

At some point in our life, all of us are going to experience significant loss. The death of a loved one is what people usually associate with grieving, but people also grieve when they experience any sort of loss. For example, the breakdown of a relationship, the loss of a pet, or having to give up something important in their lives, can result in you experiencing grief. Grief is the normal process that can follow any loss.

Symptoms

Some of the symptoms of grief include:

- Crying, shock, numbness, sadness, anger, guilt, anxiety, isolation, powerlessness, anguish, yearning, release, relief, disbelief, confusion, obsession or preoccupation
- Sleep disturbance
- Appetite disturbance and resultant weight loss/gain
- Difficulty concentrating, disorganisation, social withdrawal
- Dreaming about the deceased, avoiding reminders of the deceased
- Tightness in the chest or throat, dry mouth, hollow feeling in the stomach, over sensitivity to noise, lack of energy

Ways people respond to grief

Everybody has a different response to grief and the way people grieve is affected by many different things. For instance, grief may be exacerbated by the other losses resurfacing. In addition, males grieve differently to females and there are also cultural differences in the grieving process. Because someone is grieving differently to you, it does not mean they care any differently. It just means they are expressing it in another way.

Coping with grief

The grieving process can be very painful, but there are ways to assist with the process. Some things that people have found to be helpful include:

- Setting aside time to cry
- Journaling your feelings
- Engaging in exercise
- Basic self-care – setting up a daily routine including maintaining a regular sleeping pattern, eating healthily and keeping contact with friends and family.

Although most people will gradually return to a normal life, for some the loss seems insurmountable and they may benefit from speaking to someone about it. Speaking to a counsellor at Student Services can facilitate the processing of your grief, thereby offering hope of reaching some point of resolution.

Free, confidential counselling available for currently enrolled students at
USQ Student Services

Toowoomba Campus, G Block Ph: (07) 4631 2372

Springfield Campus Level 3 Main Building Ph: (07) 3470 4400

Fraser Coast Campus Student Hub C Block Ph: (07) 4194 3125