

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2019

DAST, 34 Glumangate, Chesterfield, Derbys S40 1TX

Telephone 01246 380415



Grief doesn't follow a timeline. Nor does the calendar make allowances for it. Grief is a wild thing, refusing to be caged within societal norms. It refuses to follow set timetables, or succumb to expected patterns of behaviour. Grief is not one thing. Grief doesn't neatly slot into family dynamics and social circles.

And yet society and often those around us continue to pretend that it should. In modern life we no longer make space for grief. We are uncomfortable bearing witness. Have you noticed how, often, those around seem to feel uncomfortable in the face of grief, and unsure of what to do. This is particularly so as time goes on, when those around us believe that those who grieve should have moved on. Society, well-meaning family and friends, do not help the bereaved when their suffering goes on beyond what they are comfortable with or feel is appropriate. Rather than helping, listening, being there, allowing space, - rather than helping they tell you that you need to get help. This is, in a sense 'pathologising' the pain of grief, treating what is a normal and healthy emotional pain and change, as a disease. And in doing so, make it harder for people to understand their own grief, let alone the grief of others.

Grief upends your life, reshapes who you are, where you thought you were going and leaves all the plans you had for getting there on the scrap heap. And it doesn't happen in a couple of weeks or months, it can take years, it can be a never ending journey of re-discovery.

It's important then to find people who are happy to bear witness to this, who are happy to hear you say the name of the one you lost, who are happy to talk about the 'elephant in the room'. Find people who are experiencing their own journey of grief. Find people who will walk with you, talk with you and support you on your journey towards a new way of being.

And in every step you take towards that new life, no matter how long it takes, may you feel the presence of the one you have lost by your side.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY!

1st Saturday of each month

Sleaford Lighthouse Group
10am – 12noon, The Source
Centre, Southgate, Sleaford

3rd Tuesday of each month

Derby Lighthouse Group 1pm –
3pm, The Old Bell Hotel, 51
Sadlers Gate, Derby DE1 3NQ

Last Wednesday of each month

Nottingham Lighthouse Group
10am – 12 noon The Roebuck,
St James' Street, Nottingham

Wednesday 27th February

Reflection & Celebration of Life
event 6.00pm at the Crooked
Spire Church, Chesterfield.

Thursday 21st March

Burton on Trent Lighthouse
Group 1pm – 3pm. Riverside
Church, e Bell Inn, Angel Row,
Nottingham

COFFEE & CHAT

We will be holding our second Coffee & Chat meeting in Kettering in March and shall be sending invitations out closer to the date. If there is enough interest this shall become our first monthly Lighthouse Group in Northamptonshire. Look out for further details!



Tips for the newly bereaved to help face the upcoming New Year:

- Begin by getting needed rest. If you're still exhausted from caregiving or from acute grieving, it is important to focus on physical recovery. This may even mean speaking with your GP about how to rebuild yourself physically.
- Also recognise the need to give yourself mental rest. Try by replacing negative thoughts with positive affirmations about ourselves. Soothe yourself and your mind with whatever works for you... be it music, prayer, uplifting literature, tears or laughter.
- Be self-aware, listen to your innermost self, notice any desires stirring within yourself and find small practical ways to give yourself new pleasure.
- Find your voice! Get the support you need by attending a support group, by talking with friends and family who can listen to you and share your memories, seek spiritual support from your local church. Articulate what you need and learn to say no to what you don't need. Don't be driven by other people's expectations!
- Most important, we will all only find courage to live into the future, into the New Year, by living in the present, one day at a time, doing the best we can to care for ourselves and others today.

BOOKS AVAILABLE TO BORROW

We have a small collection of books that some people have found helpful now available to loan. If you would like to borrow any of these books please get in touch with Jo Reeve on 01246 380481.



A Grief Observed by C.S.Lewis Painfully honest in its dissection of the author's thoughts and feelings, this is a book that details his paralysing grief, bewilderment and sense of loss in simple and moving prose. Invaluable as an insight into the grieving process just as much as it is as an exploration of religious doubt.

'You'll Get Over it' by Virginia Ironside The death of a loved one is the most traumatic experience any of us face. No two people cope with it the same way: some cry while others remain dry-eyed; some discover growth through pain, others find arid wastes; some feel angry, others feel numb. Virginia Ironside deals with this complicated and sensitive issue with great frankness and insight, drawing on other's people's accounts as well as her own experiences.

Healing a Spouse's Grieving Heart – 100 Practical Ideas after your husband or wife dies by Alan D Wolfelt Offers 100 practical, here-and-now suggestions for helping widowers or widows mourn well so they can go on to live well and love well again. Whether your spouse died recently or long ago, you will find comfort and healing in this compassionate book.

Understanding your Grief by Alan D. Wolfelt Explaining the important difference between grief and mourning, this book explores every mourner's need to acknowledge death and embrace the pain of loss. Also explored are the many factors that make each person's grief unique and the many normal thoughts and feelings mourners might have. Questions of spirituality and religion are addressed as well. The rights of mourners to be compassionate with themselves, to lean on others for help, and to trust in their ability to heal are upheld. Journaling sections encourage mourners to articulate their unique thoughts and feelings.

Heartbroken – healing from the loss of a spouse by Gary Roe As a Hospice Chaplain, the author has walked with hundreds of spouses through their pain of loss and from their stories he has produced this incredibly practical book that will touch your heart and comfort your soul.

Please be Patient, I'm Grieving by Gary Roe Loss hurts. It's tough to go through, and painful to watch. *Do you know someone who's grieving and wish you could help? Are you the one grieving and wonder if what you're going through is normal? Do you wish those around you understood you better?* This practical and easy-to-read book provides the answers you need to make a difference - in your own life and in the lives of others.

Comfort for Grieving Hearts by Gary Roe Written with heartfelt compassion, this easy-to-read, warm, and practical book reads like a caring conversation with a friend and is destined to become a classic for those looking for hope and encouragement in times of loss.

4 Things You Need to Know about 'Moving On' from Grief

The phrase "moving on" is common in the grief and loss world, but it isn't very well understood or, frankly, all that helpful. What does it mean? What does moving on look like? How does one actually do it? Unfortunately, there isn't a clear answer to those questions. However, there are things it can be helpful to know about "moving on" after the death of a loved one, divorce, or other painful life event.

1. YOU ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HOW OTHERS FEEL ABOUT YOUR GRIEF PROCESS

Typically, it feels like what those around us mean by "moving on" is for us to stop hurting, stop talking about it, stop remembering, stop crying, and just stop grieving. They talk about wishing we would stop dwelling on the hurt and encourage us to just let go and accept what happened. The truth is, what they actually want is for us to stop making *them* uncomfortable about our pain. Let's face it—being with someone who is in pain and grieving isn't the easiest of experiences. It's difficult to watch someone we love hurting so deeply. But other people's discomfort with your grief is their business, not yours. You are not responsible for making them feel more comfortable.

2. MOVING ON DOESN'T MEAN FORGETTING

I suspect that the primary difficulty many of us have with the phrase “moving on” is that it often feels as if we’re being told to forget our loved one or the relationship we once had. That’s not what moving on means. Moving on is more about learning to live what I call a *both/and* life rather than an *either/or* life. It’s not about grieving or forgetting, happy or sad, black or white. It’s shades of grey. It’s about learning to live a full and happy life even as you miss and long for what you have lost. It’s about remembering and honouring the one you loved while also embracing the beauty and fullness of the life you still get to live. It’s about the brilliance of your love and the shadow of your loss coexisting in this complex and expansive experience we call living.

Grief and loss are complex, multifaceted, and multi-layered. Loss and our experience of grief are integrated into our lives, not things we get rid of.

3. MOVING ON DOESN’T MEAN THE END OF GRIEF, EITHER

Moving on from grief doesn’t mean a static end. It doesn’t mean suddenly we’re done grieving and will never hurt again. Moving on is more about moving forward than being done. Grief and loss are complex, multifaceted, and multi-layered. Loss and our experience of grief are integrated into our lives, not things we get rid of. Grief changes and morphs over time. We get stronger as we carry it, the edges of it round and dull, and with time it begins to take up less space in our lives. It doesn’t simply disappear. Grief can (and will) continue to remind us of our loss throughout our lifetimes, in different ways and at different times.

We move forward with life, embracing the fullness of it, even as our loss becomes part of who we now are.

4. ULTIMATELY, YOU GET TO DEFINE “MOVING ON” FOR YOURSELF

People will have all kinds of advice and well-meaning intentions about how you should move on, when you should do it, and what it should look like. They, however, cannot determine that for you. There are no timelines or rules to the grieving process. You will move through it at your unique pace and not one minute faster. The process of grieving is unique to each of us. No amount of pressure from others can make us move through our process any faster, not in any kind of healthy way. Only you can know when you are ready to move forward after your loss. Only you can decide what it means to let go or accept the loss you experienced. Only you can truly decide what it means to move on and move forward.

Whatever that looks like for you, it is perfect and right.

© Copyright 2015 GoodTherapy.org. All rights reserved.

If you have something to say please get in touch, have you written a poem to share, read a helpful book lately that we can recommend to others? Perhaps you have ideas about how we can further support those who are bereaved in your area. We would love to hear your views. Don’t forget we have a Bereavement page on Facebook that you can add to. Please do get in touch either by phone, email, facebook or letter.