

Grief and
bereavement:

Anticipatory grief



- What are grief and bereavement?
- What is anticipatory grief?
- How does it affect us?
- Preparing for loss
- More information

What are **grief and bereavement?**

Bereavement is..

Bereavement is the period of time when we have lost someone or something important to us

Grief is..

Grief is a response to bereavement. Everyone experiences grief differently, though it is commonly associated with feelings of sadness, despair, anger, or denial

Grief can also affect us physically; for example, we may find a change in our eating habits or sleeping patterns. These reactions are common and normal

Types of grief..

There are many different types of grief

Some of the more commonly recognised forms of grief include **anticipatory grief**, disenfranchised grief or ambiguous grief

But there are other types as well, such as parasocial grief, or special interest grief

What is

anticipatory grief?

Anticipatory

grief is when we grieve a loss before it has happened. It usually comes about when a loved one receives a terminal diagnosis, or a shorter prognosis than had been hoped for.

Similar to other types of grief, the intensity of emotions can fluctuate from day-to-day.

Anyone can experience anticipatory grief, but some people (like younger people or those who haven't experienced grief before) may find it particularly intense.

How can it affect us?



We may be left feeling concerned or fearful when thinking about a future loss, or feel despair when thinking about a loved one's illness.

It's normal to feel angry about the position we find ourselves in, or to feel alone or abandoned. This can lead to us feeling guilt for these emotions.

Preparing for loss

Anticipatory grief can help us prepare for loss. It's helpful to understand what is happening and consider what will happen next.

It can also allow us to sort out any unfinished business, or put plans in place. Some people find their loss less overwhelming as they know what to expect. It doesn't make it any less difficult, but it can help us feel more prepared.



More information

Mind

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/bereavement/about-bereavement/>

Marie Curie

<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/information/grief/stages-of-grief>

Cruse

<https://www.cruse.org.uk/understanding-grief/>

Sue Ryder

<https://www.sueryder.org/grief-support/about-bereavement-and-grief/stages-of-grief/>

This leaflet was researched and created by Charley Whitehurst, supervised by Teign Angels. Charley has been on a work placement with us from September to December 2025.