

ALL ABOUT GRIEF



**LION
HEART**
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WHAT IS GRIEF?

Grief is how we react to loss. When an Important Person has died, it's normal to feel many different emotions. Everyone experiences grief in their own way and it's okay to feel sad, angry, confused, and happy at times.

IMPACT OF GRIEF

Grief impacts everyone differently and it can affect many areas of our lives.

You might notice changes in your:

- feelings
- thoughts
- within your body
- in what you do

You might feel like nothing will ever be the same again. It can make everyday things like school and spending time with friends, feel harder. You might find it tough to enjoy things you used to love or feel less motivated to try new things. Sometimes, grief can make you feel alone, but remember that there are people who care about you and want to help.

THINGS YOU CAN DO

Here are some ways you can look after yourself:

- **Talk About It:** Share your feelings with someone you trust, like a parent, teacher, or counsellor.
- **Write or Draw:** Use a journal, draw pictures, or listen to music to show your feelings.
- **Look After Your Body:** Eat healthy food, stay active, and try to sleep well.
- **Stick to Routines:** Keep doing things you enjoy, like playing sports or seeing friends.
- **Join a Group and Attend a Lionheart Camp:** Talking to others who've also lost someone can help you feel less alone.
- **Be Kind to Yourself:** It's okay to have good and bad days. Grief takes time.

TYPES OF GRIEF & LOSS

- death of an Important Person
- loss of a relationship, break-up or falling out with friends
- family going through separation
- loss of Country, land and culture
- death of a pet
- losing a job
- moving to another place or changing schools
- hearing about the death of a celebrity or inspirational person

CULTURE & COMMUNITY

Grief can also affect entire communities, especially in First Nations cultures. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can experience grief not only for loved ones but also for losses of land, language, and culture. In Aboriginal Australian cultures, grief is often shared through "Sorry Business," which includes special ceremonies and practices like smoking rituals and storytelling. Many cultures and religions have unique ways to honour and remember the Important Person who has died, this can help strengthen connections within the community.

MEMORY MAKING

Even though the Important Person has died, you can keep their memory close:

- **Make a Memory Box:** Fill it with photos, letters, or things that remind you of them.
- **Celebrate Them:** Share stories, look at pictures, or remember special days like their birthday.
- **Do Something Special:** Plant a tree, volunteer, or do something they loved.
- **Write a Letter:** Tell them how you feel or what you miss about them.
- **Make a Playlist:** of their favourite songs or songs that remind you of them.

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WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP

Grief can feel really big, and it's important to ask for help when:

- You feel stuck and can't move forward.
- Your feelings are too strong to handle.
- You're not eating, sleeping, or doing your normal activities.
- You experience reoccurring nightmares or worries.
- Your grief is affecting school and your relationships.
- You're thinking about hurting yourself.

IS IT GRIEF OR DEPRESSION?

Grief and depression can feel similar, but they aren't the same.

- **Grief:** Your feelings may come and go, and you might still have moments of joy or calm. Natural reaction to loss even though it can be very painful.
- **Depression:** It feels heavy all the time, and it can be hard to enjoy anything.

If you feel like your sadness won't go away or it's starting to take over your life, it's important to reach out for help from a trusted adult.

WHERE TO GET HELP

If you are struggling with grief or feel like it's too much to handle, it's important to know that help is available.

Start by talking with a trusted adult, they can help you visit your doctor or General Practitioner (GP), who can refer you to local supports. GP's can create a **Mental Health Care Plan** and connect you with a psychologist or counsellor.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT

In a life-threatening emergency contact 000 or attend your closest emergency department.

You can also call **Lifeline** for immediate support (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) on: 13 11 14

CAMHS Crisis Connect is available to support children and teens along with their adults 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 1800 048 636.

FREE & LOWER COST COUNSELLING

- headspace and YouthFocus, offer free confidential support for young people.
- National Centre for Childhood Grief provides specialised grief counselling for children aged 3 - 17 online or via phone.
- Grief Centre WA provides specialised grief counselling and support groups for children and adults.

FREE 24/7 SUPPORT VIA PHONE CALLS & ONLINE CHAT

- headspace online chat & phone line: 1800 650 890.
- KidsHelpline on 1800 55 1800 and the online chat

Don't be afraid to ask for help—you're not alone, and there are people ready to support you.

HOW TO ASK ADULTS FOR HELP

When you are grieving, it's normal to need extra support from the adults around you. Sometimes, it might be hard to ask for help, but adults want to support you. Here are some tips on how to ask for support:

- **It's Okay to Ask:** You don't have to go through it alone. Adults can offer advice, comfort, and even just a listening ear.
- **Be Honest:** If you are not sure what to say, try to be honest about your feelings. For example, you can say, "I'm feeling really sad and don't know what to do" or "I need some help understanding what I'm going through." It's okay not to have all the answers.
- **Talk to Someone You Trust:** Choose someone you feel safe with, like a parent, teacher, or grandparent.
- **Ask for What You Need:** It's okay to ask for what you think could help, like a hug, to talk or quality time.
- **Don't Be Afraid to Ask Again:** If at first, you don't get the help or support you need, it's okay to ask again. Sometimes people are busy or don't realise how important it is to you. Keep asking until you feel heard and supported.