

Change, Loss and Bereavement

During the Pandemic, all of us have been affected by change and loss. That refers to the changes in our working practice, our “living practice” and our usual routine. We have endured the loss of freedom to travel around, to meet family, friends and colleagues. There has also been the loss of tactile contact, the hugs and handshakes which were, pre-pandemic “normal” for most of us.

Other examples of change and loss have been adjusting to the frequently changing Government instructions and restrictions. Now, in the third major lockdown, we know that more changes are coming and change in itself to many may mean a loss of, and lack of control over our lives, what we do, who we see and how we see them. There has of course been the issue of coping with the Pandemic itself.

Some of us may have had to cope with the death of a loved one, maybe a family member, friend or colleague. The loss for many people may feel worse during the pandemic given that people are not able to visit and be with that loved one at the end. It is an unimaginable scenario to witness or think of a loved one being put into an ambulance and driven away, not knowing if that will be the last time you will see them.

Whatever the loss we may feel or be experiencing, our mind and body will react to this change. Something or someone that was there before is no longer there. Something or someone we depended on as part of our lives has gone. There has been a change. This can significantly disrupt all we know and if we are lacking in support from others, our ability to cope can be impacted

When we are bereaved, it is normal to feel a mix of emotions which can include feeling sad, angry, shocked, anxious, grief-stricken, withdrawn and almost in denial that the person has gone.

We may struggle with sleep despite exhaustion, our decision making ability may be affected, as well as our concentration. We may feel totally lost, numb and detached.

Following a change, loss or bereavement it is perfectly normal to have feelings that are really intense. Whatever those feelings may be for the individual it is about adjusting to what has happened. We should also try to remember that when people are bereaved their feelings may be overwhelming for them and they may feel that they will “never get over it”.

A few things that might help with change, loss and bereavement

- Consider speaking with someone impartial such as Care first, a bereavement charity such as Cruse or if children are involved and have lost a loved one a children’s charity such as Winston’s Wish.
- Remember, there is no time limit on grief. You will go through the processes in your own unique way and at a pace that is right for you so allow yourself this space to do so.
- Allow yourself to feel whatever feelings come up and be kind to yourself when they do.
- Learn to take care of yourself not just physically, but emotionally too.

- Try not to cut yourself off from everything and everyone.
- Make sure you remember to eat and drink as you will feel unwell and have no energy for the process if you do not.
- Be kind to yourself.
- Do something for yourself that makes you feel good.
- Remember that different ages, religions and cultures grieve differently so respect that.
- If children have been bereaved then be honest with them (appropriate to their age) Let them talk and don't be afraid to share your feeling appropriately.

How can Care first help?

If you feel you may need some emotional or practical support, you can contact Care first on the Freephone number. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. Whilst our BACP accredited Counsellors are available 24/7 to provide support with emotional issues, our expertly trained Information Specialists are available 8am-8pm Monday-Friday to provide advice on any practical issues that may be causing you a stress or worry and help you feel more in control of a situation.

All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.

If you would like to view the Webinar on **'Change, loss and Bereavement'** This is being delivered live on **Thursday 4th March at 12pm**, please use the below link to register for this session –

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5446220155050897163>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place.

Other Organisations that can help:

Ataloss ataloss.org

Bereavement Advice Centre

0800 634 9494

bereavementadvice.org

Beyond Words

020 7492 2559

booksbeyondwords.co.uk

Childhood Bereavement Network

020 7843 6309

childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk

Compassionate Friends

0345 123 2304

tcf.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

0808 808 1677

cruse.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland

0808 802 6161

crusescotland.org.uk

Dying Matters

08000 21 44 66

dyingmatters.org

Grief Encounter

020 8371 8455

griefencounter.org.uk

GriefShare griefshare.org

Hope Again

0808 808 1677

hopeagain.org.uk

Sibling Support

0800 02 888 40

siblingsupport.co.uk

Together for short lives

0808 8088 100

togetherforshortlives.org.uk

WAY (Widowed & Young) Foundation

widowedandyoung.org.uk

Winston's Wish

08088 020 021

winstonswish.org.uk