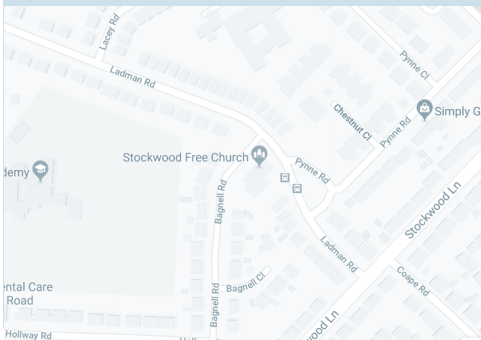


Location

When: We meet the first Tuesday of every month 1-3pm AND the third Wednesday of every month at 6pm—8pm.

Where: At the Stockwood Free Church, Ladman Road, Stockwood, Bristol BS14 8QH.
There is FREE parking behind the Church.

Public Transport: No. 2 Bus stops on Ladman Road, directly outside the Church.



Updated 23/6/21

For more information or to find out how to join the group....

Telephone, Text or email:

Jan 07595165082

Debs 07773420980

email:
starsconnecting@outlook.com



Bereavement Peer Support Group

*This is a Non-Profit
Community Association*

Our Peer Support Group 'STAR' provides free support for people grieving from a bereavement or difficult transition in their life. The aim of the support group is to create a safe space for people to receive support, listen to and share stories & experiences with others who have experienced loss in their life.

Once you have become a member of the group, you can choose to come whenever you feel like you need to.

The support group is facilitated by Peer Supporters; volunteers who have themselves been through a loss. The group does not provide formal therapy or follow specific structures or themes - we keep the group that way because we know that for a lot of people, their biggest need is just to speak to others who have gone through something similar.

Our peer support group sessions address the topics and emotions that arise for our attendees on the day instead of having pre-planned topics to discuss. We know that coping with grief can be an unpredictable experience, and therefore, we want to give you a space to talk about whatever you need on the day.

In the event that you feel you need a more formal type of therapeutic support, we can sign-post you to other provision that is available, such as counselling.

What happens in a support group session?

The support group spend the time sharing our experiences in a confidential and non-judgmental space, although sometimes we may end up just catching up over coffee and cake too (speaking informally with others in a similar position to you can feel hugely relieving). People attending the group tend to share memories and experiences, both happy and difficult, however, there are no rules about having to speak. You are more than welcome to attend and just listen, if you prefer.

We know how difficult it can be to go along to something new and we want you to



feel as comfortable as possible. Cake & biscuits help!

We are aiming to develop a growing library in our support group, with a variety of books on bereavement and information leaflets. You are more than welcome to borrow a book or



two and bring them back when you have finished them – there is no rush to return them.

The Ethos of our peer support group sessions

1. *Sharing experiences helps*

The whole point of our peer support group is to bring together people who have experienced something similar. We aim to create a space for peer support where people can get advice from others in a similar position and hear how they cope. This is different to individual support, which can be very helpful but doesn't always allow for hearing from and sharing with others.

2. *Our feelings are normal*

Our drop-in sessions aim to let people know that their experiences, as painful as they are, are a normal part of the bereavement process. For example, it is not unusual to experience a whole host of feelings, worries and body changes when grieving, and knowing that that's normal can be a relief. Stabilising our experiences can be one of the most helpful things when we feel low.

3. *Bereavement does not have a set time-limit*

Bereavement is a human experience and it does not necessarily just get easier every day – it is a rollercoaster in which you will be up and down at unpredictable points in time, whether that be 6 months, 2 years, or 5 years down the line. We would say that bereavement is not something that goes away, but something that changes shape over time and we can learn to manage our thoughts and feelings to handle these changeable times.

4. *Continuous and reliable support*

Our support is there for people at all stages of grief. The continuity, that our sessions provide, allows people to get support at any point they need it.

5. *Facilitated & supported by members*

Each support session doesn't have an agenda; the sessions are led by the people who come along and what they feel they need to talk about on the day. Some of our team members will be there to help facilitate the sessions, but it's all about what you want and need to talk about.

6. *Welcoming you into the group:*

We completely understand that many people can feel a little anxious about joining a new group. This is completely normal. We therefore, welcome every 'new comer' to meet individually with an existing member on a 1:1 basis. This will give you time to ask any questions and then make a decision whether to become a member of the group and start attending the support sessions.