



University Counselling

# Grief & Loss

**Loss may be felt due to a death, separation, illness or job loss.**

**Do you find yourself thinking...**

**“This can’t be happening”  
or “Life is unfair”  
or wondering if you could go back in time and change things?**

## Experiencing grief?

Everybody grieves differently. There are no particular feelings that a person should experience, and your feelings may fluctuate in frequency and intensity across time. One day, or hour you may be happy and getting back into routine and then the next day or hour feeling like you are plunging into despair.

**Some of the common grief reactions may include:**

- denial, shock
- sadness and depression
- crying frequently
- fatigue, insomnia, or oversleeping
- loss of interests
- forgetfulness
- withdrawing from other people
- feeling as though you are not part of the world
- despair, helplessness
- anxiety, including difficulty breathing and a feeling of panic
- restlessness and an inability to relax
- anger
- guilt

## What you can do to cope with grief

- Don't be frightened of your grief reactions, they are normal.
- Try not to be impatient - with time the intensity of your grief will lessen.
- Express your feelings in a way that feels comfortable for you.
- Don't feel guilty if you find it hard to cry.
- Share your grief with close friends and family. Let them support you in practical ways as well.
- Give yourself permission to ask for help.
- Eat nutritious meals and exercise to reduce the risk of possible illness due to a compromised immune system.
- Reduce your expectations by limiting more demanding activities.
- Try to maintain some regular, basic routines.
- Take time out for yourself.
- Avoid making major decisions such as moving house or changing jobs.