



Bereavement

Support Guide

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What is Bereavement?

Bereavement is the experience of losing someone important to us. It's characterised by grief, which is the process and the range of emotions we go through when we experience a loss.

Losing someone important to us can be emotionally devastating – whether it's a partner, family member or friend. Grief can bring up lots of different, complicated emotions, and can sometimes affect our physical health.









Health Assured provides compassionate, caring support helping people and organisations during times of bereavement.

How do I cope with loss?

Bereavement affects everyone in different ways, and it's possible to experience any range of emotions.

You may feel lots of different emotions at the same time, or your feelings may change quickly. Your feelings may also be confusing at times. There's no right or wrong way to feel.

Here are a few ways to help you cope with loss:

-  **Talk:** Going over your memories with someone—simply getting your thoughts out in the open—can help you to understand your feelings.
-  **Recognise guilt:** People can feel guilt after experiencing loss. A feeling that more could have been done is common. Moving on and letting go can be the hardest of all. Recognising guilt and processing it properly is a healthy step in the grieving process.
-  **Plan ahead:** The first year following a bereavement is hard. After the first year, the anniversaries begin which can bring the emotions flooding back. Make sure to plan ahead and book any time off you need to commemorate those times.
-  **Allowing time to grieve:** It can take a long time to learn to adjust to a major bereavement. You need to process some intense feelings. Take as much time as you need.
-  **Keep mementos:** Your relationship with a loved one doesn't end with their death. Make sure to keep photos, gifts and other items to remember them by.
-  **Be aware of stress:** The worries following bereavement can lead to higher stress. Be careful, think about how you feel. Slow down if you need to.
-  **Avoid alcohol:** Numbing the pain of loss with alcohol—or other drugs—is only a temporary fix. Alcohol can lead to more serious problems too. It's okay to want a drink, but in moderation.
-  **Take care of yourself:** Eat regularly, keep a good hygiene routine and get plenty of rest.

Where can I find help?

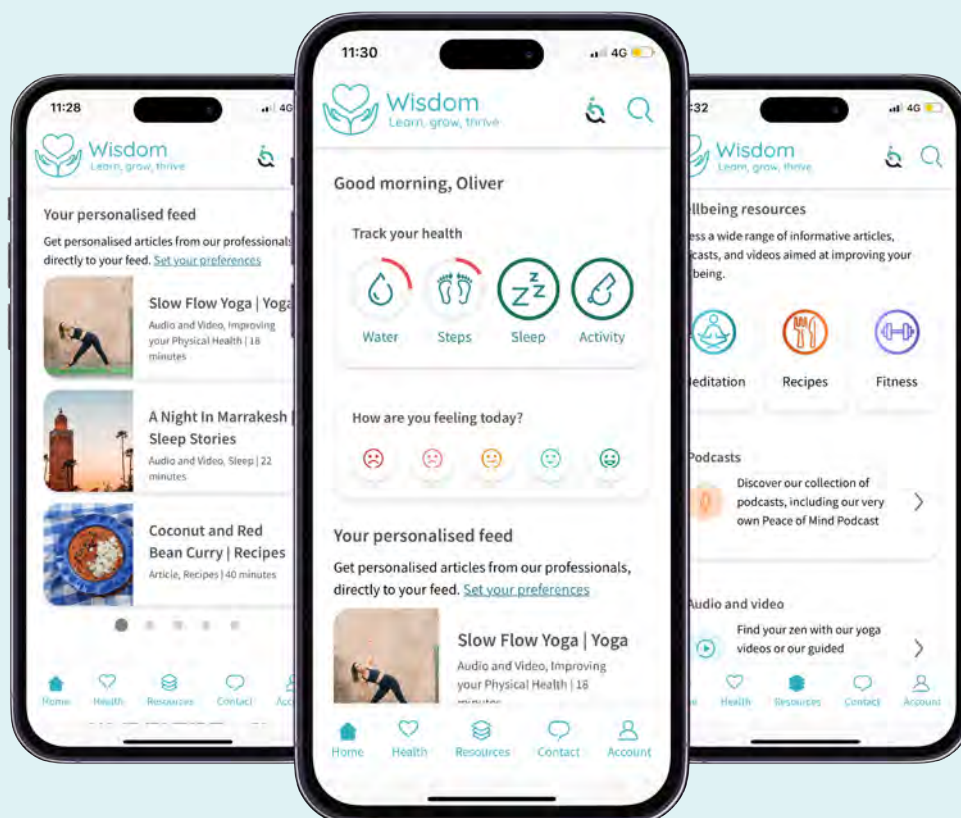
Speak to one of our counsellors. Our helpline is open 24/7, 365—you're never far from help.

You should speak with your GP if you find your grief overwhelming. They may suggest further counselling or medication. It's not just emotional pain that loss causes—practical and financial effects are common. Childcare and housing costs, looming bills and the pressure of settling the deceased's estate can build up quickly.

You may be eligible for financial help. Contact your local Department for Work and Pensions—ask about Bereavement Allowance, Widowed Parent's Allowance and Funeral Payments.

Going forward

Additional support can be found on our health and wellbeing Wisdom App which is available as a free download on iOS and Android or you can access Wisdom at wisdom.healthassured.org.





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