



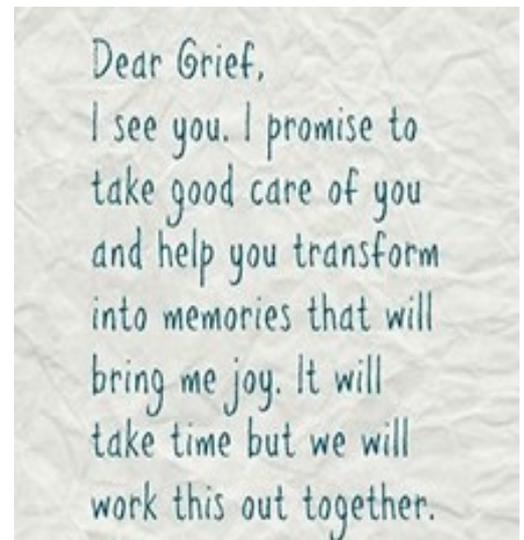


### **Everyone grieves differently.**

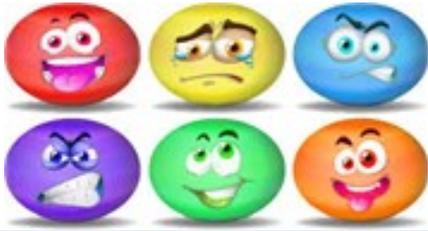
Grief is an active process which requires you to meet new challenges. Some people will wear their emotions on their sleeve and be outwardly emotional. Others will experience their grief more internally and may not cry. You should try and not judge how a person experiences their grief, as each person will experience it differently. There is no right or wrong way to grieve.

### **Various factors could affect your response to bereavement**

- the nature of the relationship with the person who has died
- the impact of the death on other family members
- the nature of the death
- the impact of the death on day-to-day routines and practical arrangements
- the support available for coping with the death
- previous experience of bereavement
- how you have been informed about the death



## Feelings



Sadness  
Anger  
Guilt  
Yearning  
Numbness  
Shock  
Jealousy  
Loneliness  
Helplessness  
Anxiety  
Tiredness  
Relief  
Emancipation

## Thoughts



Disbelief  
Preoccupation  
Worthlessness  
Confusion  
Hallucination  
Loss of meaning

## Physical sensations



Hollowness in the stomach  
Tightness in the chest  
Tightness in the throat  
Breathlessness  
Lack of energy  
Dry mouth  
Oversensitive to noise

A sense of depersonalisation (nothing seems real, including your sense of self)

## Behaviours



Sleep disturbance  
Appetite disturbance  
Absent mindedness  
Dreams / nightmares  
Soul searching  
Sighing / crying  
Hyperactive  
Treasuring objects  
Avoiding reminders

## Ideas on what happens during grief and loss (1)

# Stages of Grief

Someone who is grieving may not necessarily go through the stages in the same order, they may return to previous stages or experience all of them.

 <p><b>Denial</b></p>	<p><u>Denial:</u> "This can't be happening".</p> <p>The shock absorber, helping us to cope and survive the loss.</p> <p><i>You may refuse to accept the fact that a loss has occurred . You may minimise or outright deny the situation.</i></p>
 <p><b>Anger</b></p>	<p><u>Anger:</u> "Why is this happening to me?"</p> <p>Questioning what has happened? how did it happen? is someone to blame?</p> <p><i>When you realise that a loss has occurred, you may become angry at yourself or others. You may argue that the situation is unfair and try to place blame.</i></p>
 <p><b>Bargaining</b></p>	<p><u>Bargaining:</u> "I would do anything to change this".</p> <p>The "what if" and "if only".</p> <p><i>You may try to change or delay the loss. For example, you may try to search for unlikely cures.</i></p>
 <p><b>Sadness</b></p>	<p><u>Sadness:</u> "What's the future after this loss?"</p> <p>The intense sadness hits us, it feels like it will last forever.</p> <p><i>You have come to recognise that a loss has occurred or will occur. You may isolate yourself and spend time crying and grieving.</i></p>
 <p><b>Acceptance</b></p>	<p><u>Acceptance:</u> "It's going to be okay".</p> <p>Learning to live in this new place, accepting what has happened and where we find ourselves now.</p> <p><i>You have come to accept the loss. You understand the situation logically, and you have come to terms emotionally with the situation. You can explore new options and create new plans that will help you move forward.</i></p>

## The Four Tasks of Mourning

### Accepting the reality of the loss

Coming full face with the reality that the person is dead and will not return.

### Working through the pain of grief

This task requires the bereaved to acknowledge the different emotions and the pain, rather than suppressing or avoiding these feelings, in order to work through them.

### Adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing

This task will vary based on the nature of the relationship with the person who has died. It might require adopting a role or function that the deceased once performed. It might mean that shared routines or activities can no longer take place as they once did.

### Find an enduring connection with the deceased while embarking on a new life:

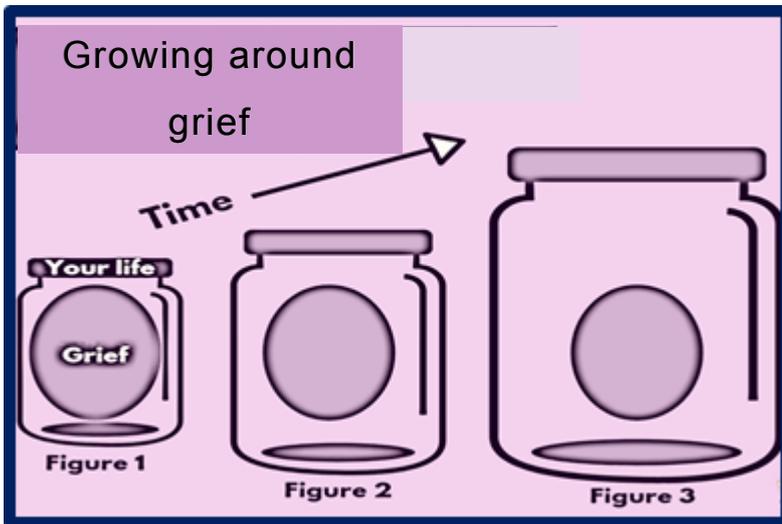
While nothing can compel you to completely forget about your relationship with the deceased, the goal is to find an appropriate place for their memory in your life. This might require letting go of attachments, so that new and meaningful relationships can begin to form.

## The Four Phases of Grief

Phase 1	Shock and Numbness
Yearning and Searching	Phase 2
Phase 3	Despair and Disorganization
Reorganization and Recovery	Phase 4

what's your grief?

## Ideas on what happens during grief and loss (3)



This model presents an alternative to the idea of phases or stages of grief and challenges the suggestion that grief “becomes smaller over time”.

According to this idea, grief starts off as all-consuming, and in fact, stays the same size and intensity - but the bereaved person grows ‘around’ their grief

The result looks somewhat like a fried egg, with the white representing your life and the yolk representing your grief – therefore this idea of grief is sometimes referred to as the “fried egg model”.

*You will have new experiences, meet new people, and begin to find moments of enjoyment. Slowly, these moments will grow and become more frequent— your life growing beyond the grief.*

GRIEF IS NOT A PROCESS.  
*There is no endpoint.*  
It's not  
something I'll  
be "done"  
with...  
It's something  
I'm learning to  
live with.



What did I find helpful at the time?

How did I help myself?

**Do any of the ideas on loss  
help me understand my own experience?**

What help was missing?

What did I find unhelpful at the time?



## Types of grief

### Normal or common grief

Contrary to what the name suggests, there really are no set guidelines on time or severity that define normal grief. Instead, think of normal grief as any response that resembles what you might predict grief to look like (if that makes any sense!).

Those who experience normal grief are able to continue to function in their basic daily activities despite the feelings of grief. From the outside it may seem as if the person has not been affected by it, but pain, numbness and other feelings are still present under the 'normal' surface. It's common for acute feelings of grief to come in bursts, so they may not be obvious to everyone unless they're with the griever 24/7.



### Anticipatory grief

This type of grief might happen in expectation of many different types of loss; but perhaps the most obvious is in expectation of a person's death. Anticipatory grief helps to prepare us emotionally to deal with the loss that is to come.

For family caregivers, grieving can start long before the person you are caring for actually passes away. For example, if someone close to you is diagnosed with a terminal illness, or we might discover that one of our loved ones only has a short time left to live - you may begin to mourn in expectation of what lies ahead.

Anticipatory grief can be difficult to deal with, as you may want to stay strong or appear positive so that you can support the person who is ill. It can be difficult to speak with others about anticipatory grief because the person you care for is still alive and you may have feelings of guilt or confusion as to why you are feeling this kind of grief. Even though it's very difficult, this extended grieving process hopefully gives you time to say goodbye to your loved one and prepare for the future.



### Traumatic grief

This is more likely to be experienced when we are faced with a sudden, violent and/or unexpected loss of a loved one. Losses for which we are unprepared, particularly if we can't be present or to hold or touch those we have lost, are difficult to understand and make real. Words and situations might easily remind us of our loved one, and we might need time to loosen our tight grip on memories and personal items.



# Coping strategies

## Memory box

*Put keepsakes in so that they are all in one place and are easy to find.*

- Cards from a special occasion, or from specific important people in your life.
- Photographs.
- Tickets to special events.
- Holiday mementos.
- Artwork.
- School books.
- Certificates and trophies.
- Greetings cards that you've been given from loved ones.
- Their funeral service sheet.
- Newspaper from the day your loved one was born.
- Coins from the year they were born.



## Write a letter, poem or song to someone in your life



Maybe this can be a way to say goodbye. You could tell that person the things you wish you'd said. Tell them the highlights of your life...

*This letter/ poem is yours and needs no validation from anyone else.*

## Draw a picture or make a photo collage

Let your emotions out in a creative way which you enjoy. Do not be afraid of your emotions or your memories, good or bad.



# Coping strategies

## Plant a tree / shrub / bulbs / seeds

Choosing a tree or shrub that flowers could be nice for a memorial planting. Flowers draw your attention, making it a special time when a memorial tree is blooming. Perhaps it blooms around the time of the loved one's birthday or passing, or its flowers are a colour that you might associate with the loved one.

Make sure whatever you're planning is suitable for the zone it will be grown in and not terribly difficult to grow.

*You could also dedicate a gift memorial tree with an organisation.*

## Plantable seed paper

Plantable paper is a biodegradable eco-paper that is made with post-consumer materials and embedded with seeds. When the paper is planted in a pot of soil, the seeds grow and the paper composts away. All that is left behind is flowers, herbs or vegetables, and no waste.

## Light a candle or hang a garden light in the garden

For centuries people around the world have burned candles in remembrance of loved ones who have died, and as a way of healing the past and bringing hope for the future. Keeping a light burning in remembrance signifies that the memory still lives on and burns bright.

Lighting a candle can be used as a meditative tool. The simple ritual of lighting a candle and watching the hypnotic flickering flame is calming and relaxing.





# Coping strategies

## Play a special song or create a playlist

Music is incredibly evocative and certain tunes can make us catch our breath or transport our memories back to special moments in time.

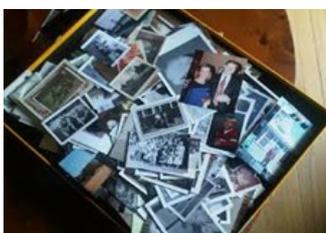
## Cook a favourite meal

You could cook a favourite meal on the anniversary of your loved one's death.

## Photo albums and online memorials

Dig out the family albums and look through them. Take turns dipping into a shoebox of old snaps and listen to the memories they bring back.

A memorial app is a great way to keep memories alive and revisit when you are thinking about someone you love on their death anniversary. You can keep it private, or invite friends and family members to share photos, memories and loving sentiments..



## Memorial jewellery

In the 19th century, mourning jewellery included pendants, lockets and even trinkets made of human hair. Today, you'll find craftspeople and designers able to create sparkling glass beads and even diamonds from a loved one's ashes; while an engraved silver locket containing a photo is a beautiful way to hold someone close to your heart. A charm bracelet could be a way to mark the years that go by on the anniversary of someone's death, with each new charm reflecting a special memory.

## Take care of your physical and emotional health

- Exercise
- Eat healthy foods
- Try and keep to routines
- Reduce your stressors
- Take time to relax
- Ask for support

[facetoface@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:facetoface@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

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