



Mayo Hospice
Medical Social
Work Department
Bereavement
Support Service

What is Grief?

Grief is a natural and normal response to loss. Everyone grieves in different ways depending on the kind of person you are, the relationship you had with the person who died, the length of time you spent together, and whether the death was sudden or expected.

What can I expect?

You cannot fully prepare for the impact of grief and loss. After the initial shock, you may experience a mixture of emotions including anger, irritability, confusion, relief, sadness or loneliness. These are all normal responses to grief and loss. Some people describe their grief like waves in the ocean, emotions coming and going, times when we seem to be doing well along with times that we may feel overwhelmed by our loss.

Remembering the Relationship

Your life has been changed forever but the memory of the relationship with the person who died will continue to be important in your life. You need time to grieve and time to readjust. Finding a meaningful way to maintain a connection to the person who died by chatting about them, looking at photos and sharing memories with family and friends can sometimes help.

Children grieve too

Children's understanding of death and how they grieve will depend on their age and stage of development. Even very young children can have an understanding of death. It is important to use simple, clear language to explain death to children. Similar to adults, children grieve in different ways. Many children cope with grief through the support of caring adults.

Caring for yourself

Every loss is different, therefore your experience of grief is unique and may bring up memories of earlier losses. Allow yourself time to grieve in your own way and remember others may do so differently.

What we can offer at Mayo Hospice

Most people cope with grief and loss with the support of family and friends, and some benefit from talking to other bereaved people or professionals. Keeping in contact with others can take many different forms and these connections are invaluable. One of the most helpful things for bereaved people is to talk about your feelings, talking about the person who has died, your memories and your relationship with them. Give yourself time and permission to grieve and seek help and support from the Bereavement Support Service at Mayo Hospice. If you are finding the impact of loss very difficult or distressing it may be helpful to speak with your GP.

The Medical Social Work Department will offer bereavement support to adults and children who have been bereaved by a family member under the care of Mayo Hospice. The Bereavement Support Service is free of charge.

Bereavement Support Service for Adults:

- Individual therapeutic support
- Telephone support

Bereavement Support Service for Children and Families:

- Individual therapeutic support for children
- Support and guidance to parents/adults in caring for bereaved children
- Therapeutic Family Support

Resources:

www.bereaved.ie
www.childhoodbereavement.ie
www.hospicefoundation.ie (links to podcasts)
The Invisible String book by Patrice Karst



Registered
www.coru.ie

If you would like to avail of Bereavement Support
please contact the Medical Social Work Team.
Mon - Fri 9am to 5pm



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