

GROWING AROUND GRIEF

When someone close to us dies, we feel grief.

Grief is a big feeling made up of a lot of other feelings – things like feeling sad, angry, scared, worried, tired. Sometimes grief makes people feel cross, or confused, or very unhappy. Sometimes, grief gives people physical feelings, such as tummy aches. Sometimes grief feels like a big, empty, hollow pain inside.

All of these feelings get jumbled and tangled up together.

To begin with, grief feels as if it takes up all of the room inside us. There's no room for anything else.

It's a bit like trying to squeeze a ball (like a tennis ball) into a mug.

After a while, people find that they can do and feel other things. There's a bit of room for feeling happy and having fun.

It's a bit like putting that same ball into a large bowl.

After more time, people may find that they have room for lots of feelings, for doing and learning new things.

It's a bit like putting that same ball into a bucket or waste paper basket.

The ball hasn't shrunk. It hasn't become smaller. It's the same size.

The space around it has got bigger.

Grief doesn't get smaller, but we grow around it.

(And some days, it takes up all the space. And some days, it doesn't.)

