



**Has
someone
died?**

*advice
for young
people*

Has someone died?

Someone close to you may have died.

You may have been injured yourself.

You may have witnessed the death, and injury to others.

What do I feel?

How you respond will be very personal and individual to you. These are some of the things that people often say when someone dies. They may help you to feel you are not completely alone.

'I can't believe it'

It may take you a long time to grasp what has happened. Some people carry on as if nothing has happened. It is hard to believe that someone important is not coming back.

'I feel nothing'

The shock can make you numb, you may feel you're in a different world.

'Why did it have to happen?'

Death can seem cruel and unfair, especially when you feel someone has died before their time or when you had plans for the future together.



Where to find help

- The school, the school nurse, counsellor or a trusted member of staff
- Your family doctor
- Youth information and advice
Tel: **0800 511 711**
- Child Bereavement Network
Tel: **0115 911 8070**
email: **cbn@ncb.org.uk**
- Cruse Bereavement Care
Tel: **0870 167 1677**
email: **helpline@crusebereavementcare.org.uk**

Young people between the age of 12 and 18 should call
Freephone: **0808 808 1677**

- Cruse Bereavement Care Youthline
www.cruselochaber.freeuk.com/youth.html
- If I should die
www.ifishoulddie.co.uk

'I feel so depressed, life has no meaning,
I can't go on'

Many people say there are times after a death when they feel there is nothing worth living for and they feel like ending it all.

'I hear and see her, what is wrong
with me?'

Thinking you are hearing or seeing someone who has died is a common experience and can happen when you least expect it.

'They said I'd be over it in a
few months'

Many people find it takes much longer to learn to cope without someone they love.

'One minute I'm angry and the next
minute I can't stop crying'

Many people find the mood swings very disturbing.

'I feel so guilty'

Many people experience guilt for being alive or not injured, or because of regrets for things not done.

It is common to have some or all of these feelings after a disaster and you may experience them immediately or some time later. The feelings can be very strong and frightening, especially if a death was sudden or violent, or a body was not recovered, or if many people died. It can feel as if you are losing control or 'going mad', but for most people the feelings become less intense over time.

'I wanted to talk over and over again'

I talked to my family, to my friends, anyone who would listen. I wanted them to understand how I was feeling, I wanted them to help me remember.

'I wanted people to say they knew what had happened'

Not avoid it or pretend they didn't know.

'I couldn't talk to anybody, just wanted to be alone'

What can help?

Reality

- Returning to the scene, attending funerals, and talking to people who know what happened, are all ways in which a situation which seems 'unbelievable' may be made more credible and easier to bear.

Support

- Sharing with others who have had similar experiences can help.

Routine

- Try to go back to school as soon as possible and take up your usual activities. It will give you a sense of structure and safety.

'I kept some special things that remind me of good times we had spent together'

Looking after yourself

Accidents

A disaster may become the main thing you think about for a long time. The stress of this and the lack of ability to focus on the here and now may make you more accident-prone.

Alcohol and Drugs

The extra tension may lead you to increase your intake of substances which you feel dull the pain temporarily. It is important to seek help if this is happening repeatedly.

Risky Behaviour

You may find that you are testing the limits of life and death by doing more risky things than you would normally. Beware!

When to seek further help

- If you feel that your emotions are not falling into place over a period of time and you always feel tense, confused, empty and exhausted
- If, for a long time, you have to keep active in order to avoid painful feelings
- If you continue to have nightmares and poor sleep
- If you have no person or group with whom to share your emotions, but you feel the need to do so
- If your relationships seem to be suffering badly, or sexual problems develop
- If you have accidents
- If you have continued to smoke, drink or take drugs in excess since the event
- If your school performance suffers
- If those around you, e.g members of your family, are particularly vulnerable, or are not healing satisfactorily.

'I feel such pain'

Physical and mental pain can feel completely overwhelming and very frightening.

'I go over it again and again'

You can't stop thinking about the events leading up to the death.

'If only'

You may feel guilty about things you said or did or that you didn't say or do.



