



# *A Brief Guide to Grief*

**Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025**

# Grief...

Is universal, yet individual

Is messy

Does *not* move through  
neat stages

Is unavoidable

Does not have a set time line

Is experienced differently, even by  
people within the same family



Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

# *We might grieve when...*

- A loved one dies: human or pet.
- A life-limiting or life-changing medical diagnosis is received.
- We see our loved one decline (eg: dementia).
- Something very important to us ends, is lost, destroyed or changes.
- We realise life is not going to be the way we hoped or dreamed.



Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

*It is normal to experience  
some or all of these...*



sadness      anger      tiredness  
worry      headaches      wailing  
shock      body aches      nausea  
numbness      confusion  
brain fog      fear      gut upsets  
heart palpitations      emptiness  
tears      no tears      denial  
loss of appetite      loneliness  
blame      resentment      hopelessness  
guilt      panic      anxiety  
helplessness      yearning  
questioning beliefs      relief  
rumination      shame      stuck

\*Always see your GP to confirm symptoms are not due to an underlying medical reason.

Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

## *Children might also...*

- Be more clingy, winey or distant
- Forget to pack everything for school or do expected tasks
- Regress - eg: wet themselves or want your help more
- Want more hugs or time alone
- *Appear* not to care
- Be moodier or more argumentative
- Act up more at school and/or home
- Ask lots of questions - even the same ones multiple times
- Worry about their own health and that of their loved ones
- Want to know how they might be impacted, eg: will they need to move home or school?
- Not want to leave you to go to school

# *A Healthy Grief Process*

When grief is new, we spend most of our time 'actively grieving', focusing on the loss and experiencing those things mentioned earlier. The remaining time, we just do what is necessary to get through each moment.

Slowly, we give ourselves **necessary** respite from the grief by decreasing the time spent actively grieving and increasing the time restoring our life - doing daily tasks, self-care, working, socialising, participating in activities and deliberately distracting ourselves.

We continue to flip back and forth (oscillate) between actively grieving and actively restoring life and wellbeing, often several times in a day, until slowly, we find ourselves mostly focusing on restoring life.

*\*This is a model of grief called "The Dual Process Model" by Stroebe & Schut*

Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

# *Secondary Losses*

A significant loss often creates multiple 'secondary losses and changes'. Eg:

- Identity and role
- Assets, eg: home, car, objects
- Finances, income, employment
- Neighbourhood, location
- Relationships
- School
- Community, local supports
- Dreams, hopes, wishes
- Social activities, groups, teams
- Values, beliefs, priorities
- Autonomy, independence
- Time, routines
- Confidence



Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

# *Grief Waves*

The sudden, increase of intense grief pain that completely consumes us.  
It can happen...

unexpectedly, out of the blue

**or**

on / near anniversaries,  
significant days, or due to  
sensory reminders (a song,  
smell, food, place, etc...)

**Grief waves come and go.  
We can learn to ride them.**



Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025



# *Living with Bereavement Grief*

There is no timeline for grief.  
The truth is,

We don't get over our grief.  
We learn to live with it by

growing *around* it  
and  
learning there is more than one way  
to have a good life



Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

# *Thoughts of suicide*

It is **very common** for people grieving to have thoughts of wanting to die. It may be in the hope of taking away unbearable pain, or to be with their loved one.

For some, the thought might briefly enter their mind, for others it might be more persistent and thoughts of how to achieve this might also begin.

Please let a trusted adult know and  
contact 24/7

**Lifeline (Australia)**

**13 11 14**

**[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)**



Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

# Remembering loved ones

It is **normal to worry** that if we stop grieving, we will forget or dishonour our loved one. However, this is not so and there are many ways to stay connected to your loved ones. *Here are just a few...*

- Talk about them, share stories, photos, videos and memories.
- Make a playlist that reminds you of them.
- Display some of their photos and objects.
- Grow a pot plant in their favourite colour, or the colour of their sport team.
- Eat their favourite food on their birthday
- Watch some movies or shows they liked.
- Read their favourite book to yourself or others.
- Visit a favourite location.



Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

## *What might help, even a little...*

- Self-compassion
- Having a good cry (a sad movie can be helpful)
- Talking about your loved one
- Spending some time outside
- Going for a walk, dance, swim, exercise
- Deliberately looking for mini moments of joy
- Spending time in a special, spiritual place, eg: returning to country
- Some time distracting yourself and some time acknowledging and processing your feelings and losses - then alternating between these.
- Writing, listening to music
- Volunteering / helping others
- Doing something creative or constructive
- Speaking to a grief counsellor
- Doing something to continue your connection with your loved one, eg: creating a reflection cabinet, memory box, having their favourite food on their birthday...
- Doing something in honour of your loved one, eg: a donation on their behalf or raising awareness of a condition.

Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

*My hopes for you...*  
*(in your own time)*

A discovery of strengths you never realised you had.

A realisation that there are many paths to a good life, but they're not always easy to navigate.

An ability to notice the everyday, mini moments of joy all around you.

An appreciation that all emotions are valid and they all come and go.

Self-compassion and compassion towards others.

Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025

*For further information*

**E:** [jo@nggriefcounselling.au](mailto:jo@nggriefcounselling.au)

**M:** 0468 853 749

**W:** [www.nggriefcounselling.au](http://www.nggriefcounselling.au)



Supporting children and adults



Natural Growth Grief Counselling  
Natural Growth Childhood Counselling  
2025