



Loss and Grief in the time of Corona



Many of us lost colleagues, friends, acquaintances, and even family members during this COVID-19 pandemic. And many of us would have experienced grief.

Grief is a normal response to a loss during or after a disaster or other traumatic events. Grief can happen in response to the loss of life, it can also happen with drastic changes to daily routines and ways of life that usually bring us comfort and a feeling of stability.

Common grief reactions include:



Anger



Anxiety



Distress

Shock, disbelief or denial



Periods of sadness



Loss of sleep and loss of appetite



Actions you can take to help cope with feelings of grief after the loss of a loved one

• Connecting with other people

- ✓ Request friends and relatives to call you and schedule conference calls to stay connected.
- ✓ Ask family and friends to share stories and pictures with you via letters, email, phone, or via apps or social media that allow groups to share with each other.

• Creating memories or rituals

- ✓ Develop a virtual memory book, blog, or webpage to remember your loved ones, and ask family and friends to contribute their memories and stories.
- ✓ Take part in activities, such as planting a tree or doing something that has significance to you and the loved one who died.

• Asking for help from others

- ✓ Seek support from trusted relatives and friends.
- ✓ Seek spiritual support. Find solace in guided meditation.
- ✓ Seek out grief counselling or mental health services, support groups, or helplines.

How to help a person who is experiencing grief?

We may not know what to say or do while trying to comfort someone who is grieving. Often it is the simple offer of unconditional support and companionship that is most important.

- **Ask the grieving persons how they're feeling.** Take time to listen and understand what they are going through.
- **Do not be dismissive or minimise their feelings.** They do not need your view on what they should or should not be feeling.
- **Do not encourage denial of a loss.** Be empathetic but accept the reality of the occurrence.
- **Talk about everyday life too.** Their loss need not be the focus of all your conversations.
- **Ask them how you can help, gently.** Simple companionship and physical presence may be all that you can do. Just do it to help someone through their grief.
- **Encourage them to seek professional advice along with support from family and friends.**