

# Coping in Bereavement

Phyllis Tuckwell®  
Hospice Care  
...because every day is precious



**Bereavement Support**  
for Families and Friends



**Total support for patients and families**  
Clinical - Practical - Emotional - Spiritual - Financial

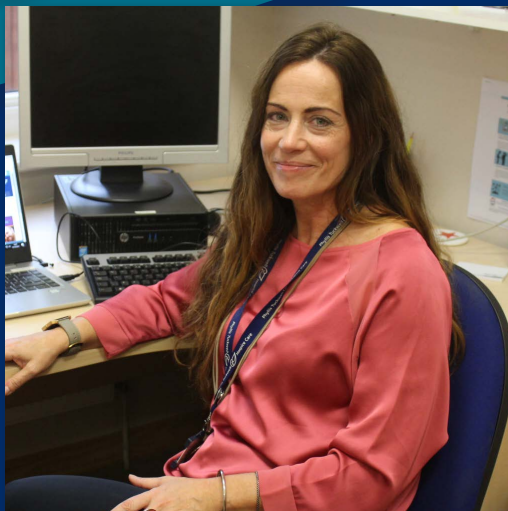
***“...we are here for bereaved families to help them through a difficult time in their lives.”***

**Most of us, at some time in our lives, will be faced with the death of someone we care deeply about.**

At Phyllis Tuckwell we continue to work and support those left behind and would encourage you to access whichever service suits you.

We are a team of staff and volunteers, who are trained and have a huge amount of experience and knowledge in how to support people who are grieving.

This booklet contains details of the services which the Patient & Family Support team provides for anyone whose loved one has died under the care of Phyllis Tuckwell.



Please contact the Patient & Family Support team using the details on the back of this booklet if you would like support.

**Thank you.**

**Maria Abellan**

Patient, Family, Carer  
Support Team Manager

***“The Hospice team helped me through a very difficult time – now I can cope with my loss and enjoy life again”***

*Relative's comment.*

The death of a loved one can leave us facing a spectrum of feelings and emotions, at a magnitude many of us will not have experienced before, and we may feel frightened and overwhelmed. Although each of us reacts to loss in different ways, we have tried to describe some of the feelings and experiences most frequently felt by bereaved people.

**It is not uncommon for newly bereaved individuals to experience a range of emotions, such as: numbness, disbelief, anxiety, sadness, anger, yearning, fear, panic, guilt, and even euphoria. We can also experience changed behaviours such as changes to sleep patterns (too much or too little), confusion, lack of concentration, forgetfulness, withdrawing, increased or decreased appetite, fear of being alone, restlessness, apathy, often being overwhelmed by emotions.**

## **Grief**

If you recognise any of these feelings in yourself, we would like to reassure you that these, although often difficult to cope with, are very natural.

Grieving is the natural process of adapting to loss. Some people describe it as feeling similar to a rollercoaster ride; one minute you're 'up', the next you're 'down' and at other times 'upside down'.

## **Believing the reality of loss**

At first you may feel numb, strangely calm and detached, or confused and unable to take in what has happened. For a while it may be impossible to believe that someone has died. It is not uncommon to think you can hear or see your loved one.

## **Yearning**

You may look for them in a crowd, listen for them when the phone rings, or see them in a favourite chair – even though you know they will not be there. At times you may have the feeling that you are searching for something but are never able to find it. You are not 'going mad', something very natural is happening.

## **Disorganisation, emptiness and fear**

This is often the longest part of grieving. You may feel that you no longer have a reason for living; nothing interests you and you lack motivation. Often feelings of confusion, the inability to focus on anything and overwhelming tiredness can prevail and you



question what is happening to yourself. You may even worry you are 'going mad'. You are not: grief can be a lengthy and exhausting experience as your mind and body process and adjust to your loss.

It's not uncommon to feel guilty for things you did or didn't do. Many bereaved people find themselves feeling angry – with God, family, friends, the hospital and medical staff, themselves or with the one who has died.

It is not at all unusual to have difficulty in remembering even simple everyday tasks during this time. Many people also have feelings of anxiety, helplessness, fear and tremendous loneliness during this time. You may well think that you will never feel better again.

### **Health**

It is quite natural to feel tired and be unable to sleep, eat or concentrate properly. You may begin to have pains you normally don't have. For the most part these are things that happen to bereaved people, but if they persist you should see your doctor.

### **Wanting to escape**

You may feel that you could cope better if you moved house and disposed of the things that are reminders of your loved one. Bereavement IS painful. It is much better to make important decisions, like moving house, when you are able to think more clearly and objectively. Try to avoid making big decisions until you feel stronger and more able to cope with life.



## How can I help myself?

Grief is individual and each of us reacts to it differently. No one can completely understand what another person's grief is like, but it is an experience most of us will go through at some point in our lives. If you find that you have feelings of guilt, panic, fear, anger or self-pity, or any others that seem alien to you, try not to hide them, but share them with someone you trust, who is understanding and willing to listen, as often this can be very helpful. Remember, these feelings are part of your grief.

## Beginning to live again

In time you will become aware that you are beginning to have better hours and days. Gradually you will begin to renew some of your old interests and take up new ones, and will find pleasure and happiness creeping in. We often hear individuals say that they feel guilty for having happy or positive thoughts; this is not uncommon at all and it is important for you

to remember that this is part of your grieving process and an adjustment to your new situation. You will find yourself being able to listen to that 'special' song or recall a memory of something special you once shared with your loved one and find it brings more happiness than sadness. Your love and memories of that special person will never leave you and through ***the talking and sharing of your memories, amidst your sorrow, you will develop ways to cope, and find hope and happiness for the future.***





## **Bereavement Support**

Whilst we know grief is an emotionally difficult and painful experience, it is not uncommon for these initial, very raw and overwhelming emotions and behaviours to last for between three and six months.



**COVID-19 UPDATE**

If you have have any Covid-19/coronavirus symptoms, (high temperature or new consistent cough) please do not visit us. For latest update, [click here](#)



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## Children

## Support for Children and Young People

Currently we offer bereavement group work for primary school age children and individual support for all children and young people.

We can support adults in how to talk to children and young people about coping with the illness or death of a loved one.

Alternatively, you can visit [www.pth.org.uk/carer-and-family-support/children/](http://www.pth.org.uk/carer-and-family-support/children/) to see the online support we offer for children and families.

Please contact us using the details on the back of this leaflet for further details.

## Pastoral and Spiritual Support

Our ethos is to care for the whole person - not just physically, but emotionally, socially and spiritually as well. We aim to value and respect everyone equally, offering this care to all of our patients irrespective of their belief, culture, background, gender or sexuality. From supporting specific faith needs to offering a confidential listening ear, we work with our colleagues to support you in whatever way we can.







## Benefits & Entitlements

After the death of a loved one, there may be financial and practical matters that you need support in dealing with. We can offer a range of advice, including helping you to claim Bereavement Benefit and access the Social Fund. We can also signpost you to agencies such as: The Probate Office, The One Stop Service, Funeral Directors, the Department for Work & Pensions and other associated services.

If you are not in receipt of a state pension and were married when your spouse died you may be entitled to a payment. Please visit the Department for Work & Pensions website searching for 'bereavement support payment', where you will find details and the eligibility criteria. Alternatively, you can call 0800 731 0469 or your local Job Centre Plus.

## **A Time to Remember**

Marking the death of a loved one is an important part of the grieving process. Our initial sense of loss can be expressed at the funeral, but people often find it helpful to attend other occasions, at a later date.

‘A Time to Remember’ is a short service in which the names of those who have died in our care are read out and people are invited to light a candle in memory of their loved one if they wish. Dates and times for these services will be published on our website.



# Breaking through the clouds

At Phyllis Tuckwell, we understand how important it is to remember those who have died. People grieve in many different ways, and some may prefer one way of remembering their loved one, while others may prefer another. We therefore offer several different ways in which you can pay tribute to the person who has died.

## Remembrance Book

Our Remembrance Book is kept in the Quiet Room at the Hospice, and contains the names of those who have died whilst under the care of Phyllis Tuckwell. Anyone who has lost a loved one under our care can request for the name of that person to be entered into the Book, and relatives and friends can come into the Hospice at any time to see it.

Names are not automatically added to the Book, but after a patient has died, their friends and relatives are asked if they would like that person's name entered. If you are unsure whether your loved one's name is in the Book, please contact staff at the Hospice, who

will check for you. If you would like to view the Book, you may want to ring beforehand to check that no one else is viewing it at that time. You are, of course, welcome to just pop in, but there may be a little wait until you can access the Book.

Names are entered into the Remembrance Book on a monthly basis by a volunteer who is a calligrapher, so if you have requested for the name of a loved one to be entered, please note that it may not happen immediately.

If you have any queries about the Remembrance Book, please contact our Patient and Family Support team on **01252 729430**.



## Memory Tree

The Memory Tree is a beautiful metal sculpture which stands in a quiet area of the Hospice gardens. Along its branches curl 300 thin hooks, from which delicate leaves can be hung, each dedicated by family or friends to the memory of a loved one.

For a donation of £100 or more, families and friends can have the leaf engraved with the name of their loved one. The leaf will then be displayed on the Tree for twelve months, after which it will be placed in a presentation box and given to the person who bought it.

If you would like to buy a leaf, please contact the Fundraising team on **01252 729446** or email **[support@pth.org.uk](mailto:support@pth.org.uk)**

## Virtual Memory Meadow

We have created a colourful meadow full of flowers and butterflies, each in memory of a loved one who has died. The meadow is a virtual one, constantly in bloom, with each flower or butterfly placed in memory of a loved one.

If you would like to place a flower or butterfly in memory of someone who has died, and make a donation to the work which Phyllis Tuckwell does to care for those living with an advanced or terminal illness, please visit

**[www.pth.org.uk/  
memorymeadow](http://www.pth.org.uk/memorymeadow)**





# *Light up a Life*

## **Virtual Light up a Life Service**

Just before Christmas every year, we hold our Light up a Life service, to remember those who have died and to celebrate their lives.

This poignant service consists of readings, singing hymns and carols, and watch as the lights are switched on, every one of them in honour and memory of those who have died.

Please keep an eye on our website for the date of this year's Light up a Life service, or call Claire McDonald on **01252 729446** for more details.

## **Tribute Fund**

Setting up a Tribute Fund can be a unique and positive way to remember a loved one. The Fund will carry their name and stand as a lasting memorial to their life, whilst the money in it will go

towards helping us to support and care for more patients and families living with an advanced or terminal illness.

The Fund can remain open for as long as you wish, and you can contribute to it as often or as little as you want. We can also create an online Tribute Fund – a personalised web page where you and your family and friends can upload photos, messages and videos of the person whose life you are remembering – a perfect place to share and keep safe those special memories.

If you would like to set up a Tribute Fund, or would like to discuss it with someone who can answer your questions, please call the Fundraising team on **01252 729446** or email **[support@pth.org.uk](mailto:support@pth.org.uk)**





# ***Frequently Asked Questions***

## **Who are the services for?**

These services are available to the families and friends of anyone who was under the care of Phyllis Tuckwell.

## **How long can I have support for?**

For as long as you and the person supporting you feel it is helping.

## **How do I sign up for a support group?**

To attend or find out more about our support groups, contact **01252 729430** or **pafs@pth.org.uk** and one of our team will be pleased to help you.

## **Do the volunteers discuss my sessions with anyone?**

The staff and volunteers who you have contact with must receive support and supervision as a regulatory requirement, and therefore your sessions may be discussed with their supervisor. We have a confidentiality policy and procedure which is strictly adhered to. Should you have any anxiety regarding confidentiality, please speak to the Patient & Family Support Team Manager at Phyllis Tuckwell.

## **What happens once I stop accessing support?**

We may write to you to ensure the service has met your expectations and our service objectives. You are under no obligation to reply, but we appreciate any comments.

### **What if I need support again?**

If you find that you would like to reconnect with the team about your loss, please contact us. We will discuss with you what service would best meet your needs and ensure that you are appropriately supported.



### **Is there anywhere else I can get support?**

CRUSE offers bereavement support and you can contact the local office on 01483 565660. If you need someone to talk to as a matter of urgency, The Samaritans number is 08457 909090. You may wish to access the website [www.caringtotheend.org](http://www.caringtotheend.org) where you will find information and support.

### **Do I have to pay for services from Phyllis Tuckwell?**

No, all services offered by Phyllis Tuckwell are free.

As a charity we are dependent on the local community for financial support, as we usually only receive about 20% of our funding from the NHS/Government.

If you would like to make a donation to Phyllis Tuckwell, please ask a member of staff or visit our website.



**Phyllis<sup>®</sup>  
Tuckwell**

Hospice Care  
...because every  
day is precious

**Breaking through the clouds  
I find the sun is shining**

**My heart is hopeful**

**In order to access  
any of the services in  
this leaflet please contact:**

Patient & Family Support Team  
Administrators at Phyllis Tuckwell:

**01252 729430**

Alternatively you can email:

**pafs@pth.org.uk**

***Large print version available on request.***

Farnham,  
Surrey, GU9 8BL  
Tel: 01252 729400  
**[www.pth.org.uk](http://www.pth.org.uk)**

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