

HOW COUNSELLING & PEER SUPPORT WORKS



Grief is an inevitable part of every human life, regardless of gender. It is also one of the great isolating forces in the lives of men. Male grief is all too often invisible, misunderstood, and unwanted, which leaves many men in the difficult position of having to deal with their grief on their own, if they deal with it at all. For many there is a cultural expectation that bereaved dads will heal from their grief in a relatively short period of time – that their feelings of sadness, anger, helplessness, and guilt will just disappear.

How men and women grieve is significantly linked to the roles and the different expectations society places on us. The way in which many men deal with loss and grief can best be understood by thinking about their expected role in society. Despite many changes in our society, men are generally expected to protect their partners and children....so when a baby dies a dad can find themselves internally questioning their role and their feelings.

We know not all men grieve through crying and talking, for many it is about doing things, keeping busy and being around people that understand their feelings without having to share deeply their own pain.

Bears of Hope helps provide our supports:

- Chatting with a counsellor (male or female) about ways to support their partner and in return support themselves
- Using the online chat to ask questions about grief and grief reactions that both men and women experience
- Seeking Peer Support through the Dads' WhatsApp group on tough days or to just check in

- Joining social events throughout the year that look at coping through practical strategies – 4WD events, Sporting, Campfires, Education.

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Bears of Hope Dads Facebook Group

Bears of Hope Dads Facebook Group is a place for AUSTRALIAN DADS to network and build friendships of support with others who have experienced pregnancy, birth or infant loss.

This groups are private, forums for bereaved parents (and one for family and friends) across Australia. They are an opportunity to speak when it's too hard in person, and a place to start healing with those who understand.

We ask that bereaved DADS only request to join this group. For a list of our other groups please visit our website*

<https://www.bearsofhope.org.au/seek-support/online-support-groups/>

Link for Dads Facebook group -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BOHdads/>

WhatsApp group for bereaved dads

A place for Dads to connect, share a thought or post a photo and know the people on the other side will get it, and understand them. To learn more or sign up email support@bearsofhope.org.au to register or text 0422 447 268 with your name.