



THE  
**GRIEF**  
CENTRE

# Grief & loss after losing your partner

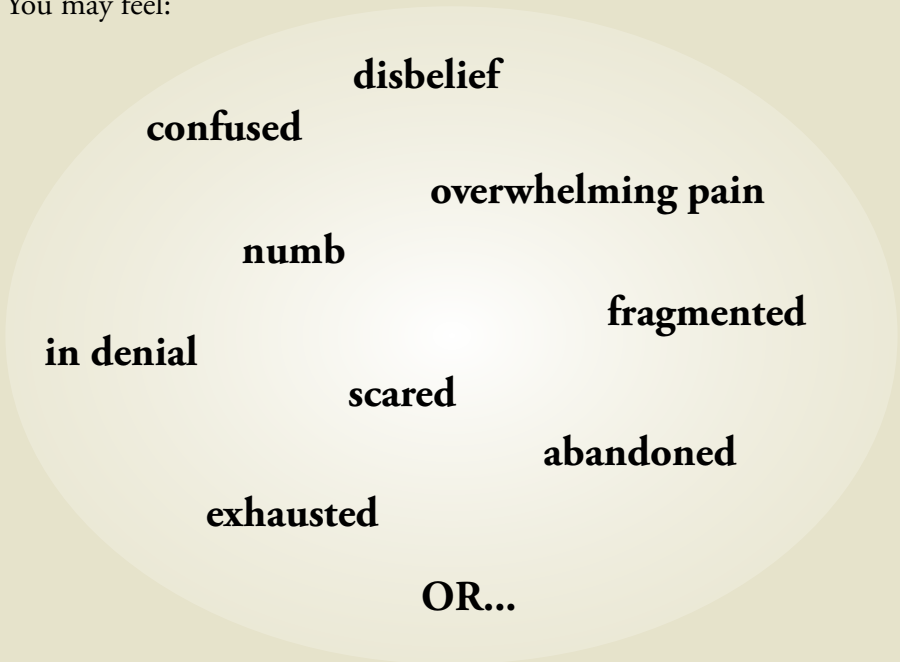


Losing a partner can happen as a result of:

- a relationship ending
- an illness or an accident
- death

No matter how it happens, whether it is sudden, expected, or violent, the loss can be devastating.

You may feel:



Whatever your reaction, it is normal and common to have a wide range of often overwhelming feelings. It is important to look after yourself, give yourself time to acknowledge your feelings, and to seek support.





Image courtesy of [alphathread.wordpress.com](http://alphathread.wordpress.com)

Others who have lost a loved one have described the experience as:

- “My heart felt broken; I was surprised by the physical pain”
- “I felt weary in my soul”
- “The world felt unsafe”



You may feel both **emotional pain and physical pain**.

These reactions are common and expected.

There may be times when you **feel out of control**

and this too is **understandable**

and often experienced by those who lose a partner.

When you think about it, you have lost your life ‘map’ - how you know how to ‘do’ your life. Others have described this as:

- “I felt as if I had lost my future”
- “I couldn’t be who I was before”
- “I lost my identity”



The chances are that many others are affected by the loss of your partner, including children, other family members and friends. If you have children to look after, or other family commitments, try to find people to take over from you while you grieve.

It is important that you take the time and look after yourself.



You may be surprised and even hurt to discover that some people, even close friends, are not very good in these grief situations. But there are always those who just seem to know what to do and how to support you. Accept their help when they offer it and seek them out when you need them.

You may also want to read The Grief Centre booklet called “Grief after Loss”





There are small steps you can take, for example:

- **Seek help**
- **Eat**
- **Accept help**
- **Sleep**
- **Cry when you need to**
- **Look after yourself**
- **Talk about your loss**
- **Do some gentle walking with a friend**
- **Keep hydrated but avoid alcohol**
- **Take one day at a time**



Image courtesy of [www.tomassobekphotography.co.nz](http://www.tomassobekphotography.co.nz)

## Some thoughts

- Even though loss and change are common to all in life, how you experience your grief is intensely personal
- Grief is a process that cannot be rushed; it takes time
- While you may feel as if you will never ‘get over’ your grief at losing your partner, you will ‘grow around’ it
- Visit your doctor for checkups
- Seeking help from a professional, such as a counsellor, can be an enormous support for you in processing your grief



Others have described their grief over time after losing a loved one as:

- “It was about getting my heart and head connected”
- “I lived and managed one day at a time”
- “When I need a good cry, I have a good cry”
- “I learnt to go with the flow”
- “The group I joined helped to normalise my grief and helped me feel that I’m not going crazy”
- “It won’t always be this bad”
- “Believe it or not, the pain does ease”

Grief is a natural response to loss and grieving takes time, patience and support.



The Grief Centre would like to recognise and thank Dr Fiona Pienaar, who has written the material for this booklet. Please acknowledge the source if you are quoting from this material in presentations or publications. For more information or assistance contact us at:

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**Our services are available throughout the Auckland region.**

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