



# Dealing with grief



Grief is a common human response to loss, including the death of another person, the end of a relationship, unemployment, physical disability or illness, or the loss of things that were precious to you.

While everyone grieves in different ways, it's common to experience many different emotions, such as anger, depression, fear, numbness or feeling overwhelmed.

Grief operates like a swinging pendulum, pulling you between two states: focusing on loss and focusing on moving forward. However, the pendulum can remain at either of these places for hours, days, weeks or months. Again, there is no right or wrong way to grieve, and this pendulum can continue to swing for years.



## What can I do to help myself in trying to address my grief?

### Validate your grief

The first step to grieving is to acknowledge that however you're feeling is normal and understandable. Other people may have expectations about how you should grieve, but these are often derived from their own needs, cultural beliefs or even stereotypes from movies.

Remember that it's just as valid to want to get on with life, as it is to feel completely numb. We all approach loss differently.

### Discard timelines

There's no prescribed timeline for 'getting over' loss. Over time, the way you experience grief will change, but it isn't something that simply goes away after you complete a certain set of tasks, or by a certain date. We carry losses with us across our lives in different ways.

### Find meaningful ways to grieve

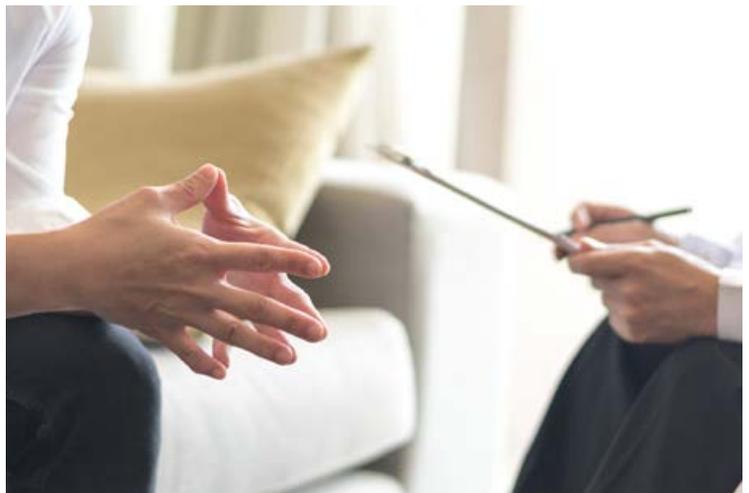
While there's no right way to grief, some people find these activities useful:

- write a letter to the person you've lost
- keep a journal, allowing you to express your negative feelings and remember your positive memories
- read about the ways other people get through their grief
- find someone supportive to talk to, and someone to help distract you or keep you busy
- re-connect with meaningful places, objects, songs, or people connected to the loss
- try and discover new interests.

### Seek counselling

The University provides free one-on-one counselling services, and can provide support as you talk about your grief and learn coping techniques.

- T: +61 2 8627 8433
- [sydney.edu.au/counselling](https://sydney.edu.au/counselling)



## Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

+61 2 8627 8433  
caps.admin@sydney.edu.au  
[sydney.edu.au/counselling](https://sydney.edu.au/counselling)

Level 5, Jane Foss Russell Building  
Opening hours: 9am to 4.30pm,  
Monday to Friday

### Crisis contacts

Ambulance/Fire/Police: 000  
Lifeline (24 hours): 13 11 14  
Mental Health Access Line: 1800 011 511