



Royal London presents Lost for Words

I think for me, when we lost my dad, I went into solution mode straight away. You know, looking after my mum, thinking about the future and everything, and then you've got all these things to organise - funerals, driving licence, everything like that. For me, personally, I stepped up a notch. I think I did the family proud, really, and really got to grips with what needed to be done. But, then, on the flip side, I don't think I allowed myself enough time to really grieve and think about my dad.

It was right before Christmas that I lost my dad, in the build-up to Christmas, you know, I was getting everything sorted, I was going through everything that needed to be done, then, on Christmas Day, lo and behold, I came downstairs. Normally, that's where me and my dad used to have a coffee or a cup of tea or something and think about the day ahead. And that's when it hit me, really, floodgates opened, and I shut down completely.

I don't know, I suppose a lot of people might feel that they're being selfish, when they should be selfish, to allow themselves to get over something that's so tragic as losing someone. I think there's a lot of pressure on everyone nowadays with jobs, families, money, maintaining a household. And I think they might feel like they're letting people down. But we all need to be open and we all need to talk about bereavement, because it's happening every day. We can't really be scared of talking about death, you know.

Me and my mum talk about it quite a lot. My mum's very prepared for when anything ever happens to her. She always tells me, every time I see her, she says everything's in this bureau here, you don't need to do anything. I think what happened to my dad has made us have those conversations where before, when everything's cushty, and everything's going fine, you might not have those conversations. So, I think having a life event like that that's been so sad, does spur on those conversations. I do think it's best to prepare for the future and the sad times that will happen eventually. You can prepare so much, but, when the time comes, I don't think you can prepare for it, emotionally.



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Everyone's different. It is a very trying and challenging time. And what I always tell my friends is that there's always the first of everything that you need to get over, so the first Christmas, the first Easter, the first birthday, the first anniversary, and then, after that, it does get easier. It will get easier. It's quite a cliché, but time is a great healer.