



Dealing with Loss and Grief – a Resource Guide for North Norfolk

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This brief guide is intended for those experiencing grief, and for people trying to support grievers, either personally or professionally. The 'Grief Themes' below are, of course, only a brief summary of some elements of grieving - to encourage us to talk and think more. The links to local and national resources are correct as at June 2024.

It's important to recognise that losses come in all sorts of forms – bereavement is the most obvious, but there are many others such as loss of home, career/ job, faith, health, relationship/loved pets. There are also less tangible, but no less real, losses such as loss of belief in our future, loss of hope, loss of confidence. We can also experience loss of things we have never 'had' – loss of children because we were never able to have them, loss related to relationships we never had or which were not what we wanted – losses related to what we've not had can be just as real and strongly felt as what we have had and lost.

There is no hierarchy or 'league table' of losses – we need to trust our own feelings about what our loss feels like and it's important never to compare losses or tell someone how significant their loss actually is or isn't!

There is also no standard timescale for grief and when we are grieving we will often go for periods of time when things feel better, OK or numb, followed by periods when it feels like we have gone back to square one, or emotions we thought we had "dealt with" come back again. This is normal!

There is no single pathway to living and dealing with loss and grief. Each person's experience of loss and grief is unique to them.

One of the biggest challenges of loss and grief is that we typically have little helpful information on what to do when we are grieving – so, navigating our way through our own grief can feel like a process of trial and error. In some ways this is inevitable as we have to find what works for **us** and that is not always a straightforward process.

Some grief themes that may be helpful in navigating our own grief:

Acknowledge our emotions: The first step to coping with grief and loss is to acknowledge our emotions, whatever they may be. The initial impact and effects of grief can be devastating and shocking. This will affect how we feel (physically, mentally and emotionally), think and behave – it's not that we are 'not coping', but that our whole world has turned upside down. We may feel this immediately after our loss, sometime after, or not at all. There is no 'wrong' or 'right' emotion – we feel what we feel. Grief is not a linear or predictable process, there are no sequential 'steps or stages' of grief (contrary to popular myth) and we may experience a range of feelings, which **can** include exhaustion, shock, denial, anger, guilt, sadness, loneliness, relief and despair. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, and we should not judge ourselves or others for how they react. By recognising and accepting our emotions, we can start to process them and begin to navigate through our own grief.

Look for support: It's really important to reach out for support from others who can empathise and comfort us. We should not go through this alone, and we can benefit from

talking to someone who understands what we are going through, such as a family member, a friend, a counsellor, or a support group. Be prepared for the fact that those you expect to be 'there' for you in your grief may not turn up – either in person and/ or emotionally. Equally, we may find real empathy and support from unexpected quarters – people we've previously not known well, but who 'get it' in terms of our feelings and who will listen without judgement. By sharing our feelings and experiences, we can relieve some of the pressure and isolation that grief can cause. We can also ask for help with practical matters, such as chores, errands, or paperwork when we feel overwhelmed – and we will feel overwhelmed at times!

Expressing ourselves: Expressing ourselves in ways that suit us can help to get our feelings and experiences out of our heads. We may find it helpful to write down our thoughts and feelings in a journal, a letter, or a poem. We may also prefer to express ourselves through art, music, or other creative outlets. Some people find comfort in wearing clothes or jewellery belonging to loved one who has died - or whatever especially connects them with a person who has died. We might also find it helpful to talk to others while we are actively doing something else like walking, gardening or DIY. By expressing ourselves, we can release some of the emotions that may be bottled up inside us.

Self-care: Taking care of ourselves physically, mentally, and emotionally is hugely important – loss and grief are exhausting in all sorts of ways and we need every possible resource to find our way through. Grief can take a toll on our health and well-being, so we need to pay attention to our needs and boundaries. If working, it's a good idea to speak to our boss/ human resources department as soon as possible – employers' attitudes vary a great deal, but letting them know what's happened at least gives them the chance to help. There will be good days and bad days – people often talk about the 'roller coaster' of grief. It's good (though not always easy!) to maintain a healthy routine of eating, sleeping, and exercising, as well as avoiding excessive reliance on drugs, alcohol, or other harmful habits. We should allow ourselves to do things that make us happy, such as hobbies. Equally some things that have previously given us enjoyment may feel too difficult, e.g. listening to music. Definitely the most important thing is to be kind to ourselves. Most of us are enormously judgemental, critical and harsh on ourselves in ways we would never dream of being with other people! It's a great habit to break anyway, but it is absolutely critical to be gentle, accepting and kind to our grieving selves.

Finding meaning: If our loss is a particularly painful and heart-breaking one, the idea of finding meaning in it may seem alien or even ridiculous at first when surviving a single moment may feel to be all we can do. We may lose our sense of purpose or identity, or question deeply held beliefs. If our loss is especially profound, we may have to build a new life, finding friendships and activities to give us renewed hope and purpose. It may sound strange, but it's good if we can remain open to the possibility of learning positives from our loss. We may appreciate life more, discover new strengths, or reconnect with our spirituality, find new friends and levels of compassion in ourselves.

Seeking professional help: Grief and loss are normal and natural responses to a significant change or loss, but sometimes they can become complicated or chronic, and

interfere with our daily functioning and quality of life. It can be really difficult to know when and if we need professional help. Some will say that if you are feeling stuck, overwhelmed, or depressed more than xx months after your loss, then you should seek help, but it's often not this simple. Reaching out for professional help often feels really hard and needs courage. A simple rule of thumb is to ask ourselves whether the pain of reaching out for help is more or less than the pain we are feeling because of our loss? It's good to ask ourselves whether the support we want is going to be one to one or in a group. The temptation can be to keep our grief as private as possible. It can make sense to seek out a therapist, counsellor or other professional who offer free initial consultation in which they will listen carefully to our loss and resulting feelings and then discuss with us whether they feel that their input or help through a group would be helpful.

Links to: Grief Support Guide

[National Bereavement Alliance Grief Support Guide](#)

And: How to support people who are grieving (may also be helpful to identify what sort of support will help you)

[Grief Specialists: What to Say after Loss](#)

This selection of Counsellors and Therapists are listed for information purposes only and are not specifically recommended or endorsed. Details are correct at January 2024,

Some North Norfolk Counsellors

1.	Kaori King	counselling@kaoriking.com
2.	Jo Clarke	jo@innerspaceworks.com
3.	Elaine Brown	elaine.browncouns@gmail.com
4.	Jennie Cummings-Knight	jennie_ck@msn.com
5.	Claire Cotgrove	claire@cotgrovecounselling.com
6.	Kathryn Price	Counselling121@mail.com
7.	Rachel Griffin	rachel@rachelgriffincounselling.uk

Some North Norfolk Therapists

1.	Cal Cannon MBACP Accredited Aylsham area	07900055485 calcannon78@hotmail.com
2.	Ian Pocklington UKCP Reepham	07775935073 ian.pocklington@btinternet.com
3.	Helen Hamond UKCP Briston	07307168962
4.	Ellen Drew UKCP/BACP Aylsham	0773300073 ellendrew@live.com

Online Counselling

Sue Ryder: <https://www.sueryder.org/grief-support/online-bereavement-support/online-bereavement-counselling/>

Marie Curie: <https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/bereaved-family-friends/dealing-grief/bereavement-or-grief-counselling>

Death by Suicide

Comparisons or 'ranking' of different griefs are pointless. However, grief resulting from someone taking their own life will often add more layers and types of heartache for the bereaved. So, here are some links to organisations that specifically provide resources for and work with those bereaved by suicide:

National: [Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide](#) and [MIND](#)

Norfolk: [Hope after Suicide Loss](#) and [Empathy Norfolk](#)

The following information is provided by the North Norfolk Macmillan Cancer Support Centre. Please note that it is correct at June 2024.

Bereavement Services

Please note the services listed are for your information and are not endorsed by the North Norfolk Macmillan Cancer Support Centre.

North Norfolk Macmillan Information and Support Centre at Cromer Hospital

Telephone: 01603 647717

Email: Cromermacinfocentre@nnuh.nhs.uk

Bereavement Office, NNUH	Colney Lane, Norwich, NR4 7UY	Website: https://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/patients-visitors/help-support/patient-services/bereavement-office/ For an appointment Tel: 01603 287165 or 01603 287166	Opening Hours: Mon – Fri: 09.30 – 16.00 Closed weekends and Bank holidays
Norfolk County Council – bereavement support		Website: https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/births-ceremonies-and-deaths/deaths/bereavement-support	
CRUSE Bereavement	National	Website: https://www.cruse.org.uk/contact-your-branch/?pcode=NR27%209PR&brch=Norfolk&eml=NorwichBranch@cruse.org.uk National Helpline: 0808 808 1677	National Helpline Opening Hours: Monday and Friday: 9.30am-5pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9.30am-8pm

			Saturday and Sunday: 10am -2pm
MacMillan 'Support after Loss'	National	Website page and phone number: https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/supporting-someone/coping-with-bereavement National Helpline: 0808 808 0000	Every day 8 am to 8 pm
Marie Curie Bereavement Support Line	National	National Helpline: 0800 090 2309	Available to anyone 8am-6pm Monday to Friday, and 11am-5pm on Saturdays
Hope Again Online support for people aged 16-25	National	Website: Hope Again	
Nelson's Journey Child Bereavement in Norfolk	Bradbury Building – Smiles House, Octagon Business Park, Hospital Rd, Little Plumstead, Norwich NR13 5FH	Website: https://nelsonsjourney.org.uk/ Tel: 01603 431788 Email: enquiries@nelsonsjourney.org.uk	
Samaritans	National	Contact number 116123 – worth putting in your phone so it's easy to access	

At a Loss Bereavement signposting website	AtaLoss.org, PO Box 824, CHICHESTER, PO19 9WW	Website: https://www.ataloss.org/ Tel: 07976 646644/ 07801 351947 Email: Office@ataloss.org	
The Healing Harbour A compassionate community for people with life-limiting illness		Email: thehealingharbour22@gmail.com	
Care For The Family Online/telephone support		Website: Bereavement support - Care for the Family Tel: 029 2081 0800 Email: mail@cff.org.uk	
Norfolk Hospice – Tapping House Bereavement support	The Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House, Wheatfields, Hillington, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 6BH	Website: https://www.norfolkhospice.org.uk/support-for-you-when-someone-has-died Tel: 01485 601700 Email: enquiries@norfolkhospice.org.uk	

Norfolk Grief Tending		<p>Website: https://www.norfolkgriefftending.com/</p> <p>Email: hello@norfolkgriefftending.com</p> <p>Tel: 07951 928877</p>	
Child Bereavement UK		<p>Website: www.childbereavementuk.org</p> <p>Email: helpine@childbereavementuk.org</p> <p>Helpline: 0800 0288840</p> <p>Live chat via Website</p>	
The Good Grief Trust		<p>Website: https://www.thegoodgrieftrust.org/</p> <p>Email: hello@thegoodgrieftrust.org</p> <p>Sudden Bereavement Help: 0800 2600 400,</p>	<p>Operating Hours</p> <p>10-4 Monday-Friday</p>
Rosedale Bereavement Support Groups	<p>Wymondham, Diss, Halesworth, Beccles, Bungay</p>	<p>Website: https://www.rosedalefuneralhome.co.uk/rosedale-bereavement-support-groups/</p>	
Cromer Library – Tuesday Grief Café	<p>Cromer Library, Prince of Wales Road, Cromer, NR27 9HS</p>	<p>Telephone: 01263 512850</p> <p>Email: Cromer.lib@norfolk.gov.uk</p>	<p>Tuesdays 12pm – 1pm</p>

Sheringham Library – Grief Café	New Rd, Sheringham NR26 8EB	Telephone: 01263 822874 Email: sheringham.lib@norfolk.gov.uk	Tuesdays 1pm – 2pm
Holt Library – Grief Café	9 Church St, Holt NR25 6BB	Telephone: 01263 712202 Email: holt.lib@norfolk.gov.uk	Fridays 11 am – 12 pm
North Walsham Grief Cafe	New Rd, North Walsham NR28 9DE	Telephone: 01692 402482 Email: north.walsham.lib@norfolk.gov.uk	Second Tuesday of the Month 12pm – 1pm
Sheringham Salvation Army – Bereavement Care Group. Group and 1:1 Support	Cremer Street Sheringham NR26 8DZ	Website: https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/sheringham Email: Sheringham@salvationarmy.org.uk Tel: 01263 826059	Fridays 10am-12pm
Mind – Norfolk and Waveney	50 Sale Road Norwich Norfolk NR7 9TP	Suicide Bereavement Support Website: Norfolk and Waveney Mind - Suicide Bereavement Email: suicidebereavement@norfolkandwaveneymind.org.uk Tel: 0300 330 5488	
Big C Bereavement Support Group	Big C centres in Great Yarmouth, Kings Lynn and Norwich	Website: HILL bereavement support group - Big C Cancer Charity (big-c.co.uk) Email: support@big-c.co.uk Tel: 0800 0927640	