

Newcastle Department of Forensic Medicine

COUNSELLING UNIT

Counselling Unit

SERVICES

- Information about the role of the Coroner
- Information regarding Post mortem examination
- Provision and support for viewings
- Grief and trauma counselling
- Referral for support groups and other services

If you feel you wish to contact one of our counsellors, please contact:

8.30 AM TO 4.30 PM
Monday to Friday
02 49 223700

If calling outside of business hours, please leave a message.

Grief is a normal response to loss, and while loss can be the result of many situations..... the loss of someone you loved and cared for as a result of an unexpected or sudden death, can bring intense feelings which may be overwhelming and frightening.

You may have feelings of disbelief, disconnectedness and overwhelming sadness, never imagining that this could happen to you. THIS IS A COMMON RESPONSE.

While there are some common responses to grief, it is important to understand that the way in which someone responds to grief is **Unique**.

Family members experiencing the same loss may all respond in different ways.

THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG WAY TO GRIEVE

SOME COMMON RESPONSES MAY INCLUDE

PHYSICAL- *Tiredness / exhaustion, palpitations, aches and pains, changes in appetite and disturbed sleep.*

EMOTIONAL- *Confusion / disorganisation, disinterest / reduced concentration, mood swings, despair / helplessness, denial, guilt / blame, relief, anger /aggression and risk taking.*

SOCIAL- *Loss/ change of role, loss of confidence / withdrawal, difficulty socialising, some friends may avoid you and new people may become important to you due to their ability to know what to say.*

SPIRITUAL- *Questioning your beliefs, deriving strengths from your beliefs, looking to faith for support, anger with beliefs- why did this happen.*

COUNSELLING UNIT

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

- **ASK FOR AND ACCEPT PRACTICAL HELP AND SUPPORT-** *This may include help with transport, meal preparation and household duties.*
- **TALK ABOUT YOUR LOSS-** *You may find that some family and friends find it easier than others, to listen to you talk about your loss and feelings. Connect with these people. Seek spiritual or pastoral guidance as needed*
- **TAKE CARE OF YOUR NEEDS-** *Drink fluids, eat when you can, and sleep and take care of any medical requirements. Talk to your Doctor.*
- **RESIST MAKING ANY MAJOR DECISIONS OR CHANGES IN THE FIRST FEW MONTHS-** *You will be able to think more clearly later on.*
- **BE PATIENT WITH YOURSELF-** *You may find it hard to focus and concentrate on even simple tasks. This may be the hardest thing you will ever go through, so don't put too much pressure on yourself.*

**HEALING TAKES TIME,
ALLOW YOURSELF TIME TO
GRIEVE
THERE IS NO PREDICTABLE
PATTERN OR TIMETABLE**



GROWING WITH GRIEF

Some people never stop missing a loved one; however the pain may gradually decrease, allowing the person to live with the loss. Special days and anniversaries may be challenging and can often allow grief to be re-visited. THIS IS NORMAL.

FURTHER SUPPORT

While the support of family, friends and community groups are important, sometimes it may be helpful to seek professional support.

There are fully trained professionals and support groups, which can give you the opportunity to regain a sense of hope and optimism for the future, to talk through your loss and the feelings associated with it.

- ◆ **Lifeline- 131144 (24hr)**
- ◆ **Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages- 1300 655 236**
- ◆ **The Australian Funeral Directors Association- 1300 888 188**
- ◆ **Coroners Court (NSW)**
www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au

Written in acknowledgement of

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