



Bereavement self-care guide in response to Covid-19

Support, advice and information for when someone dies

You may have been personally affected by bereavement during this time of crisis, this can be the most distressing and devastating time. Grief is a very personal experience and there is no right or wrong way to grieve. Not being able to say goodbye or hold a traditional funeral because of current restrictions can make the feelings of loss and helplessness appear even more intense.

Grief is natural, healthy, and a journey, not an event. It has no time limit and can be delayed for years but cannot be avoided. Please be reassured that there is no reason why your job role should be threatened by allowing yourself time to grieve. By working together with your line manager any reasonable adjustments will be considered to support your wellbeing.

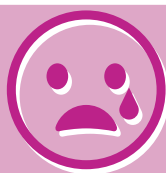
It is mostly emotional rather than mental; grief hurts, but grief helps. Grief is very individual and influenced by many factors, depending on life experiences. The hurt and pain you feel when grieving can be helpful as it helps us work through our grief.

You may experience emotions of feeling:



Shock

usually the first reaction to loss and one linked to numbness/daze



Overwhelming sadness

tearful or crying



Lost

feelings of emptiness



Angry

towards the person you have lost or the reason for your loss



Helpless

Alone and scared



Guilt

for feeling angry or for things you said or didn't say

Resulting in being unable to:

Think clearly

Concentrate

Manage day-to-day tasks

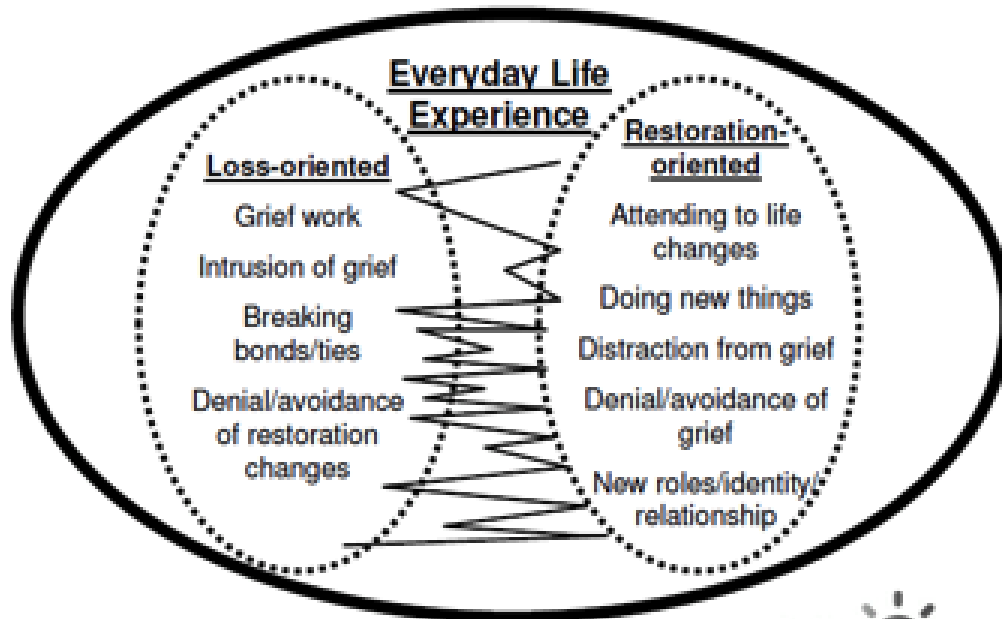
Sleep

Eat

These are all normal, natural emotions to experience during grief

The Dual Process Model of Coping with Bereavement

Rationale and Description, Stroebe, M. & Schut, H. (1999)



Death Studies 23, 197-224

Child Bereavement UK
REBUILDING LIVES TOGETHER



Self-care

- Be prepared for the inevitable, grief can begin before a loved one passes away
- Tell people what you need.
- Seek help and support if you feel you need it. Try talking about your feelings to a friend, family member, health professional or trained counsellor. Talk to other people about the person who has died, about your memories.



Avoid

- Keeping your emotions bottled up
- Thinking you are weak for needing help
- Feelings of guilt if you are struggling to cope
- Becoming reliant on drugs or alcohol – the relief will only be temporary

Look after yourself, give yourself time and permission to grieve. Click on each icon for further information:



[Sleep](#)



[Eating](#)



[Mindfulness](#)

Further resources:

- [Grieving in isolation](#)
- [NHS - Bereavement support during COVID-19](#)
- [Helping children overcome a loss](#)
- [Wellbeing guide](#) - The impact of bereavement can be heavy on your wellbeing, but there is support in the workplace. Consider reading through the Covid-19 Staff Wellbeing Guide, and some of the support available through internal/external services as well as apps. If you require further information, support or signposting, please contact our Workplace Wellbeing Co-ordinator on Samuel.skelding1@nhs.net

Spiritual Care Team

The Trust chaplains are available to offer spiritual support to staff as well as patients. The team are there for all and are respectful of all the different faiths and beliefs they encounter. You don't need to be religious to receive support.

The simplest way to contact the Spiritual Care Team is to call **07813 015325**. The team will aim to respond on the day if a call is received during office hours, or on the next day if made overnight.

- [Walsall Bereavement Support Service](#)
- [Dudley Bereavement Service](#)
- [Sandwell Bereavement Service](#)
- [Wolverhampton Bereavement Service](#)



Contact:

0808 808 1677

www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus-dealing-bereavement-and-grief

SAMARITANS

Contact:

116 123

Concerned that your feelings are prolonged for an extended period of time? Try completing a [mood self-assessment](#)



Contact:

0800 448 0800

[Website](#)

Ways to access NHS support

Workplace - 24/7 NHS helpline: 0345 646 0827 | [Staff Support](#) | EAP (access details via [VIVUP](#))



There is no right or wrong way to feel. Accept your feelings and talk to someone who can help you while at work, i.e. your Line Manager