



Together, no one
has to deal with
grief alone

At some point we will all be affected by a bereavement. Here's some resources to support you and those around you at the time of need.

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It's what we do

You're never alone here.



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An Introduction to Coping with Grief

Grief is a natural reaction to loss but it can be devastating, preventing you from moving on in your life and affecting your relationships and work. This fully updated self-help guide offers an examination and explanation of the grieving process and outlines clinically-proven strategies, based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), to help you adjust to life without a loved one.



Good Grief - Living Through Loss

The word 'bereaved' comes from an old word meaning 'robbed.' All you have to do is live long enough and you will lose someone. It will feel as though they didn't live long enough. Whether you are going through grief yourself or helping someone who is, you will need comfort way beyond words, which somehow this book provides.

*You're never
alone here.*



What is Grief? (Tonkins Model)

This is one explanation of what Grief is. The term 'grief' is often complicated, and hard to understand. How do we experience grief? What does grief mean? Is the way I am grieving normal?



Grief works

Death affects us all. Yet it is still the last taboo in our society, and grief is profoundly misunderstood. Hosted by Julia Samuel – a grief psychotherapist with over twenty five years' experience of working with the bereaved – we hear stories from those who have experienced great love and loss – and survived.

*You're never
alone here.*



Grief and loss

If you are experiencing grief or loss, or you know someone that is, take a look over these resources. Grief is a completely natural reaction to losing something or someone. When someone you love dies, you know that your life will never be the same again. You are likely to experience a range of physical and emotional reactions, even if the death you have experienced was expected.



*I'm here
for whatever
you need.*

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Don't worry too much about saying exactly the right thing

The feeling will come across and it is more important that you say something than that you find the perfect words. If you can't think of the right words, here are some examples:

- *I don't know what to say but I am so sorry to hear this news.*
- *I am so sorry for your loss - you are in my thoughts.*
- *I'm so sad to hear this and I'm here if you need to talk.*
- *They were such a wonderful person/so selfless - full of positivity/kindness [whatever feels appropriate] - they will be hugely missed.*
- *They will be missed so much - they were so special. You are in my thoughts.*
- *I am so very sorry to hear this sad news. I cannot imagine how devastated you are.*
- *I cannot imagine the hole that she/he will have left. If you need anything, let me know.*
- *So very shocked and saddened by this sad news. Hard to believe [name] has gone. I am here when you need me.*
- *This is so heartbreaking - I wish I could be there to give you a hug.*

Fancy a brew?

I know times can
sometimes get hard.

I'm always here if you
need someone to talk to.

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Shall I put the kettle on?

It can be heart-breaking for the bereaved person when people stop mentioning the person who died. Sometimes you might really want to help but just feel unsure about how to start. Don't be afraid to bring up their name or the fact they are not here anymore. It is normal to want to start a conversation with 'How are you?' but this can be an impossible question to answer for a bereaved person. Better suggestions are 'How are you today?' or 'How have you been this week?'.

Here are some things to consider if you want to start a conversation after more time has passed:

- *I'll be thinking about you and X next week on your anniversary/ their birthday/Mother's Day/etc.*
- *I was thinking yesterday about that time when we all ...*
- *I found these photos of X, did I ever share them with you?*
- *I read something in the paper that made me think of X ...*

Be kind

If your friend, colleague or relative is grieving, it can be difficult to know how to support them. It's normal to feel awkward, or worried that you will make things worse.

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Can you help?

Don't let your worries and fears stop you from being there for them at a time when they need you more than ever. There are some simple things you can do to help and support them.

Listen

One of the most helpful things you can do for someone who is bereaved is to listen. It can be a difficult conversation to start, but it is really important to get in touch with your friend or relative and let them know you are thinking about them. You need to know that you can't 'fix' their grief. But you can support them through it.

Offer practical help

Grieving people often find it difficult to make decisions. If you say 'Let me know if I can do anything' they need to be able to reach out and think about what to ask you for.

Consider their individual situation

Grief is universal, but different cultures have different traditions and nuances, so try to find out what your friend or family member needs. There may be things important to them which you haven't thought of wouldn't feel is the top priority yourself. Bear with them and try to find out what they need.

Can you help?

Understand that grief doesn't ever go away

Don't expect the person to ever to get over the death of someone close - in time the pain becomes less overwhelming but there are still going to be times which are difficult years or decades later.

Remember important dates

Anniversaries, birthdays, holidays and special days like Mother's Day or Valentine's Day can be particularly painful for many people. Remembering and offering support at these times can be very comforting.

Suggest useful services

There is no set timeline or set stages for grief. However if after some months someone remains unable to cope with everyday life, or find any pleasure in things they might have once enjoyed, they may need extra help.

Look after yourself

It can be very emotional to support someone at such a difficult time. Remember that you can help most if you keep yourself strong.

For more information, tips and helpful resources [click here](#) to find out more.

Lend an ear

I could do with
a chat - are you
free to listen?

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Are you free to listen?

When you are listening to someone who is grieving, your role is not to fix their problem. You both know you cannot bring the person they have lost back. But just being with someone through their experience can be an enormous help.

- *Concentrate on what they are saying, and try not to think about your response until they have finished.*
- *Show you are listening by nodding or saying something like 'mmhmm'.*
- *You can check you have understood by trying to summarise what you think they have said back to them.*
- *Try not to rush in and share your own experiences straight away.*
- *Only offer advice if they ask for it - just letting someone speak is useful in itself.*

One of the most helpful things you can do for someone who is bereaved is to listen. It can be a difficult conversation to start, but it is really important to get in touch with your friend or relative and let them know you are thinking about them. You need to know that you can't 'fix' their grief. But you can support them through it.

We're here

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going through a
bereavement or
supporting
someone who is,
you don't have to
do it alone.

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Reaching out for support

Employee Assistance Programme

0800 069 8854

open 24 hours a day

Cruse Bereavement Care

www.cruse.org.uk

Support for children, young people
and adults

0808 808 1677

Monday and Friday 9.30am to 5pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.30am
to 8pm

(excluding bank holidays)

Saturday & Sunday 10am-2pm

Grief Support

[https://www.coop.co.uk/](https://www.coop.co.uk/griefsupport)

[griefsupport](https://www.coop.co.uk/griefsupport)

Wellbeing Hub

Bereavement Advice Centre

Practical help when you need it most

0800 634 9494

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

You can also access **GP support** through **Smart Health**, the Co-op's virtual health service, which offers free & confidential GP appointments to all colleagues and their dependants. You can call them to book an appointment on **020 3499 0167** - you'll need to have the policy code LG012363 to hand to book

This **handy guide** has all of our other wellbeing support that you can access as a Co-op colleague.