



## Royal London presents **Lost for Words**

There I was, in that moment, sobbing on the stairs of this church, having lost my Nan, and just fully understood that this is the reality and that this is going to happen again, to other people that are with you now. It's very sobering. I think if we're sort of alert to that slightly, then our lives don't need to be derailed. they'll be affected.

Every loss is entirely unique, you have to ask the individual themselves. It's not just the relationship they had with that person, but it's also who they are within themselves, what stage of their life they're in, what kind of place they're in. You know, if they have good mental health, that's going to play a massive part. But, generally, if you are someone who can delve into loss, honestly, if you're surrounded by people that are also happy to talk about it, then I think you're going to fare better.

And it's interesting to hear someone say, you know, how can you do well in grief? Well, you do well in grief simply because you don't make it unnecessarily difficult by creating obstacles for yourself.

My advice to anyone who wants to support a friend would just be to do the practical things first, like go and make sure that there's milk and bread and to not necessarily put any pressure on yourself to come up with this magic sentence that's going to make everything feel better, cos it doesn't exist, not in any language. You can play your part by just asking them how they feel and not feel like you're being insensitive. Yes, it's an obvious answer - I feel horrendous - but you're not being insensitive, you're giving them the opportunity to talk and to be supported.

Culturally, we avoid things that are difficult for us. We tend to just stick to what we can cope with and what's comfortable. The danger of that is not all of life is comfortable. In fact, if we're going to be honest, and talk about our personal experiences, it's the...it's the discomfort that we learn from. That's where we grow.



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Bereaved people can feel like a huge burden. They know that they're the one who's dealing with a horrendous multitude of emotions and feelings and the last thing they want to do is put them on people, not realising that obviously, if the situation were the other way around, obviously, the first thing you'd want to do is support. In life, you are going to need to support people and you are gonna need to be supported by people. So, when it's your turn, take your turn.

Thing is with funerals is a lot of us are making decisions based on what we want, but we're not going to be there to enjoy it, to benefit from it. So, I suppose the other way that you can go about it is to think about what your family would like, what they'd benefit from. So, for me, congregating in a church, it doesn't make much sense for someone who's not necessarily ever been religious in their life. But, for them to have an experience somewhere nicer that they might even say, right, we've had a nice day, and this is exactly what Jeff might have wanted.

Now, for my 40th, I made people climb Snowdon. Not many people came, actually, it was a terrible birthday party, a terrible idea. Maybe we're gonna see a developing trend in that, for someone's send-off, actually, you're going to end up doing something like an activity or you're gonna visit a certain place, you're going to go somewhere which is entirely befitting of that person's life, that person's passions. That's triggered a lot of thoughts in my mind. I can imagine it's probably gonna do the same for a lot of people watching this.