

Maninder's Story – The Grief That Never Had a Voice

Some losses happen in a moment. Others stay with us for a lifetime.

For Maninder, the loss of his mother more than 35 years ago is not something that belongs in the past. It is something he continues to carry every day.

Raised by a devoted single mother, he grew up surrounded by her love, sacrifice and determination. She worked tirelessly to give him opportunities and hope. She was his protector, his teacher and the person who always believed in him.

When Maninder came to the United Kingdom, he wanted to build a better future. Instead, he found himself carrying an overwhelming sense of guilt after his mother's death. For decades he has lived with the painful thought that perhaps he should have done more, been there more or cared for her differently. Those thoughts have stayed with him, even though the past cannot be changed.

After her death, nobody really asked how he was feeling. There was no space to speak about his grief, no opportunity to express his pain and no support to help him understand what he was going through. Life simply carried on, while inside he felt as though his world had stopped.

He buried his grief because he believed he had to be strong. The sadness became part of his everyday life. Even today he says he still hears his mother's voice. Sometimes it brings comfort. Sometimes it reminds him of everything he has lost.

Unspoken grief can quietly shape a person's whole life. Maninder has found it difficult to sustain close relationships. Opening his heart and trusting others has often felt frightening because loss taught him how deeply love can hurt. Much of his pain has remained invisible to those around him.

Behind the smile that people may see are years of unanswered questions, loneliness, guilt and longing. He still misses the chance to tell his mother how much he loves her and wishes he could have cared for her in the way he believes she deserved.

Today, through the Dil Sey Dil Tak Bereavement Café, Maninder has discovered something he never had all those years ago—a safe place where someone simply asks,

'How are you really feeling?' He has found people willing to listen without judgement, to remember with him and to remind him that grief does not have an expiry date.

His story is a powerful reminder that healing begins when someone feels heard, understood and accepted.

'Your grief matters. Your mother mattered. And you do not have to carry this alone.'