

Finding Comfort in the New Year After Loss

The start of a new year can bring mixed emotions for those in grief.

While the calendar signals new beginnings, it can also amplify feelings of absence and longing.

This gentle guide is designed to help you navigate feelings of loss with kindness, offering small, practical ways to find comfort as you move into the year ahead.

Take your time

- Sadness, anger, confusion and numbness are all natural responses to losing someone – allow yourself to feel emotions without judgment.
- Write a journal or talk to someone you trust or a bereavement counsellor – this will help you process those feelings at your own pace.
- Remind yourself that grief doesn't have a set timeline and it's okay to still feel apprehensive and emotional as a new year begins.

Give yourself permission to step back

- The New Year can bring emotions and memories to the surface.
- It's okay to step back from traditions that feel overwhelming right now.
- New Year's Eve is one night of the year – do whatever brings you comfort.

- Social pressure to appear cheerful can intensify feelings of isolation or sadness.
- Friends and family can support you best by respecting your need for time and space.

Create a grief calendar

- This can be a gentle way to navigate the emotional ups and downs that often come at the start of a new year.
- Mark days with small acts of remembering your loved one like lighting a candle.
- Create gentle routines for yourself that focus on self-care, like an exercise class or a refreshing walk.
- By giving structure to grief, a calendar can help you take the small steps you need towards healing and hope.

Take each day as it comes

- Try not to focus too much on planning ahead – anniversaries that you can no longer share with a loved one can feel overwhelming.
- The most important thing is to live in the moment and take part in activities that you enjoy.
- You may even want to try something different or an activity you've always wanted to do – for example, volunteering.

Spend time with loved ones

- It's important to keep in regular contact with family and friends.
- You may not feel up to very much, but just being with others who care about you can provide immense comfort.
- If large get-togethers are too much, then arrange to meet in small groups or one-to-one.

Reach out for grief support

- A bereavement counsellor or therapist can help you understand your feelings in a gentle, supportive way.
- Talking with someone who understands grief provides a safe space to fully express your thoughts and emotions without judgment or causing upset.
- A trained professional will help you find ways to manage your grief day by day as you navigate a new year.
- Try to find support groups in your local area or use online forums to share your grief with others who understand what you're going through.

Please remember that there are many ways to find comfort after losing a loved one and none are wrong. The most important thing is to remember that you're not alone. Look after yourself and follow your path to healing at your own pace, doing whatever brings you a sense of peace and hope as you navigate the New Year.

If you need support, we can help put you in touch with the bereavement charity [**AtaLoss.org**](https://www.ataloss.org).

Call our 24-hour Careline on **0800 0744 362** or visit: [**www.eastofengland.coop/funerals/our-services/bereavement-support**](https://www.eastofengland.coop/funerals/our-services/bereavement-support)