



Helping men grieve

Are you a man grieving for the loss of a loved one? Have you lost a spouse, home or farm or a beloved pet or suffered some other kind of loss like your health?

The grieving process is a difficult time and there is no single explanation for what it is like for men as they grieve. Every experience is unique and you don't just 'get over it'. You learn to live with it as you move forward.

If others are also grieving, you may feel an expectation to put the focus on their grief rather than your own. When you have been put into the role of protector and provider of the family you can feel pressure to put on a brave face and hide your own emotional pain to support others.

It's difficult, but you may have to work at connecting with your emotions or grief. It may feel easier to push those feelings away but talking about them is a healthier way to cope. Don't shut others out and keep the lines of communication open with supportive friends and family.

You may show and express anger and will probably not be willing to be more public or open with your emotions than you are comfortable with. However you may be willing to express your grief

through action and activity, including thinking things through and reflecting on them in your own time.

Grieving inwardly and alone is less helpful than releasing and sharing emotions with loved ones.

How can you help yourself?

- Be courageous in not pushing feelings underground but allowing yourself to express your grief.
- Communicate clearly to others your need to be alone and to deal with your feelings in private.
- Use activities and rituals to express your grief and work through it.
- Make time to grieve and allow yourself to heal.
- Stay close to friends and talk to them.
- Make time to be in the garden or keep up good health through exercise, good food and sleep.
- Read a book on handling grief.

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- Keep a journal as a record of your journey through this.
- Join a grief and loss support group.
- Call or come in and talk to the TOMNET Professional Support Team or other blokes. We understand.

What else can help?

Accept your feelings.

There is no right or wrong way to feel after losing someone you care about. Accept how you feel and acknowledge that it is stressful and having strong feelings is a natural and normal way of managing grief and loss.

Avoid bottling things up as the tension can make you feel worse and have health side-effects.

It's okay to enjoy the past. Remembering the happy memories and fun times and having a smile about those is often helpful.

Talking to someone else about those memories can be freeing.

It is not a sign that you miss the person any less to share with others how special they were to you.

Saying goodbye is important.

Letting go is part of grieving and saying goodbye can help with this. Some people write a letter, hold their own private memorial service at home or light a candle as a ritual. Saying goodbye happens in your own way and in your own time. There is no right or wrong way to do this.

You will have good and bad days but speaking to other men or a member of the TOMNET Professional Support Team is one step towards being heard and supported.

The TOMNET Centre

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Email: tomnet05@tomnetinc.org.au

Open:

Monday - Thursday 9:00am - 4:00pm
Friday 9:00am - 3:00pm

FOR IMMEDIATE HELP, call:

Lifeline 13 11 14

Talk to us. We understand.

Supported by:



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