



Railway Mission

Support on  
life's journey

When we  
lose a loved  
one...



# Chaplaincy support following the death of someone close



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## There is nothing in life sadder than the loss of a loved one.

The death of a close friend, colleague or relative brings the pain of separation into our lives. Along with the hurt, there are many emotions that come with bereavement.

We may go into shock, or feel a numbness inside. Often there are patterns of regret, anger or guilt that can sweep over us. Uncontrollable sorrow can envelope us. Some or all of these emotions may come upon us at any given time, often when we least expect it.

For some people it will feel as if they are the only ones going through this intense suffering and it can lead to times of self-imposed isolation, with no seeming cure for the level of grief being experienced.

## Working through grief

When we are first confronted with the loss of a close family member

or friend, it can seem as if there is no way out of the agony, but there are things we can do that will help us come to terms as much as possible with what has happened.

## Is there way through this? Can these emotions ever be overcome?

There will be periods when we can step out of the overwhelming weight of despair, but the memories will recur from time to time. However, remembering things can be of assistance when we learn to adjust to them, and work through the associated emotions and feelings of grief. There is always a way forward.

It is a process that may not seem possible at first, but learning to sort through memories will help us in the long term.

## Grief is a normal reaction

The first thing to know is that strong feelings like depression, despair and even anger are normal, natural reactions to loss.

Your first reaction might be shock, which is perfectly normal. There is no shame in allowing your grief to show. It is a release valve for personal loss. We have human responses in place, emotionally, that, despite the pain, can help us sift through the changes in life that come with grief and loss.

When touched by bereavement we should try not to suppress the emotions that will inevitably surface. These emotions can help us through the pain of loss. They can help us come to terms with loss, especially if we share those feelings with family, friends or a support group.

## It's OK to seek help

There are many different ways in which people react to the loss of a family member, close friend, or colleague. We all respond differently to loss and may have different emotions to others who share the same loss. This is normal as we cope with grief in different ways.

Initially, some may need to gather around familiar faces for comfort or strength, whilst others may not want

to speak to anyone, see them or hear from them until they feel able to articulate their feelings without breaking down. It's a personal thing. It's normal. It's natural. It's who we are at the moment.

This may be a time of soul-searching and emotional isolation, but we may eventually need to find others, like family, friends or someone else, to help us through. It will likely also be a support to them as they grieve. We need each other.

## Chaplaincy support

What we will need to do as soon as we feel able is seek help from others. It is hard to face grief alone. Friends and family are our main means of support, but there are also professional care agencies that are trained to offer support to help us through the various stages of grief.

Chaplains provide care and support to those who are grieving following a death on the railways. Our mission is to offer short term care and support and act as a signposting service to other support agencies to help you through this time.

# Railway chaplains

Railway Mission is a chaplaincy service to all staff and patrons of the railways of England, Scotland and Wales.

Our chaplains are equipped to come alongside family and friends to be a listening ear and comforting voice to the bereaved.

Chaplains will also help find the right agencies to help continue with ongoing support should it be needed.

Railway Mission partners with BTP and railway industry companies to provide independent, impartial and confidential support to anyone affected by tragic incidents on the railway network, regardless of status, lifestyle, race or religious beliefs.

[www.railwaymission.org/grief](http://www.railwaymission.org/grief)

**Call: 0203 887 7000**



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