

# Coping with grief after voluntary assisted dying

## A guide for family and friends

Disclaimer: This guide provides general information for people supporting someone who has accessed voluntary assisted dying (VAD). It is not a substitute for professional advice. For more detailed information, scan the QR code. ➡



### What is voluntary assisted dying (VAD)?

VAD is when a health practitioner assists a person with a terminal illness, disease, or condition to end their life.

### Is VAD legal in Australia?

- Legal in all Australian states.
- ACT scheme begins November 2025.
- Not yet available in the NT.

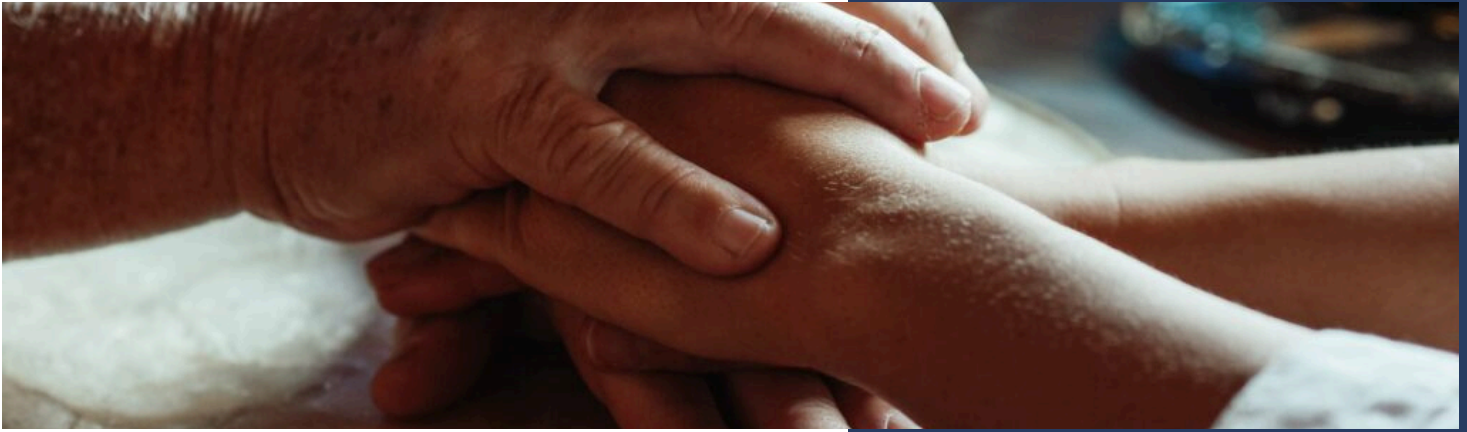
### Grief and VAD

The grief experience can be complex and deeply personal. It is shaped by your relationship with the person, your beliefs and values, and the circumstances surrounding their death.

#### Common feelings may include:

- **Relief** – freedom from pain and suffering.
- **Comfort** – knowing they had choice and control.
- **Abandonment** – not ready to let them go.
- **Anticipation** – sadness and anxiety before their death.
- **Guilt** – questioning your support or decisions.
- **Anger** – frustration with systems or circumstances.
- **Sadness** – missing their presence deeply.
- **Isolation** – feeling alone if others don't understand.

*These emotions may come and go in no set order. Your grief is unique.*



## Supporting yourself while grieving

- **Connect with others** – join a grief or caregiver support group.
- **Take breaks** – rest from caring responsibilities when possible.
- **Practice self-care** – care for your physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.
- **Seek professional support** – a counsellor or therapist can help you process grief and find coping strategies.

## Support from Griefline

- **VAD Support Groups**  
Pre- and post-VAD support (with Dying with Dignity Victoria).  
👉 Register online by scanning the QR code below.
- **National Helpline**  
Free, confidential grief support.  
☎ 1300 845 745 | 8am–8pm (AEST), 365 days.
- **Online Forums** – Peer support available 24/7 at [griefline.org.au/forums](https://griefline.org.au/forums)

## Other support services

- **13YARN** – crisis support for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples (24/7).
- **Beyond Blue** – 1300 22 4636 (24/7).
- **Kids Helpline** – free counselling for ages 5–25 on 1800 551 800 (24/7).

## More information

Scan the QR code to access VAD information, resources and support 👉 [griefline.org.au/get-help/vad-support-groups](https://griefline.org.au/get-help/vad-support-groups)

