

# Cruse Bereavement Care



## The Death of a Partner

“The pain is unbearable. I just can’t go on without you... please take me away from all this suffering.’ “These were my thoughts each morning. My life could be compared to a jigsaw that was broken in pieces that would never, I felt, fit together again. Through Cruse it has a different picture, but it is whole and perhaps even more strongly put together. I can honestly say that without Cruse I would not be here today.”

When we lose a partner, and in the midst of what may be the most intense emotional experience of a lifetime, we may also have to face change of identity, loss of dreams, financial loss, social isolation, increased family and household responsibility and increased vulnerability to health problems.

The length of the journey through grief is different for everyone. There is no predictable schedule to grief. Grieving after a partner dies often lasts longer than friends and relatives may think appropriate. Although it can be quite painful at times, grieving cannot be rushed; it is a journey that changes us and our situation. Time is needed.

Our grief may become a series of different issues affecting not only our emotions but also producing physical effects of one kind or another. We might suffer headaches, weight loss, sleep disturbance or fatigue. Adjusting to life after losing a partner commonly produces feelings of loneliness, sadness, despair, emptiness, anger and guilt. We may also experience restlessness, irritability, loss of concentration and have concerns about health and well-being. Consequently, our resistance is lowered and we may become vulnerable to minor illnesses. We need to pay careful attention to our own health.

Significant dates, holidays or other reminders may also trigger feelings related to the loss, but with time and support, things generally do get better.

When we grieve we are likely to fluctuate between wanting some time to ourselves and wanting closeness with others. We may want someone to talk to about our feelings.

### **We can help the healing process by:**

- drawing on support from friends and family
- taking part in a support group
- coming to Cruse for one to one support
- trying to gain an understanding of our feelings of grief
- finding new friendships and developing new interests when we are ready.