



COMPASSIONATE  
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## Understanding Grief



This leaflet has been designed to help you to deal with  
your grief or help someone else.

## What is Grief?

Grief is defined as '**intense sorrow**', it is an emotional, physical and spiritual response to loss.

Grief is a person's reaction to the loss of something significant in their life, it can be a loved one, their health, or a relationship.

Grief is unique and personal to each individual. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to grieve; there is no manual and there is no timescale. It takes time to find meaning in a different life living with loss.

## Grief is the price we pay for love.

Grief can cause a person to feel numb, overwhelmed, tired, and angry. These feelings may not be present all of the time, or all at once. These feelings can present themselves without warning.

Nobody can feel another's pain but you can offer support by simply listening. To talk out loud about your feelings helps you to process difficult emotions.

Understanding our grief helps to know that these 'abnormal' feelings' are a 'normal response' to 'abnormal events'.



## Understanding where you are

The 5 stages of grief model is not a map, it is a guide to help us to understand and validate our feelings.

To help you to understand your own grief try to write down your thoughts and feelings. Reflecting on these will help you process your feelings.

Look at the grief curve, what stage do you think you are at? You may feel that you are in between two stages. It can be possible to go back a stage.

Everyone travels their own journey with grief.

For further help and advice on bereavement care please visit the Western Trust Health and Social Care Trust website <https://westerntrust.hscni.net/service/bereavement-care/>.



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