



CORK COUNSELLING CLINIC
PSYCHOTHERAPY · MEDIATION · COACHING



GRIEF & BEREAVEMENT

Letting go with love



Grief and Bereavement

Grief and bereavement are profound human experiences that touch everyone at some point in their lives. Losing a loved person or any profound loss is an intensely personal journey, marked by a myriad of emotions that can feel overwhelming and sometimes insurmountable. At Cork Counselling Clinic, we understand the complexities of grief and provide compassionate support to help individuals navigate this challenging time.

Understanding Grief and Bereavement

Grief is the natural response to loss. It encompasses a wide range of feelings from deep sadness to anger, and can also include shock, guilt, anxiety, and disbelief. Bereavement refers to the process of recovering from the loss you are experiencing, such as the loss of a loved one, loss of your job, your health, a beloved pet or any substantial grief is part of this process. It's important to recognize that grief is not a linear process; it involves a variety of emotional responses that can come and go unexpectedly.

Everyone experiences grief differently, depending on a variety of factors including their relationship with the person who died, the loss experienced, their coping mechanisms, their life experiences, and their support system. There is no "normal" timetable for grieving. Some people start to feel better in weeks or months, for others, the grieving process is measured in years.

The Stages of Grief

While grief is highly personal, many researchers have identified common stages that many people experience. Originally developed by Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, these stages include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. These stages are not a rigid roadmap but are helpful as a guideline:

- 1. Denial:** In this stage, individuals may find it hard to believe that the loss has actually happened. Denial is a defence mechanism that buffers the immediate shock, numbing us to our emotions.
- 2. Anger:** As the masking effects of denial begin to wear off, reality and its pain re-emerge. The intense emotion is deflected from our vulnerable core, redirected and expressed instead as anger.



- 3. Bargaining:** During bargaining, there may be a struggle to find meaning, reaching out to tell one's story, or making a deal with a higher power in an attempt to change the reality of the situation.
- 4. Depression:** This stage is marked by sadness, regret, fear, and uncertainties. It might feel as though it will last forever. This is a time for the release of bottled-up emotion.
- 5. Acceptance:** Not everyone reaches this stage, and it's not about feeling "okay" with what happened. Rather, acceptance is about acknowledging the reality of the loss and starting to adjust to life without the loved one.

Coping with Grief

Counselling plays a crucial role in helping individuals manage the complexities of grief. At Cork Counselling Clinic, our therapists are trained to offer support through these stages in a thoughtful and non-judgemental way.

- **Sharing the burden:** Sometimes, just talking about the loss can be healing. Our therapists provide a safe space for bereaved individuals to share their stories and express their feelings, which can often lead to a sense of relief.
- **Identifying coping strategies:** Each person's grief is unique, and what works for one person might not work for another. Our therapists help individuals explore various coping mechanisms, whether through creative expression like writing or painting, physical activity, or meditation and mindfulness.
- **Handling complicated grief:** Sometimes grief becomes so overwhelming that it leads to complications like depression or prolonged grief. Our therapists are equipped to work with these complications and provide the appropriate therapy, including cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) and other modalities. An example of complex grief may be the loss of a parent who was also emotionally neglectful or abusive.

Rebuilding and Finding Meaning

One of the most significant aspects of managing grief is slowly beginning to rebuild your life without your loved one. This doesn't mean "moving on" or forgetting about your loved one but finding a way to preserve their memory while continuing to live your life. Also for example If you are grieving the loss of your health, partner through separation or any substantial loss, then finding new meaning through such loss is a valuable goal.



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Our therapists at the Counselling Clinic can help you explore ways to honour the memory of your loved one or your personal loss, perhaps through rituals, anniversaries, or dedications, as part of the healing process. They can also guide you in rediscovering your own sense of purpose and joy, helping you to gradually find meaning again.

Grief is a powerful, often a profoundly difficult part of life. But you don't have to navigate it alone. If you or someone you know is going through a period of grief, Cork Counselling Clinic offers a range of services designed to support and assist during these tough times. Our aim is not to hasten the grieving process but to facilitate a meaningful and manageable journey through it, helping you to adapt and find renewed sense of hope, peace and new meaning.

**You can contact us by phone 089 600 9460 / 021 439 7552 or
through our website www.corkcounsellingclinic.ie**

We will be happy to take your call and look forward to working
with you in creating a harmonious and strong relationship.

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