



What is bereavement?

Bereavement simply means losing someone through death. It could be one of your parents, grandparents, brothers or sisters, friends, boyfriend or girlfriend – anyone who is important to you.

'My dad died a week ago ...I'm just in a dream hoping my dad will come home but knowing he won't.'

'I feel so lost and confused, it's like all the world came crashing down, I didn't think I would ever stop crying. Now I just feel so hurt and upset.'

'Why did she have to die? I needed her. It's just not fair. Death no longer makes me sad, it makes me angry.'

What might I feel?

The feelings that we have after someone close has died can be called grief. Everyone experiences grief differently – there is no 'right' way to feel. Feelings can include shock, numbness, despair, intense sadness, guilt, depression, relief, fear, anger. It can sometimes feel as if we're thrown from one feeling to another to another.

It's not unusual to feel numb, which means feeling like you have no feelings at all.

'How can I cope with it all...?'

It can feel like the bottom has dropped out of your world, that nothing good will ever happen again. How can you begin to cope?

'My mother died 3 years ago. I never used to speak about her. Now, I can talk about her and be proud of the time I shared with her. Whether I feel her every moment or not, I know she is always here with me.'

'My dad died a month ago. I miss him so much, I can't cope with everyday things like going to college. I just want my dad back, is that too much to ask?'

Many young people find that they can't get on with day-to-day activities. Even small things like getting out of bed, going to school, talking to friends can somehow seem enormous. Sometimes you might find that you get behind with

school, college or work because you just can't concentrate. Life can just feel 'too much'. This is a common reaction. It might help to explain to someone how you're feeling – maybe a teacher you trust, a friend, someone in your family. If people know what you're going through, they are more likely to understand why you might be acting differently from normal.

'I feel so alone...'

When you're going through something so painful, it can be hard to believe that anyone else can understand. This can lead to feeling isolated, and finding it hard to talk to friends and family.

'I feel empty, lost, confused and lonely. I need someone to talk to but don't know who.'

Although it can seem really difficult, finding someone to talk to about how you're feeling can be an important first step in coming to terms with the death of someone close. Not everyone will understand but many will. People usually like to be asked for help, so you might be surprised that your friends or family are willing to listen and to support you as best they can.

'The worst part is the loneliness. Nobody knows how I feel. I just wish I had someone to talk to.'

'After my sister died I got bullied because I kept crying. Things got better when I told someone.'