

As the pandemic continues and we begin to realise just how far we are from 'normal' anxieties are inevitable. We have collectively suffered a huge change to the way in which we live our lives and many of us may be feeling 'out of sorts'. We must be careful to look after our mental as well as physical health. I share this parable from the Samaritans with you to say it alright to reach out for help, a shoulder to cry on or someone just to listen to our fears. Please feel free to call me or reach out to the Samaritans on 116 123

Pooh woke up that morning, and, for reasons that he didn't entirely understand, couldn't stop the tears from coming. He sat there in bed, his little body shaking, and he cried, and cried, and cried.

Amidst his sobs, the phone rang.

It was Piglet.

"Oh Piglet," said Pooh, between sobs, in response to his friend's gentle enquiry as to how he was doing. "I just feel so Sad. So, so, Sad, almost like I might not ever be happy again. And I know that I shouldn't be feeling like this. I know there are so many people who have it worse off than me, and so I really have no right to be crying, with my lovely house, and my lovely garden, and the lovely woods all around me. But oh, Piglet: I am just SO Sad."

Piglet was silent for a while, as Pooh's ragged sobbing filled the space between them. Then, as the sobs turned to gasps, he said, kindly: "You know, it isn't a competition."

"What isn't a competition?" asked a confused sounding Pooh.

"Sadness. Fear. Grief," said Piglet. "It's a mistake we often make, all of us. To think that, because there are people who are worse off than us, that that somehow invalidates how we are feeling. But that simply isn't true. You have as much right to feel unhappy as the next person; and, Pooh - and this is the really important bit - you also have just as much right to get the help that you need."

"Help? What help?" asked Pooh. "I don't need help, Piglet."

"Do I?"

Pooh and Piglet talked for a long time, and Piglet suggested to Pooh some people that he might be able to call to talk to, because when you are feeling Sad, one of the most important things is not to let all of the Sad become trapped inside you, but instead to make sure that you have someone who can help you, who can talk through with you how the Sad is making you feeling, and some of the things that might be able to be done to support you with that. What's more, Piglet reminded Pooh that this support is there for absolutely everyone, that there isn't a minimum level of Sad that you have to be feeling before you qualify to speak to someone.

Finally, Piglet asked Pooh to open his window and look up at the sky, and Pooh did so.

"You see that sky?" Piglet asked his friend. "Do you see the blues and the golds and that big fluffy cloud that looks like a sheep eating a carrot?"

Pooh looked, and he could indeed see the blues and the golds and the big fluffy cloud that looked like a sheep eating a carrot.

"You and I," continued Piglet, "we are both under that same sky. And so, whenever the Sad comes, I want you to look up at that sky, and know that, however far apart we might be physically...we are also, at the same time, together. Perhaps, more together than we have ever been before."

"Do you think this will ever end?" asked Pooh in a small voice.

"This too shall pass," confirmed Piglet. "And I promise you, one day, you and I shall once again sit together, close enough to touch, sharing a little smackerel of something...under that blue gold sky."

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