



Bereavement: Supporting and signposting an adult struggling with loss

Bereavement, Grief and Loss

Bereavement is a natural response to loss and everybody grieves differently.

Whilst primarily linked to death of a family member or friend, bereavement can be experienced in other situations. Such as the loss of a relationship, pets being rehomed or dying, declining health, being unable to continue to work, or can be due to other aspects of life.

Signposts

- [C-A-S-T-L-E Directory of services](#)
- [Cruse Bereavement Care](#) – Covering Coventry and Warwickshire
- [Freddie's Wish](#) – Support service for grieving Parents Coventry and Warwickshire
- [Suicide Bereavement support](#)
- [Blue Cross](#) - Pet loss support
- [RSPCA](#) Pet Bereavement Toolkit
- [Canine Partners](#) – Bereavement Support

Further Considerations

[Mencap](#)'s website has a number of easy read documents to help explain loss to adults with learning disabilities.

Financial abuse can manifest during a bereavement when somebody exploits vulnerability. Professionals should always remain curious and concerns can be reported to [Action Fraud](#). A common cause of loneliness is loss of a friend or loved one. Encouraging an adult to join a community group, volunteering or reaching out to speak to somebody can help.

Supporting an Adult who is Self-Neglecting

A good approach to this is to:

- Be person - centred
 - Non-judgemental
 - Think creatively
 - Be empathetic
 - Always go back
 - Understand building trust takes time
- Regular, encouraging engagement and gentle persistence may help with risk management planning.

Professional Support and Considerations

Professionals working with adults can offer emotional support whilst respecting individual grieving styles. This includes encouraging communication about feelings and being aware of available resources for specialist support. Such as, bereavement councillors, local community groups or mental health support.

Supporting Autistic People

Autistic people may express grief and process loss in a number of ways due to their unique communication and sensory sensitivities. Professionals working with autistic people may see significant changes in their behaviour or the person may act differently to what would be expected. It is also important to recognise that along with emotional loss when somebody dies, there may also be a loss of routine, essential care and support for the person.

- [Autism.org](#) – Bereavement guide for professionals

Self-Neglect and Bereavement

The trauma of losing a loved one may contribute to an adult self-neglecting or it may lead to an already existing concern worsening. This coupled with other concerning factors such as mental or physical health issues, substance misuse, alcohol dependency or past experiences of trauma and abuse, can contribute to the need to trigger a multi-agency risk management approach.