



Living With Bereavement

A fortnightly support group at Dove House

The Living With Bereavement group is a free fortnightly group that runs on alternate Thursdays at Dove House from 10.30am – 11.45am. We invite those who are bereaved to join us for morning tea, social connection, and peer support in a safe and comfortable environment. The group is open to anyone who has lost a loved and are welcome to stay for up to two years after bereavement. The group is facilitated by two Dove House staff members.

The group is a social support group that we offer ongoingly. New people can join at any time. We appreciate how daunting it can be for those who are often vulnerable in bereavement to join the group, however once they come along, we see people benefit greatly from connecting with others who are going through similar experiences. Here is some feedback we recently received from two members of the group:

"The Living With Bereavement sessions have helped to uplift me during a very difficult and emotionally stressful time. The gentle, calm atmosphere is very soothing and there is a feeling of freedom to talk and share without having to explain anything or apologise for being an emotional basket case. Everyone in the group understands as they have also lost a significant other."

"I was 7 months into life without my husband before going to my first bereavement group. I'd felt kind of on track with my grief. I had fully leaned into it – talking and crying a lot, was really well supported by friends and family, and had an understanding of what I needed and when."

But as we know, people around us don't quite get it, and the loneliness of that motivated me to find people who did.

Despite those of us in the group being at different stages along the grief 'pathway',

having different ways of expressing ourselves, or of manifesting grief, there's so much comfort in being with people who understand, who really do get it. Who feel some of what I feel.

There's almost a feeling of unity - we identify with each other's feelings and experiences, and we laugh (and rage) together. We're unfiltered, and I draw strength and inspiration from the others. To feel just like everyone else in the room for an hour or so a fortnight, briefly eases the loneliness of my grief.

Orla and Steffi are kind and gentle, and they swing appropriately and respectfully between observers and facilitators. I'm grateful for the group. I get to leave the weight at the door."

Group Times: Alternating Thursday mornings from 10.30 to 11.45, starting again on 18 May 2023. This is an ongoing fortnightly group.

Venue: Dove House, 207a Riddell Road, Glendowie

Facilitators: Steffi Richter (registered psychotherapist with special interest in grief and loss) and Orla O'Riordan (registered nurse working in the area of palliative care).

Cost: Free

How to attend: please use the Dove House referral form on the website below. We will then add you to our email list for our group and you will receive an email invitation the day before the next group. If you would like to talk to one of the facilitators to find out more about the group, please contact us on 09 5754555 or nurse@dovehospice.org.nz.

<https://dovehospice.org.nz/make-a-referral/carer-or-bereaved-form/>

Nga Mihi Nui,

Orla O'Riordan and Steffi Richter

