

Understanding & Coping with Disenfranchised Grief

Grief isn't always recognised in the way it should be. When a loss goes unacknowledged by others, it can feel isolating and difficult to process. Disenfranchised grief is real, and finding the right support can help you navigate it in your own way.



Disenfranchised grief is the kind of loss that isn't always recognised or validated by others, making it even harder to process.

It can take many forms, such as:

- **Unacknowledged relationships** – losing a partner in an LGBTIQI or polyamorous relationship, a pet, or an absent parent.
- **Non-death losses** – a failed adoption, job loss, or declining health.
- **Loss tied to stigma** – grief after suicide, estrangement, or a loved one's criminal conviction.
- **Being excluded from mourning** – not being recognised as a griever (e.g. after an extramarital affair or loss of a loved one with mental illness).
- **Grief that looks 'different'** – expressing loss through anger, staying busy, or substance use.

Coping Tips:

- **Lean on those who understand** – connect with people who validate your grief.
- **Create your own rituals** – plant a tree, write a letter, or make a memory collage.
- **Speak up about what you need** – say, "I'd like to talk about it" or "I need company."
- **Reach out for help** – grief counsellors, mental health professionals, and EAP support can make a difference.

Grief is personal, and all losses are valid. You don't have to go through it alone.

To book an appointment with one of our counsellors, call or scan the QR Code



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