



Dr. Marilyn L Barton
B.Ap.Sc (Psych), Grad. Dip. (Couns),
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Applecross Psychological Services proudly offers Cognitive-Behavioural (CBT) and other therapies to help you cope with grief and loss.

Inside, you will find information on how to cope with grief and loss prior to your session with Dr. Marilyn Barton.

Grief and Loss

Grief is what we feel when we lose someone or something important to us. It is a normal and natural individual response to loss. It is known to all human beings, regardless of age, sex, culture and religion. Extremes of grief appear when one loses a close and meaningful relationship. Examples of loss are through death, divorce, separation, abortion, the loss of health, physical or emotional lifestyle, including enforced retirement. All of these and more, may precipitate this most painful human emotion of grief.

Coping With Grief

We should be allowed to grieve in whatever way suits us best. The feelings we experience when we are bereaved are healthy, normal and part of the healing process. In our society, there is a genuine belief that getting upset is bad for us, however we should be allowed to grieve in whatever way we wish.



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How to Cope with Grief and Loss



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The Grieving Process

The journey from grief to healing is a painful one. Often it is a lonely journey, characterised by self doubts and intense emotions, but an important one for healing the wound of separation. It is normal and healthy to experience a wide range of feelings, and express intense and painful emotions related to loss, such as shock, sadness, anger, guilt, depression and despair, as well as relief, hope and acceptance.

A bereaved person who has not successfully grieved is more prone to illness, both physical and psychological and a total absence of grief - when a person carries on as though nothing has happened - is not a healthy sign and may also indicate a need for professional help. The painful feelings will diminish with time. However if they remain intense and prolonged, then professional help may be required.

How Long Can Grief Last?

Will it go on forever? It takes time to accept the loss. If you allow the expression of emotion, then it can help reduce the symptoms. Symptoms can last from three months to up to five years or longer. There is no right or wrong in the type of symptoms, the length of time or the intensity of the symptoms associate with grief.

What Will Help?

- Being gentle with your self.
- Keeping your stress levels to a minimum.
- Talking about your loss.
- Trying to be with people you find comforting and supporting and especially those who don't expect you to be brave.
- Taking some time out from your grief to do some of the things you enjoy.
- Asking for practical help.
- Finding safe and creative ways to release the feelings of anger, pain and loneliness, such as writing in a journal or going for walks.

What Are The Usual Reactions?

- Shock, disbelief and often denial.
- Feeling disorientated.
- Feeling numb in the first few days.
- Bodily distress ranging from migraines to upset stomachs.
- Difficulty eating and sleeping.
- Replaying the events over and over.
- Experiencing vivid dreams and nightmares.
- Being dependent on other people to a greater or lesser extent.
- An increase in addictive behaviours, such as smoking or drinking.
- Impulsive acts such as quitting a job or breaking off a friendship.
- Emotional outbursts.
- Anger / aggression.
- Crying.
- Sadness.
- Feelings of emptiness and loneliness.
- Guilt / regret.
- Feeling personally responsible for the loss.
- Depression / despair.
- Relief, hope and acceptance.

Further Help Needed

Becoming stuck in one of the natural phases of grieving such as self blame is also common, but not helpful.

At these times, you may wish to seek help from someone you trust such as a close friend or family member or professionally through counselling.

Applecross Psychological Services can assist you with this process.

Who is Dr. Marilyn Barton?

Dr. Marilyn Barton established Applecross Psychological Services ten years ago to care for the mental health and well being of patients in the southern corridor of Perth. She is an experienced clinical psychologist, who has been counselling children, young adults, parents, families for the last 25 years. Along with her tertiary education, including a PhD, Dr. Barton also possesses a Diploma of Clinical Hypnosis. She is also a member of the Australian Psychological Society's College of Clinical Psychologists.

How Do I See Dr. Marilyn Barton?

- Appointments can be made via phone or email. You can meet with us or even SKYPE or FaceTime us from the comfort of your own home.
- Monday - Thursday, 9am - 5pm.
- Appointments are 50 minutes long.

