



Are you currently:

- coping with a recent bereavement?
- experiencing anxiety or loss in confidence?
- facing end of life, either personally or of someone you love?
- feeling fearful, down, or anxious about the future?
- wanting someone to just listen to how you are feeling?

Whatever you are dealing with right now, it is important that you do not feel alone. Our lives are full of change and some of the changes which we experience as we age can bring challenges with them. In our later years, it can become more common to experience the loss of family members and friends. We may also experience a decline in some aspects of our health, which in turn can impact our overall sense of wellbeing. Our Emotional Support Team is here to listen, hold space for you and guide you towards sources of further help.

Limited social contact can negatively affect our health and wellbeing. Experiences like loneliness and living alone can be linked to depression, dementia, and poor overall health. We are here to support you- we believe that nobody should have to deal with challenges- including death- alone.

Are you approaching end of life?

Having the right person there to take time to sit with you, listen and offer support is so important. When you are approaching end of life you are going to need support to process what is happening - in your own time, at your own pace and without judgement. You deserve to feel listened to, respected and for your wishes to be followed. You are going to have questions; you are going to want information and you will need help with making decisions. Getting the right kind of support can make a huge difference to the way you live the last stage of your life. You might want to be at home - but you don't want to be on your own - and you may not have family nearby.

Compassionate Companions Volunteers - Are here to keep you connected when you feel most alone. They will sit with you, be with you and talk if you want to - and if you do not, they will sit with you quietly. Do you want someone to listen to music or watch tv with? Perhaps you want to make an album for your family, write letters, tell people how much you love them or make amends? We can support you with that too.

Has a loved one died?

If you are reading this now, sadly it is very possible that someone close to you has died. Immediately after someone dies there can be a lot of activity and you might feel like you do not even have the time to stop and think about how you feel. You can go through a range of

feelings which can be really confusing. Talking with someone who has training or experience in grief can help you to organise your thoughts. This might help you feel more able to cope with those overwhelming feelings. You might think that you have moved on a bit, only to see, hear or read something which brings back a memory and you feel it has taken you right back into a place of feeling down and alone again. Change can be difficult, and it is said that you can do something as little as three times before it can become a habit so adjusting to the loss of years of shared dreams, memories and how you envisaged the future with a loved one will take time.

Bereavement Support Volunteers - Will arrange to contact you once a week for a few weeks. Your volunteer will arrange a convenient time and space to talk- to review how your week has been, how you feel and if you need any extra help. They will talk to us regularly and let us know if you need directing to other information and services. We will then help to coordinate that for you.

Mental Wellbeing

Maintaining a healthy balance of all the different aspects of our lives is essential to our overall wellbeing. Not having enough money, being unable to leave your home and having no-one to talk to can all impact how you feel and cope with other issues. If you are also having concerns about your own health, worrying about a loved one or needing additional care, it is clear to see just how easily we can become overwhelmed. Sometimes just having someone to really listen and help you to identify small next steps can make all the difference.

Support Groups and Emotional Support Volunteers- We work with models like the five ways to wellbeing to help you identify small ways to improve your overall sense of feeling good. Through connecting you with emotional support volunteers and support groups, we can find ways of helping you feel connected, keep you active, become more mindful, learn new things, and get involved in giving something back to your community. Many people become involved in volunteering themselves when they have achieved a greater sense of balance in life.

Volunteering Improves our wellbeing in many ways - it can reduce anxiety and stress; improve confidence and help us cope better with illness. We feel more connected, less lonely and get a sense of satisfaction from doing something meaningful. **Our volunteering** activities offer a fantastic chance to take care of your own wellbeing whilst offering valuable support to others. We offer an excellent range of training and ongoing support to help you learn new things and make a real difference in someone else's life.

Talk to us today to find out more.

If you would like to access any of our FREE emotional support services, please contact us now on 01206 368420 option 2 or email emotionalsupport@ageconcerncolchester.org.uk