



## Royal London presents Lost for Words

The worst part of it, and I probably shouldn't say this, the first thing that people say, when you tell them what happened, is, "How are your mum and dad?" Because my mum and dad have lost their son. So, to everybody else, their grief is more important than mine, having lost my brother. And that infuriated me. I think we just assume that losing a child is much harder than losing a brother.

I have a son as well, who's eight, he was seven at the time and having to explain to him that Uncle George had died, I had to prioritise his grief and try and understand that he dealt with it completely differently, cos children are completely rational and take the emotion out of it, if you give them the true facts, but having to understand that I was going to have to facilitate his grief and help him work through it, cos he relied on me, was really difficult.

I met my BDM from Royal London, who was explaining different benefits that they have as a life insurance provider. And I had the policy myself. And then she explained that these benefits were available and maybe it was better that I should speak to someone, cos I clearly wasn't coping with life as it was at that time. And she put me in touch with "Helping Hand" through the Royal London policy that I had taken out years previous and hadn't understood that I had the benefits of.

It took a very long time to accept that I needed help, probably long enough that I dealt with the grief better than I would have if someone had offered me counselling at the very start. I think you have to be willing to be in a place to understand that you need it In the very beginning, I hated everybody and everything, was Wonder Woman and could control the whole world and work 100 hours a week and work out five times a day to be in control. And that is how I dealt with my grief, was to control everything and everyone round about me where my sister's going through the same thing, dealt with it completely differently and didn't want to speak to anyone, didn't want to see anybody couldn't work, didn't think that it was OK to be at work. And we had massive arguments over what is



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and isn't right. And the truth of it is that all of its right and all of it's wrong. We shouldn't be going through it, but we are and whatever you have to do to mean that you get up in the morning is the right thing to do.

I think we put too much pressure on ourselves, to cope with everything, to be OK. Don't expect too much of yourself. Don't try to control it. I think if you try to control it and stop it or feel something different, you make the process more difficult. I think you have to feel every stage of it. It's normal to go through it. And I think understanding that it is going to be absolutely horrifyingly hard not trying to make it a finite process, understanding that it's all-consuming and it's ever evolving, it will be with you forever, you start to accept it, as opposed to getting over it. You don't ever get over it, you just learn to incorporate it into your life.

There's very few people who go through life and don't experience grief, but yet it's something that we never, ever speak about or something that we don't know how to deal with. People don't want to know what to say.

We never spoke about whether he wanted buried or cremated. We didn't know. He was 28, we weren't supposed to say goodbye to him. And I know what my mum and dad want, everybody knows what I want. I want cremated, in case you wanted to know. But you should have that conversation with people. What you want to happen when you're no longer here should be something we speak about. If you can take away your family having to make that decision for you, then it would make their grief less difficult to deal with, cos then they can deal with their emotions, as opposed to guilt that they got it wrong.