



Remember

..Take time to check in and see how you are on the inside as well as the outside.

..Ask yourself what you need to feel better that is possible right now and get those needs met.

..If you feel stuck in one place in your grief, at any time, even years or decades later, it is never too late to ask for help.

Queensland Bereavement and Grief Support Services

Compassionate Friends

www.compassionatefriendsqld.org.au | (07) 3254 2585

Road Trauma Support Services QLD – 0434 540 258

www.roadtraumaservicesqld.org

Red Nose Foundation – 1300 308 307

Victims Support Agency – (07) 3109 9254

Griefline – 1300 845 745

Celebrant

Dissolving Grief

Imagine you're walking on a frigid windy day
With just the bitter cold, you've nothing to say
You huddle down to protect yourself to stay afloat
As you do up the buttons at the top of your coat

It's hard to focus on anything but pain and fears
As the stinging squall draws out hidden tears
You wear the heavy coat and a constant frown
With your shoulders tight and your head bent down

But as you turn a corner, to feel the wind cease
Just a subtle change, the pre-cursor to peace
You look up, still encased in a dark shroud
Only to see the sun breaking through a cloud

Amazed at the transformation, the timing's got you beat
As the cloud dissolves, you embrace perfect heat
The next stage you notice, as if from an inner call
You relax your shoulders and start to stand tall

By now with a childish grin, the relief to flow
You remove your coat and bask in the warm glow
The brilliant sunshine was, and is always there
No sense of loss, just a connection with love and care

So how do you turn a corner, remove the weight of dust
True friends and family are the key, open with trust
The grief of loss is replaced by humour and guile
As pleasant memories are reflected, by an inward smile

So consider your lost loved one, and now will find
They are ever smiling, ever gentle on your mind.

MDD 2017



Australian Federation of
CIVIL CELEBRANTS

www.afcc.com.au

THE PROCESS OF GRIEF

WHAT TO DO WHEN SOMEONE DIES

“The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss and have found their way out of the depths.

These persons have an appreciation, sensitivity and an understanding, which fills them with compassion, gentleness and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen.”

- Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

Bereavement is the experience of loss after a death. Grief is the natural healing process after any loss. Our brains physically change when we are in grief and due to these changes we can be forgetful, disorientated, confused, impulsive and emotional. If we could see how we feel, we may have a limb missing or perhaps gaping wounds in the chest or stomach. That is why we need time to heal and transform and grief gives us that time. Grief is an individual experience and it is up to us to acknowledge how big our wound is and what we need to heal and transform. Just like a wound there are phases to healing and ups and downs.

The grief process will vary for each person due to:

- Personal meaning and worth attached to that which is lost.
- Age.
- Previous grief and life experiences.
- Trauma associated with the loss.
- Culture.
- Associated guilt.
- Associated anger and resentments (displaced grief).
- Expected or sudden loss.

There is no right or wrong way to grieve, there is only what works and doesn't work for the individual. What works is anything that supports our healing and does not cause harm to us or others.

We can use the pain of grief to:

1. Understand, reflect on, love and honour what was.
2. Let go of what no longer serves us.
3. Accept what is.
4. Make decisions about what is important and how life will be from now on.
5. Grow into a new way of being and find a life with new meaning.
6. Remain connected to our loved one.

Grief is a normal part of life. We are all different; some people need a lot of time alone while others like to keep busy doing things. The outward behaviour of a person does not tell us if they are grieving or not, it is what they are processing on the inside.

As we respond to grief, it is normal to alternate between times of focusing on what is lost and then on what we have. This focus can change all the time as new waves of emotion drive us to reach out and keep going, or to stop and withdraw.

Overwhelming feelings of pain, chaos and exhaustion are normal. These feelings can return suddenly, even years later, because grief integrates and becomes part of who we are. It is not something to get over or stop, but something to feel, connect with, learn and grow from.



Supporting Yourself

Life has changed and with that change you will have new needs and so you will need new skills.

These new needs may be:

Autonomy and Independence

New Meaning or Purpose

Isolation: for contemplation, self-expression, prayer meditation.

Connection: Affection, compassion, being heard, supportive friends, practical friends.

Security: Finances, a safe place, commitment from others.

Physical needs: Nourishment, exercise, sleep.

Emotional needs: Talking with family, friends, support groups, writing.

Movement: Exercise, walk, dance, yoga, etc.

Creative expression: Form a foundation, art or craft, renovations, gardening, make a memory box or book.

Meditation/Prayer

Acknowledging and Validating your feelings

Find the people and information you need to support you with these changes. You do not need to do it all on your own. See below for resources.

It is normal, and helpful, to keep your connection to your loved one who has died through talking to them, visiting special places, taking action in their name, making things with them in mind, looking at photos, having keepsakes.