








EMPLOYEE SERIES





Tips for managing disenfranchised grief

Disenfranchised grief, also known as hidden grief or sorrow, refers to any grief that goes unacknowledged or unvalidated by social norms. This kind of grief is often minimized or not understood by others, which makes it particularly hard to process and work through.

What it might look like:

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Unrecognised relationships. E.g. – LGBTQI, polyamorous partner, a pet, unknown sibling or absent parent
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Non death loss. E.g. – adoption that did not go through, loss of safety, job, dementia, loss of mobility
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Loss around stigma. E.g. – death by suicide, loss of a loved one convicted of a crime, loss of relationship due to addiction or estrangement
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Exclusion from mourning. E.g. – loss of a lover extramarital affair, children, someone with mental illness
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Grief reactions that does not align with social norms. E.g. – anger, keeping busy, substance abuse

Coping Tips:

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Seek support from someone who understands. E.g. validates your experience and listens emphatically
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Provide your own mourning rituals. E.g. – planting a tree in their honour, writing a letter to bring closure, making a collage or photos and mementos
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Don't be afraid to ask for what you need. E.g. – “I don't want to be alone” or “I would like to talk about it”
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Getting help. E.g. – grief counsellors, mental health professionals, EAP counselling

Reference - <https://www.healthline.com/health/mental-health/disenfranchised-grief#finding-support>

If you would like to book an appointment and /or speak with one of our Counsellors, it's as easy as calling 1300 66 77 00 or New Zealand 0800 327 669 or visit our website www.accesswellbeingservices.com.au