



Royal London presents **Lost for Words**

You have those moments where you say to yourself, "Am I allowed to be happy? Am I allowed to enjoy this moment?" Even though you've lost someone, and even though they're not here to share with you, that's also quite a hard balance to get hold of, and to understand when it is OK to...to be, quote, normal.

I know there are times that I do feel guilty. So, you get to the point that you don't smile as much as you would have done, you would do normally. That how can you be happy when you've lost somebody, and that person is not there to share it with you.

For me, for a long time after Stephen died, just experiencing Christmas again, um, him not being there and the little things that we used to do around Christmas, that sense of tradition, for ages, was really hard to accept, to enjoy to, to remember and just to allow Christmas to be Christmas. I'd definitely say that having my own son, that's been the biggest driving point to help me and to have a new tradition, a new way of doing things and to make it about him rather than about my memories of Christmas.

Nothing prepares you for death. It doesn't matter how the person dies. And then to lose Stephen, the way in which we lost Stephen, I say, "Well, he wasn't ill. He didn't have an accident. Somebody deliberately went out and took his life." It's the blasé way these individuals behaved. There was no remorse, there was nothing. I was more angry and I've been angry for a very long time. I presume the grieving process is still going on, for me.

There's a point where every day, I would think about him and then the one day where you don't think about him, you'd then sort of question yourself, are you forgetting things? Are you now at that point where you've come to that full part of grief, and you're able to move on?



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When you're going through something like that, you want somebody to have the empathy to understand where you are at that particular moment. David Cruise, who was the Reverend at our local church, he was someone that always made it more personal to yourself rather than the situation or scenario that we were in at the time.

David has always been there. I mean, he was the one that conducted Stephen's funeral. And for the past, apart from the last three years, I visit the spot where Stephen died, like, three times a year. David is standing at my side and he's a great comfort, whereas, I don't think anyone else outside the family, I feel is a comfort. He was always there to help and support us.

If you're a bit younger, you should try to have as much help and support as you can. I was only 16 at the time. I thought that I dealt with it really well. I thought that I was dealing with it well, and it's only now, as an adult life that you look back and there's parts of my life I can't remember, that I've blacked out, I've decided I don't want to remember. There are certain behaviours I had as a child that I now look back and go, "Oh, that's classic behaviour of someone that doesn't want to form relationships." So, I would go to college, I'd meet new people, but then as soon as I left that college, I'd leave those people behind and I'd move on to that next step.

I've realised now that's part of it all, where I don't want to form relationships with people, because I don't know when they're not going to be there no more. So, to experience that again, with someone that you build up time and all that effort again, to lose that person again, that's too much. So, I didn't see the point in investing time and effort into someone if they weren't going to be around for life, so to speak.