality.

Yearning

This is a longing for the person that has been lost and may also involve searching behaviour, or returning to places that have had a significance to those bereaved and their loved ones. When yearning becomes less powerful it may be a sign that person's grief is changing.

Relief

This is often felt where there has been a long illness, and especially if those bereft feel that their loved one suffered. However, feelings of relief can often be accompanied by guilt.



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Physical wellbeing

Most people who are grieving do not need to visit a doctor because grief is not an illness. However, grief can often cause physical symptoms and if a person is concerned about their health they should contact their GP. Common physical symptoms include:

Sleep Difficulties

Those bereft may have difficulty going to sleep, staying asleep, early waking or feeling that you are sleeping too much. Sometimes bereaved people fear their dreams, or fear that they may not wake.

Appetite Disturbance

This may be overeating or undereating.

Anxiety symptoms

People often report feelings of panic, fear and shakiness. They may notice tightness in their chest and breathlessness. People sometimes feel as though there is a physical weight on their chest.

Tiredness

You may experience weariness and lack of energy.



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Behaviour

Social Withdrawal

Following a loss, it's not unusual to become socially withdrawn, not wanting to go out or to see other people. This can include a general loss of interest in the outside world and you may stop following the news or watching television.

Avoiding Reminders

People bereaved might find that they avoid going to places that remind them of their loved one, as they trigger painful feelings of grief. They may also try to avoid talking or thinking about the person that you have lost.

Crying and Tearfulness

Some people experience weeping, sobbing or uncontrollable crying, whilst others feel a need to cry but aren't able to do so.

If you would like support you are welcome to attend our bereavements hubs- please see separate sheet for information.



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Universal Grieving Symbol

Meaning and symbolism

Inspired by the traditional symbolism of a wheat stalk blowing in the wind and the transformational nature of the butterfly and dragonfly, Michele and Kelly McBride created the Universal Grieving Symbol™ that is now recognized worldwide. It is an undefined and open symbol to encompass all theories and opinions on death, as well as all religious and cultural aspects. The Symbol represents the belief that everyone has the freedom to grieve in their own way. The sisters believe the Symbol acknowledges the powerful and life-changing experiences a death can bring to those missing their loved one. By allowing and supporting an individual to express their emotions surrounding their loss publicly or privately, a foundation is laid to begin a healthy and grounded approach to grieving.



Find out more :

<https://www.lunaslight.com/universal-grieving-symbol>