

Cruse Bereavement Care, 2020

Coronavirus: anger and blame

Feelings of anger and blame are common after any bereavement. When someone has died under sudden or traumatic circumstances it can make these feelings worse.

Feeling angry is an understandable response to feeling out of control, powerless and abandoned. When someone has died due to coronavirus there may be additional reasons to feel angry. People may feel angry and helpless that this situation arose at all. They may feel angry that their friend or relative did not receive the care they should have, for example if hospitals become overwhelmed and medical staff are forced to make difficult decisions. They may feel angry with the government if they think there should have been more protection and stronger controls. Or they could be angry with people who took risks leading to infection. They may feel angry with the person who died for not protecting themselves

How you can help yourself

Coming to terms with anger will take time and may be a difficult emotional balancing act. Talking about your feelings with someone you trust may help. Remind yourself that these are exceptional times, and that most people have been trying to do their best without the usual rules to help. If your anger has led to impulsive outbursts or you have said or done things to hurt others, it can help to apologise.

In some circumstances anger can be a force for good, leading to changes. But that may have to be put on hold if you are isolating and while the current exceptional circumstances continue.

How you can help another person

Try to stay in contact with bereaved friends and family (even if you cannot visit in person if you or they are isolating). Let them talk about how they are feeling and about the person who has died – talking can be one of the most helpful things after someone dies.

How Cruse can help

- Our National Freephone Helpline remains open – call 0808 808 1677. Opening hours are Monday-Friday 9.30-5pm (excluding bank holidays), with extended hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, when we're open until 8pm.