

Bereavement Help

Bereavement Coaching

BEING BEREAVED - EXPERIENCING THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE

In a world that feels like nothing is certain, there is only one true certainty in life, and that is death. Losing someone we love is one event we are bound to experience in our lives. It is one of the most devastating experiences we can ever encounter.

Yet grieving does not come with an instruction manual. When someone we love has died it can feel as if nothing is real anymore, we can lose a sense of who we are, what we should be doing, saying or thinking. Yet, society seems to know the whispered rules. "She should be over it by now", "he's got another new partner already, so soon!". There are so many unofficial societal rules that the grieving individual is faced with many conflicts when trying to piece shattered lives back together.



As an experienced and trained bereavement counselor, I have a very special interest in supporting the bereaved through their journey of grief. Becoming widowed at the age of 27, I have experienced first hand the devastation of loss and despair.

Yet I speak with some certainty when I say that grief does have a flip side. There are 2 words that people rarely associate with bereavement "HOPE" and "TRANSFORMATION". I now understand the importance of HOPE for better days to come, for something to aim for. TRANSFORMATION from much pain can come great learning and development, and a greater capacity to love, and achieve what we hope for. I have been on my own personal journey, and have emerged a stronger, more vibrant person, who recognizes the importance of creating happy memories, whilst holding dear many happy memories of what is lost. Where there is love, pain and learning are usually set to follow! It is how we deal with the pain and the learning that counts.

THE JOURNEY OF BEREAVEMENT

When we experience our worst fears the loss of a much loved person, when we have plummeted through the depths of despair, there is only one direction left to travel upwards.

Grief may be denied or delayed but there is no way around grief, only through. There is no doubt that grief is an individual and unique experience, but there are many common features. One of the most common models that trained bereavement counselors work with is WORDEN'S¹ 4 tasks of mourning?

1. To accept the reality of the loss
2. To experience the pain of grief
3. To adjust to a world in which the loved one is missing
4. To invest in new roles and relationships



If you are reading this and can identify being stuck in one of these stages, or are particularly overwhelmed and unable to cope with your feelings of grief, I would strongly recommend that you get in touch with a voluntary organization such as CRUSE BEREAVEMENT CARE www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk, or to seek the services of a suitably qualified bereavement counselor who will be able to offer you therapeutic support during this distressing time.

For those who have been bereaved and feel ready to move beyond stage 4 ? to invest in new roles and relationships, coaching can help you to achieve this. This can be a transformational, yet challenging, time.

FROM INTENSE GRIEF GROWS FRESH HOPE

Once we have understood the fragility of life and learned how precious today can be, we have been given a bittersweet gift. A learning that all we have is the here and now. Let's make the most of it.

This new understanding can leave us with a confusing set of new values. Sometimes, old ways of being suddenly no longer seem to fit. Shared goals may no longer seem appropriate, and we can be left with a feeling of not being able to "slot" back into our old lives, even our closest friendships sometimes do not survive the scrutiny. Our lives seem to take on a "before bereavement" and "after bereavement" quality.

BEREAVEMENT COACHING - INTO THE LIGHT

Bereavement coaching can often pick up where counseling ends. Using an empathic approach, dealing sensitively with your feelings, working with me as your coach, you will be able to:-

- Start making an adjustment to the new identity you have inherited as a result of bereavement. For instance, widow, widower, single parent, orphan, only sibling, without child
- Explore your new set of emerging values, and re-evaluate old ones
- Establish new or revised life goals. These could be in the areas of work, hobbies, relationships, travel etc
- Assess current friendships, relationships to see how your own behaviour, feelings, revised values and beliefs may be affecting your way of being with those around you
- Deal with losing support from those you thought would be there for you.
- Facing the disapproval of others (particularly those who know the "whispered" rules of bereavement), as you make your journey upwards
- Take control of and start shaping your life

In summary, everyone has the right to grieve, just as they have the right to love. It can feel as if the pain of death is a huge debt to repay for the price of love. Everybody has the right to

grieve in a way which suits them ? the individual way.

However, as individuals, and society too, we can lose sight of the fact that there is a polar opposite to loss; in time, there can be gain.

Once we have reconciled painful feelings, we can discover a new meaning to life. Some examples being ...

- New friends
- Better job
- New interests
- Further education
- Second family
- New partner
- New acceptance and liking of self
- New plans for the future
- Fresh ambition
- Different challenges
- Freedom to choose how to live your life

Contact me now to find out how I can support you in transcending your journey of grief.

Now is the time for change

1 Worden, J.W., (1983), Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy, London, Tavistock Publications

For more on this topic and other information, please visit www.njcoaching.co.uk