

“How are you feeling?”

It might seem like a simple question with a simple answer, but it’s probably a difficult question right now. How can you contain your myriad of emotions and experience to a simple answer? How do you even identify any singular emotion clearly when it may feel like a constantly shifting emotional landscape?

It has now been three months of experiencing grief, the emotions, and feelings of disrupted love. You may be feeling a sense of emptiness or alone-ness, loss, suffering, shock, pain, anguish, joy, anger, guilt, change, anxiety, uncertainty, torment, ache, exhaustion, unknown, relief, hostility, confusion, agony, gratitude, bitterness, fear, sadness, numbness, regret, thankfulness, unpredictability and lack of control, as well as larger questions of life and mortality -all mixed together in a undefined cluster that can make this time of grief difficult to understand and navigate. These feelings might peak at different times, and some may come later or not at all. And all of this is normal.

By now, people in your circle have gone back to their regular activities and you might find yourself alone in your home for the first time in a long time, or you might be having trouble concentrating. Emotional exhaustion and unexpected intrusive thoughts and emotions can make it seem like your mental and emotional processes are now taking you for a ride. It is normal and easy to feel that life is out of control. And life usually is outside our control. Grief has a way of revealing this truth more than anything else. What you are feeling is normal.

Relief will come. With a good strategy for support, coping skills, good self-care, you will navigate this grief journey and make it through to the other side a transformed person. Grief does that. It transforms us. And we move through it on its terms.

Your Bristol Bereavement team is here to continue to support you. This might be a good time to check out a grief support group, or some grief counseling, or just check in on the phone. Talking about your experience will help you move through the process of grief. All emotional energy needs to find its way into words. It needs to be talked about. We are here for you. You are not alone.

Walking with you,

-Bristol Bereavement Team