

# Counselling Services

## GRIEF

Grief is an emotional reaction to an irretrievable loss, which may be death, divorce, miscarriage, loss of friendship, job, or home. Many emotional, physical and behavioural reactions may be experienced as a response to the loss such as feelings of helplessness, overwhelming sadness, sometimes confusion and anger. The intensity of the grief depends on the nature of the loss. Allowing ourselves to experience the pain is a natural, necessary and time limited process.

### Phases in Reactions to Grief:

- Shock and disbelief
- Yearning and protest
- Despair and disorganisation
- Resolution

### Stages in learning to survive the loss:

- Accept the reality of the loss
- Experience the pain and grief: sadness, anger, confusion, guilt, palpitations, nausea, dizziness
- Adjust to life; everyday tasks may be difficult, new roles may need to be learned.
- Emotionally detaching from the loss and opening up to new sources of nurturance, support and new relationships

### What can help:

- Talk to others who have experienced loss and grief
- Talk about how the loss affects you and what it means to you
- Seek support from those able to give it. Accept a hug
- Recognise your feelings, be forgiving and patient with yourself
- Be good to yourself
- Use writing, art and music to let out your feelings
- Give yourself time
- Seek empathetic guidance, professional counselling

### What does not help:

- Making major life decisions too quickly
- Using alcohol and drugs to numb the pain
- Denying your feelings
- Isolating yourself
- Expecting that every day will get better, there will be ups and downs

### Other Sources of Help and Information:

Further information on loss and grief is available from

Lifeline: phone 13 11 14 (24hours); Centacare: phone 3252 4371

***QUT Counselling Services offers professional assistance with this and other issues***

**Kelvin Grove 3138 3488**

**Gardens Point 3138 2383**

**Caboolture 5316 7400**

Disclaimer: References to other sources are provided as an information service only and should not necessarily be construed as an endorsement of them or the information contained within them. This information is provided on the basis that all persons accessing it undertake responsibility for assessing the relevance and accuracy of its content (eg by speaking with Counselling Services professionals).  
(Current @ July 2009)