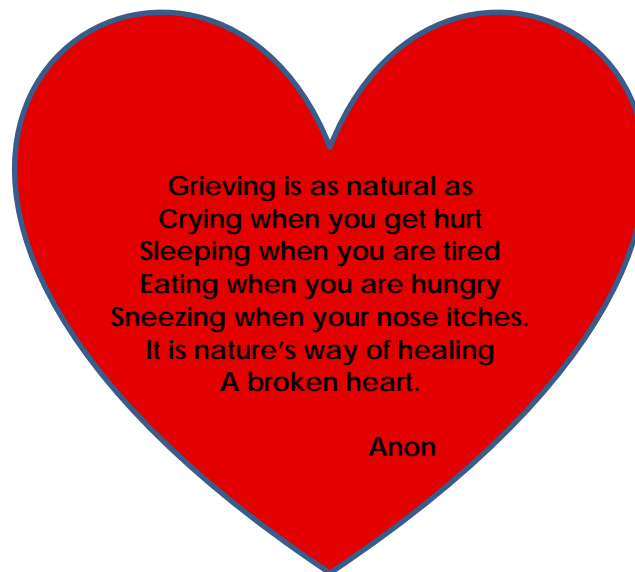
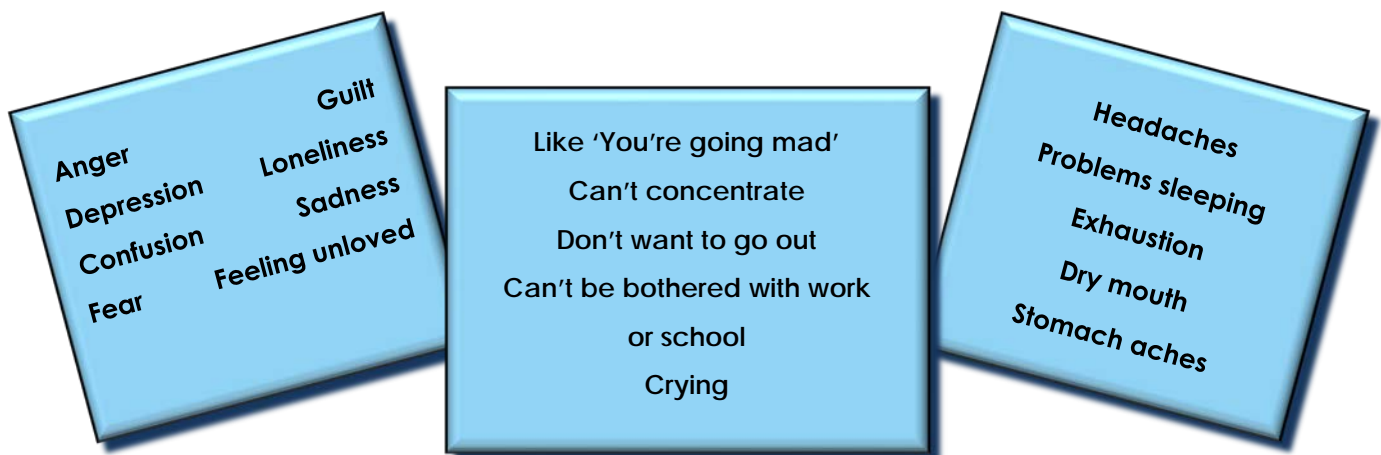


FOR TEENAGERS

It hurts when someone you love or someone who was important to you dies. The loss and hurt leave you grieving. When you are grieving it can be painful and frightening. It may seem like everything is out of control. It can be helpful to know a bit about grieving. This may make it easier to understand what is happening.



There are many different reactions to grief.
Some of these include:



You may feel some of these – or you may not.
You may not know what you are experiencing; it may seem like a time of nothingness'.
It's OK to feel this way.
Everyone's grief will be different and how they express it may also be different.

Suicide presents us with additional challenges in understanding or accepting death.

When someone takes their own life there may be more intense thoughts about:

- **Searching for 'why'; trying to make sense of it all.** This can sometimes lead to blaming others or blaming one thing that happened.
- **Regrets and guilt** – “If only I’d done something different;” “Couldn’t someone have stopped it?”
- **Anger and rejection** – “How could he/she do this to me?”
- **Feeling suicidal.** If you feel like this it is important to talk to someone who can help. Often people who consider suicide see no other way to solve their problems. Remember there is always someone to talk to and other ways to deal with pain.

Remember, you are NOT responsible for the death.

“You are only in charge of your own destiny. You cannot control the lives of others no matter how much you love them.”

It takes time to heal.

The intense pain does not go on forever.

It does soften.

Gradually there will be more good days than bad days.

This does not mean you will forget and stop loving the person who died.

In the words of one teenager:

“I think a lot about my special friend. Sometimes I feel sad and cry. Lately, I’ve begun to smile when I remember what we did together. I feel better knowing that this person is with me – only a thought away.”



Drugs and alcohol do not help. Many people take them hoping to ease the pain but they actually make grief more complicated.

“When the effects wear off you will feel worse than before”¹

Some things that might help when you are grieving:

- Talking
- Being with friends
- Listening to music
- Laughing
- Talking with a counsellor
- Hugging
- Writing down your thoughts
- Praying
- Getting involved with school activities
- Exercising

Talk with trusted friends.
Tell your friends what you need from them.
They care about you but they might not know what to say or do.

Sharing the pain with others helps

Make a list of people you could talk to. This might include your parents, friends, teacher, neighbour, a close friend's parents, doctor, school chaplain or school psychologist.

When things are feeling overwhelming or you just need to share your thoughts, contact these people.

Websites

These websites may be helpful to you. You will find that each site can also direct you to other sites of interest.

The Anglicare WA are not able to review or monitor, and do not endorse these sites. Your access to, and reliance on, these sites is entirely your own responsibility.

<http://www.reachout.com.au>

An Australian site which includes information on different aspects of grieving and coping after suicide.

<http://www.kidshelpline.com.au>

For ages 5-18, you can talk to a counsellor online from this site.

<http://www.headroom.net.au>

Information and ideas about positive mental health

Telephone Services

Kids Help Line (Aust) 1800 55 1800
(ages 5 to 18)

Samaritans Youthline 9388 2500

Lifeline 13 11 14

Crisis Care (metropolitan) 9223 1111
(for country callers) 1800 199 008

All are confidential, free and available 24 hrs a day.

1 Grollman, E. A. (1993). *Straight talk about death for teenagers: How to cope with losing someone you love*. Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press. ISBN 0-8070-2501-1.
This pamphlet includes material adapted from the above reference.