



Talking and being with people who are bereaved



Try to:

- Be aware of how to sensitively approach interactions with those who are bereaved, to have the confidence to talk or just listen
- Acknowledge the person's loss and offer sympathy. Even just telling them that you're finding it hard to know what to say is ok too
- Let the person lead the conversation at their own pace and try to be comfortable if there are any silences
- Mirror the words and phrases used by the person who is bereaved
- Handle and package possessions sensitively
- Ensure that you are looking after your needs as well as those of your team

Try not to:

- Hide away from a person who is bereaved out of fear or embarrassment
- Force anyone to open up or press for details
- Say that you know how someone feels or make reference to your own thoughts, views or beliefs
- Be apprehensive to use the words dead or died. Euphemisms are often used but aren't always helpful
- Hand possessions to a family in an unthoughtful manner
- Make assumptions about how someone is feeling based upon outward appearances. Take talk of suicide very seriously, seek advice, either about what you should do or what can be done to support someone



Please visit www.sad.scot.nhs.uk to watch a short animated film on this topic and for other educational resources on bereavement for health and social care professionals

Grief

- There is no right or wrong way to grieve - it is a process not an event
- Grief is a personal journey, unique to each of us
- People may experience a combination of powerful emotions at different times



Please note these resources are not designed to be used by the lay public (including patients, relatives or carers)



www.sad.scot.nhs.uk



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