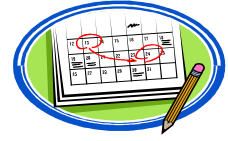


GRIEVING MINDFULLY



COMMON TRIGGERS

When you suffer a major loss, your whole world can seem like a constant reminder of the absence of your loved one. In addition to people, places and things, special days/holidays can also feel overwhelming.

It maybe helpful to plot a year long calendar with space to write in dates that was meaningful in your relationship. Things you might like to do or places you may wish to go at these times. Occasions and dates often establish the rhythm of our lives and relationships.

PERSONAL MILESTONES

Birthdays
Anniversaries: **"firsts"** i.e. death, funeral memorial.
Beginnings/Endings: The year; calendar, school, financial.
Events: weather, sports, food, festivals, visitors, family.

FAMILY MILESTONES

Births
School
New job
Illness/death of loved one
Weddings/Unions

SECULAR DAYS

Valentine's Day
Mother and Fathers Day
New Year's Eve

RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL

Passover
Ramadan
Easter
Wesak
Muharram
Deepavali
Chanukah
Christmas

For the grieving family there will seem to be numerous day to day events that most people take for granted but when you have experienced the death of a child these events become significant 'trigger's for grief. In saying this, there is a need to confront these events and take them as 'stepping stones' to recovery. These may include:

- If your child was stillborn, two dates will be important the date of death and your due date.
- Entering the room where the sudden unexpected death took place.
- Handling your child's personal affects ie clothes, toys, bedding and bottles.

- Being in receipt of the interim and final coroner's reports. The interim can take up to 6 months the final can take up to 2 years. In most cases the time frame is much shorter.
- Receiving the death Certificate
- Recognition that 1 month has passed since the death.
- This can also occur when the realisation of the same period of time has elapsed that the child was alive to how long the child has been dead.
- In re-establishing routines it becomes necessary to expose yourself to places like Shopping Centre's, child minding/day care/schools/ hospitals and so on where there is a high likelihood of other young mothers with babies-
- Pick your times to reduce the impact and gradually rebuild your confidence
- Be aware that TV programs and ads can evoke triggers too
- If you are returning to work, negotiate a buffer or negotiate a slow return where you can be flexible initially. Confronting well meaning work colleagues can be difficult in many respects, few would have had the experience, many are awkward and do not know what to say or how to approach. You need to have a short but clear statement that you can respond with so that others can understand your needs.

It may be wise to have a short break to deal with the grief and take the time to consult with your Doctor, Genetic Counsellor, Personal Counsellor, Parent Peer Supporter in relation to any fears about a subsequent pregnancy.

SIDS and Kids provides a Professional Counselling Service to assist and support you and your family through all eventualities. Phone 8369 0155