

We understand that this may be a very difficult time for you and your whānau. Please know that our Bereavement Support Team is here to walk alongside you, in whatever feels right for you.

We offer a range of support options, and you are welcome to access as much or as little as you choose, including:

- + Regular phone calls or visits
- + Monthly *Cuppa and a Chat* gatherings
- + One-on-one counselling
- + *Journey with Grief* — a six-week bereavement course
- + Written information about loss and grief
- + A selection of books available to borrow
- + Resources for children and teenagers navigating loss and grief
- + Remembrance services, held every three months.

We respect that not everyone feels ready or wishes to use these services. However, if you would like further information or support at any time, please don't hesitate to contact us.

“How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.”

-A.A.Milne



Grief poem

There is a sacredness in tears.
They are not the mark of weakness,
but of power.
They speak more eloquently than
ten thousand tongues.
They are messengers of
overwhelming grief
... and unspeakable love.

-Washington Irvine



Hospice South, PO Box 7020,
Invercargill 9844
03 211 3081
office@hospicesouth.org.nz
hospicesouth.org.nz

Support for Whānau in Grief



What is grief?

The death of someone you love is the beginning of one of the most painful experiences in your life.

Grief can touch every part of your being. You may feel you have lost your anchor or sense of direction, and at times it may seem that no one truly understands — or even notices — the depth of your pain.

Grief is a natural and deeply human response to the loss of someone we value or love.

Why is grieving so difficult?

When someone you love dies, you may lose not only the person themselves, but also the dreams and hopes you shared for the future. You may be grieving the loss of a close companion, someone who understood you, and someone who shared your past.

It can take months, or even years, to fully understand the extent of your loss. Along the way, you may experience emotions you have never felt before, or feel them with an intensity that makes daily life especially challenging.

You may feel:

- + Shocked
- + Sad and hopeless
- + Angry or resentful
- + Anxious or restless
- + Confused and forgetful
- + Panicky or afraid
- + Physical aches and pains
- + Numb or disconnected

These feelings are a normal part of grieving and will not last forever.



You may also

- + Find it difficult to concentrate or remember things
- + Feel overwhelmed by sadness at unexpected times
- + Experience physical sensations such as a tight throat, stomach discomfort, shortness of breath, or recurring headaches
- + Struggle to believe what has happened or find it hard to accept the loss
- + Feel confused or frightened
- + Notice changes in eating or sleeping patterns, such as loss of appetite, overeating, or difficulty sleeping
- + Have vivid dreams about the person who has died, or feel as though they are still with you — expecting to see them or even calling out to them
- + Find yourself preoccupied with thoughts of the person who has died.

Remember, crying is a natural and healthy way of releasing sadness.

You can help yourself by

- + Sharing your feelings with at least one trusted person — someone who can spend time with you, listens well, and does not judge what you are experiencing
- + Being patient with yourself; healing may take longer than you expect
- + Looking after your physical wellbeing by eating small, nourishing meals regularly, getting as much rest as possible and including gentle exercise such as walking
- + Accepting practical help from others, while making your own decisions wherever possible and avoiding rushing into major changes
- + Do it your way — every person is unique, every relationship is different, and everyone grieves in their own time and in their own way.

You will know you are working through your grief when

- + You are less preoccupied with the past
- + You are able to look toward the future and begin making plans
- + Memories still bring sadness, but are no longer overwhelming or painful
- + You begin to establish new routines
- + New friendships and connections start to form.

*Memories are the loveliest things;
They last from day to day,
they can't get lost, they can't wear out
and they can never be taken away.*