

Loss of a Partner

When your partner dies, at any age, can be one of the most intensive and challenging events of your life. How you grieve depends on many factors like; how long you were together, whether their death was sudden or expected the support you have afterwards, your financial situation, and, most importantly, whether you are able, over time, to make sense of what has happened.

We also must face a change of our own identity, social isolation, changes in your role in the family and increased vulnerability to health issues.

The length of your grief is completely different to everyone. There is no timetable with grief. Grieving after your partner has died, often lasts longer than your family and friends may think suitable. Your grief journey can be very intense with pain at times, one thing that is for certain, your grief cannot be hurried along. Time is needed to process it.

Our grief may become a series of different issues that affect not only our emotions but also produces different physical effects on ourselves too. We may well suffer from sleep disturbance, headaches, weight loss or weight gain and fatigue. Adapting to life after losing a partner will commonly give you feelings of isolation, loneliness, sadness, despair, anger, guilt, and emptiness. We also may experience lack of concentration, irritability, restlessness and have worries about our health and well-being. We will also potentially become susceptible to minor illnesses as our resistance will be reduced.

Reminders, special dates, holidays may also trigger feelings related to your loss, but with time and support around you, things generally do get better over time.

When we grieve, we may want to talk to someone about our feelings, and you may feel that you need some time on your own or you may want to be close to others.

You may have feelings of loneliness – even if you have children, other family, and good friends, you still feel lonely; you are the odd one out at a dinner party, you see couples shopping together, dining out in restaurants, walking the dog just like you used to. Society seems to be geared up for couples, you are single again. You have lost your companion, your soul mate. There can be intense longing for them, despair at the emptiness and both physical and emotional pain over the separation you are feeling.

We can help the healing process by:

- Trying to gain an understanding of our own feelings of grief
- Getting support from family and friends
- Finding new interests or developing new friendships when we you are ready.