



karuna
dedicated holistic support

the kindest care

Care of the mind

Living with grief

Grief is a normal and healthy reaction when you face loss and may begin from the moment you become aware that your illness is terminal. While each person will experience grief in their own way, there are common features of grief that you may notice.

It helps to know which aspects of what you are going through are due to illness and which are due to grief. Whilst the impact you can have on improving the illness may be limited, grief is an emotional process which you can influence in a positive way.

Here are some ways to recognize grief:

- People tend to have trouble concentrating and organising their thoughts. It can be difficult to think clearly and learn new information which can impact on their ability to function well on a day to day basis.

Knowing this, give yourself time to attend to important matters. There will be periods of the day when your thought processes are at their peak. It is best to schedule important meetings (e.g., medical & legal appointments) at these times as you will be more mentally alert and feel more in control.

- Grief affects people's physical health and can show up as fatigue, aches and pains, sleep and appetite problems. Learn to recognise these symptoms as helpful messages from your body that signal the need to take care of yourself.
- People in grief often do not feel like spending time with others. There can be many reasons, including finding communication difficult, a lack of others' understanding and simply not having the energy to do so. While there will be times where it is helpful to spend time alone, losing connection with friends and family only intensifies your grief. Most people experience grief as an emotional rollercoaster which can include mood swings and emotional fragility. Emotional pain, while not pleasant, is normal. Finding healthy ways to express how you feel can help you process these emotions rather than bottling them up and having them explode in uncontrolled ways. Some ways people express feelings are through journaling, talking to others, exercise, and meditation.



Karuna also has experienced people you can talk with on:
07 3632 8300 or karuna@karuna.org.au

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This is a **Support and Learning** resource. More resources available at
www.karuna.org.au/resources. Karuna is affiliated with www.fpmt.org



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