

Grief and loss

Grief is a natural, powerful and human response to the loss of someone or something close to us. It takes time to adjust or grow around grief and during this time you will need to care for yourself, while managing everyday life.

What is grief? There are many experiences in life that may cause you grief. For example:

- *the death of a family member or friend (bereavement)*
- *the death of a colleague or peer (bereavement)*
- *a relationship break-up, separation, or divorce*
- *leaving your country, family or friends to live in another country or location*
- *moving away from home*
- *intermitting or withdrawing from your study*
- *leaving Australia and returning home*
- *failing a subject*

The feelings of grief can include sadness, anger, guilt, regret, relief, amongst others. You may be confused and your thoughts disorganised as you adjust to the change and loss. Studying at this time can be very difficult.

The process of grieving is a very individual experience. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, and in fact there are different styles of grieving.

When you are grieving it can be helpful to talk about how you feel and what you think with a trusted other.

Talking may help you deal with the loss, help with feelings of isolation, and has the potential for others to show they care, and support you. If you do not have family or friends around to talk to, or don't want to talk to them about your loss, talking to a counsellor can be really useful.

Grief and your study

When you grieve your ability to study can be affected. Rarely are you so overwhelmed with grief for long periods that some study is not possible. However, understand that long periods of uninterrupted study will not be possible as your grief will never be far away. Sometimes study may in fact offer a distraction from your grief.

Apply for extensions to give you the extra time needed to complete your work. Attend classes as much as possible to ensure you don't miss anything new. Have readings close by so that you can study when you feel able to.

Quick tips

1. *Immediately after your loss, allow yourself to grieve and be involved in any ceremonies*
2. *Be aware that grief will come and go. Grief is a normal human response to loss.*
3. *Contact your pastoral care teacher and/ or administration by email explaining any absence and requesting details about what you've missed*
4. *Try to study a little, often*
5. *Talk to someone about your loss*
6. *Keep grieving, and keep going as much as you can. Pace yourself.*

Contacting a counsellor

BIT provides free on campus counselling to assist you in managing grief. Please make an appointment at reception or speak to our counsellor direct. All counselling sessions are STRICTLY confidential.

Taking it further

National Association for Loss and Grief (NALAG):
<http://www.nalagvic.org.au/>