



### WHEN WE HEAR THE WORD GRIEF

**We often make the immediate link with death. But there are many circumstances in our day to day life that create grief:**

- Relationships – separation, divorce, boy/girlfriend breakup, broken friendship.
- Loss of role – jobless, retrenchment, retirement, 'empty-nest', becoming or ceasing being a carer
- Health issues - cancer diagnosis or other illness, loss of limb, sight, hearing, bodily function, infertility, disability.
- Loss of possessions – home, money, personal possessions through bankruptcy, natural disaster, divorce, gambling or addiction.
- Dementia - losing the person we once knew.
- Ageing - loss of independence, mobility, choices, eyesight, hearing and general good health.
- Loss of the future - unfulfilled hopes, plans and dreams.

**When you are grieving, you can help yourself by:**

- Being real about how you feel – try not to pretend you are okay or hide your true feelings.
- Finding a way of expressing how you feel – talking to someone or writing in a journal.
- Accepting that grieving is nothing to be ashamed of – it's all a necessary part of adapting to the changes in your life and learning how to manage what's happened.
- Taking good care of yourself – even though you may not feel like it, gentle exercise, daily walks, eating regular small meals, relaxation, listening to music, massage these are all positive ways of nurturing yourself.

### EMOTIONS

Sadness / guilt / anger  
Loneliness / isolation / emptiness  
overwhelming loss / resentment

### THOUGHTS

Why me? I miss you so much. How will I cope with this? I'm relieved it's finally over. I can't believe it's true. I'll never get over this.  
Why did God let this happen? It's not fair!  
Life is meaningless - I can't go on.

### BEHAVIOURS

Crying / keeping busy / can't sit still / talking about it all the time / aggressiveness -'snap' easily / disinterest in usual things / withdrawal from others / panic attacks / lifestyle changes – smoking, drinking, eating or spending habits

### WELLNESS

Not eating or sleeping / 'pain' in chest, stomach, throat, arms / no energy, feeling flat / more susceptible to illness / skin complaints, rashes / headaches / migraine / high blood pressure / generally 'off balance'