

Here are some organisations that may be able to help you.

Cruse Bereavement Care (England and Wales)

Cruse can help anyone who has lost someone they love.

Helpline:
0870 167 1677

You can get details of local branches from their main offices at:

126 Sheen Road
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 1UR.

Phone: 020 8940 4818

Cruse Bereavement Care (Scotland)

Riverview House
Friarton Road
Perth
PH2 8DF

Phone: 01738 444178

The Samaritans

The Samaritans offer a 24-hour telephone listening service. You can find their number in The Phone Book.

Citizens Advice Bureau

This is a good source of practical help and advice and is particularly helpful with financial or legal problems.

The Compassionate Friends

They offer help for parents whose children have died.

53 North Street
Bedminster
BS3 1EN

Phone: 0117 953 9639

The Child Death Helpline

Phone: 0800 282 986
(Mondays, Wednesdays
and Fridays 10am to
1pm, and Monday to
Sunday 7pm to 10pm)



Who is Dignity?

Dignity Caring Funeral Services has over 500 funeral directors in towns and cities across the country who have served their local communities for generations.

We help families through every step of arranging a funeral, from registering the death to the details of the funeral service itself. Our first priority is to make sure that families can arrange the funeral they want for their loved one, and we will do everything we can to meet any special requests or arrangements.

We are available every day of the year, 24 hours a day, to help and advise. We also have a clear pricing policy and provide written estimates before the funeral, so you know exactly how much the funeral will cost. We have a very strict code of practice, to make sure that all the families we serve have the same high standards of service from caring and professional staff.

If you need the services of a funeral director, please call us on 08000 344 6489 at any time of the day or night, and we will put you in touch with your local funeral director.



Dignity Funerals Ltd.

A company registered in England No. 41598.

Plantsbrook House, 94 The Parade,

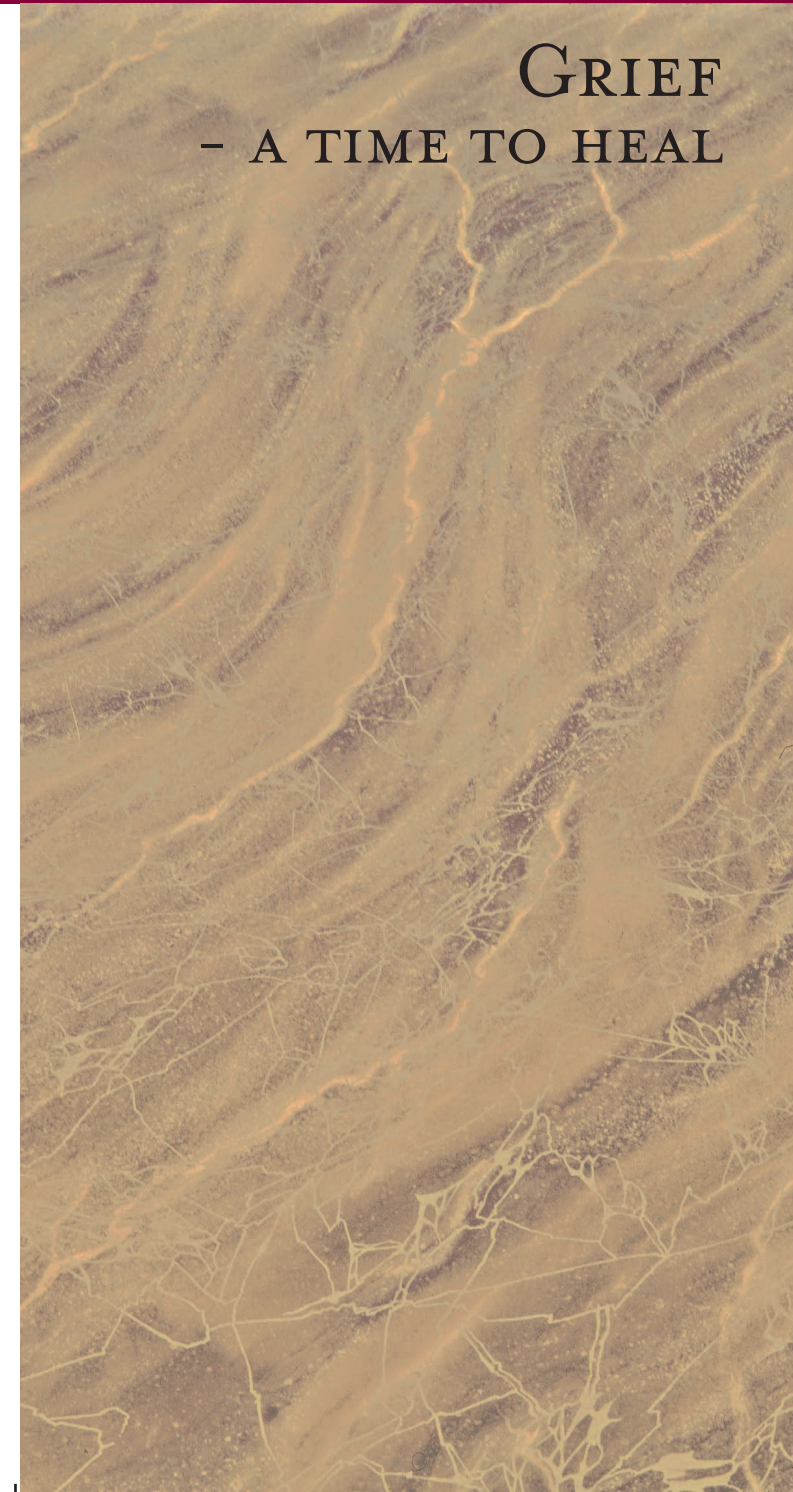
Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B72 1PH.

Phone: 0121 354 1557 Fax: 0121 355 8081.

www.dignityfunerals.co.uk

A British Company

GRIEF - A TIME TO HEAL



Coping with life after the death of someone close to you can be very hard. In this leaflet we explain some of the feelings you may have and suggest ways of dealing with them over the next few months.

Grief

Grief is a normal response to loss. It often brings physical and emotional pain. Shock, anger, guilt, regret, numbness and loneliness are some emotions that most people feel.

Unfortunately, there is no magic wand to take away the pain. Grief is something you have to work through. There is no set time to say when you will feel better. Sometimes you might find that you take two steps forwards and then three steps backwards.

First reactions

If you have been expecting someone close to you to die, at first you may feel numb. This is nature's way of helping you realise and accept the death.

If the death is sudden and unexpected, your reaction may be disbelief. It may take time to understand what has happened and you may feel a great deal of pain because you have not had the chance to say goodbye.

You may find yourself expecting your loved one to suddenly arrive and hear familiar sounds like their key in the door, or feel their presence in the room. Accept these things as part of the process of grieving, which will eventually lead you through this terrible time.

Physical signs of grief

Some people are affected physically by the death of their loved one. Some people can't sit still and become hyperactive. Others have headaches, shortness of breath, chest pains, dizziness, lack of concentration or depression. Some find it difficult to sleep and some experience bad dreams.

But don't be alarmed – it's unlikely that you will suffer any of these symptoms. It is just important to realise that an emotional shock can produce physical symptoms. You should speak to your doctor if you have any symptoms over a period of time.

Emotions

Do not be afraid of crying or showing emotion. Tears relieve emotional stress and there is nothing to be ashamed of. Most people have times when they feel angry – angry that they have been left or that the doctor did not prevent the death, or angry that the life was not fulfilled and that there are plans left unfinished.

You might also feel guilt. 'If only...' is a very common feeling and is natural after a death. Talking about these feelings with a close friend or member of the family may help you.

The way forward

Many people choose to withdraw from social contact, feeling unable to face the outside world. You may feel like this, but grieving is difficult enough without having to do it all on your own.

Allow yourself time to grieve and adjust to your new situation. Always take time before making any major decisions such as moving house.

The most important healing can come from talking. It may help to go over what happened many times with family and friends. Talking about your feelings may also help. A professional counsellor or people like the Samaritans will have the time and understanding to talk to you. You will never get over it, but in time you will come to terms with what has happened.

Try to recognise the danger signs of becoming too dependent on tranquillisers or alcohol. You may find keeping a diary or writing down your thoughts helpful, and you never need to show your writing to anyone.