

**Supporting NSW communities,  
families and individuals  
experiencing loss and grief.**

[www.nalag.org.au](http://www.nalag.org.au)



**NALAG**  
National Association for  
Loss and Grief (NSW) Inc

## Helping someone who is grieving

When someone has experienced a loss, there will be big and small adjustments needed to be made in their lives. These could bring uncertainty, frustration, fear, sadness and change as each new day comes along. Grief is about adapting to change in life, thoughts, hopes, beliefs and the future.

### Be a good listener

Grieving people need to talk about their loss and acknowledge that they have been through a difficult experience. You can't fix their grief, but you can be there to hear their story and share their journey.

### Be a shoulder to cry on

Allow the person to cry with you. Crying helps the release of emotions and improves the healing process.

### Be in touch with them

Visit the person or call them. Let them know you've been thinking of them. Write a letter, send an email, remember their special days like birthdays and anniversaries.

### Be a friend

Often just being there is all that is needed to support someone who is grieving. Everyone's journey through grief is different and can last a long or short time. Don't be afraid to speak up if you think your friends needs help.

*(Adapted from the writings of Doris Zagdanski)*

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& referral, please contact:

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**NALAG BRANCHES:**

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# Drought

**Coping with loss, grief,  
stress and change  
in a rural crisis**

**www.nalag.org.au**

## Coping with Loss, Grief, Stress and Change in Rural Crisis

Much attention is given to the drought's impact on the environment - global warming, soil erosion, the risk of bush fires and to the increased price of food. But what about the psychological costs of drought?

The drought brings with it many losses. Loss of income, loss of family farm, lifestyle, loss of relationships and loss of control.

Drought, fires and floods are an inevitable part of the ongoing cycle of farming.

However, the associated stress on farmers, their families and their local communities is enormous and result in a great sense of loss.

Ongoing psychological stress can lead to mental health problems such as depression, stress and anxiety. Symptoms of stress often remain untreated as farmers struggle to cope with the day to day tasks of drought management.

In any crisis it is normal to have a variety of feelings which may change from time to time. These feelings are **NORMAL**. They usually last for only a limited period and give way to other feelings.

### Normal Feelings and Emotions in a Crisis

#### Anger

- At what has happened, at whoever or whatever caused it or allowed it to happen, at those trying to help, at those not affected or not as badly affected.
- At the shame and indignities

- At the lack of proper understanding by others
- WHY ME, WHY US!

#### Helplessness

- It's too big...it's too hard feeling very alone
- FEAR - of future, of 'breaking down', of 'losing control'

#### Disappointment

- Life is turning out like this, after so many years of hard work

#### Failure

- Blaming yourself for the ways things are turning out, when it's really beyond your control

#### Guilt

- For being better off than other
- For being worse off than others
- Regrets for things not done
- About decisions made
- For letting others down

#### Shame

- For having been exposed as helpless, 'emotional' and needing others
- For not acting as one would wish

#### Sadness

- For losses of every kind

#### Longing

- For all that has gone

#### Isolation

- Wanting to be alone
- Irritated or cannot bear the demands of being with others

#### Numbness

- Feeling empty inside
- Loss of feelings
- Can't connect with things you should

feel strongly about

#### Let down

- A sudden loss of energy, enthusiasm which alternates with....

#### Hope

- For the future, for better times.

### Stages in response to loss

People vary greatly in their response to LOSS, but most come to terms with it by working through a number of stages that occur as part of the healing process, but not necessarily in this exact order.

