



## 6 Tips for Grief and Loss

### activity sheet

**If your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete. Jack Kornfield**

Life just doesn't feel normal right now for the wider community. We are all experiencing a sense of loss whether that's a loss of routine, job or connection or an increase in stressors such as juggling commitments, extended hours at home or not being able to engage in our usual self-care. Across the world individuals are experiencing a period of grief and loss as a result of Covid-19.

This is heightened for those within the perinatal period where, adjusting to a new identity can involve a complex mix of emotions. For some, this juggle whilst joyful, can often mean no longer being able to do things or connect with others with the ease of the past or learning new skills whilst feeling completely overwhelmed. When dealing with loss and grief, we want things to be back to normal but dealing with the uncertainty of when it will end can be really challenging. Additionally, new and expectant parents are facing experiences such as:

- The highs and lows of IVF treatment.
- Recovery from birth.
- Ongoing sleep deprivation.
- Challenges with feeding.
- Changes to services such as mothers' play groups or even health services.
- Family and friends unable to celebrate exciting milestones or provide support.
- Those also experiencing the loss of a child. Those who may be unable to grieve as they would want, with the support they need.

Isolation, grief and loss can be a trigger for other challenging emotions and mental health difficulties, such as perinatal depression and anxiety. But there are ways of supporting this.

**Here are 6 tips for creating your own mental health first aid kit:**

1. **Acknowledge the emotions you are feeling.** Where do they overlap? Where do they conflict? It's ok to feel joy with your baby but sad that this isn't how you imagined your maternity/paternity leave.
2. **Think of a previously stressful situation.** It may be useful to ask yourself - What helped before? Who did you reach out to?
3. **Untangle your thoughts.** Write them down, problem solve, then delegate/organise the ones you can right now and review the ones you can't at a later date.
4. **Do what feels right and take it day by day.** Worrying about the future right now may only add to complex feelings. Try setting just one goal a day that makes you feel good.
5. Finally, remember to be compassionate towards yourself as you create a new sense of normal.
6. **Please reach out for support.** There are some fantastic resources available through [Gidget Foundation Australia](#) or seek a Mental Health Care Plan from your GP and connect with one of our clinicians for support. You are not alone.