

REGRET

What are the different aspects of pain and loss in the account?

Key components are:

- Awareness of death
- Loss of relationships
- Loss of a sense of purpose

These can be common experiences for dying people and are also related to 'spiritual pain' – the search for meaning that can involve:

Existential questions - about identity and the meaning of life

Value/normative questions – about the quality and morality of relationships and one's own conduct

Spiritual questions – religion, faith, relationships to god and nature

How might migration affect these experiences and questions?

People's lives are so different these days. The few friends that I did have, they are in a different sort of a situation, you know, some have got a daughter and a son-in-law to entertain or involve themselves with their problems and thoughts and their activities and so on and so forth and there are others who've got grandchildren. But it's only my wife and me now, there's no one else.

What I'm trying to say is right in the beginning, then each of us has had a suitcase or a couple of suitcases in our hands and we came with maybe £50, or if we were lucky £100 and we had to ring around to see which landlady would take us in, there was a lot of commonality. There was absolutely no dearth of friends at that stage, because we were all in the same boat. Even when we had to go out and buy a tweed jacket, you know in such and such a place in Clapham Junction, you know word would get around quickly that they've reduced the price of these jackets to a mere £7 or £8. There were lots of friends then, you see and you could talk to them, you could play cards with them, you could joke with them, you could go out to dances, you know, what the lads do. But that was a different time. Now it's just we're sitting looking out and watching a couple of pigeons, maybe a fox or a squirrel.

I say to myself "I wish I did this, I wish I'd done that." Or maybe I could have done a bit more for my mother or my dad in their old age? First thing in the morning, when the sun is just rising, it's all hunky-dory and very glorious and last thing at night, when the birds start chirping once again and they fly back into the trees to settle down and the sun starts setting, it's a different sort of feeling. I say to myself, my father died when he was 67, he had cancer and I'm already 68 and I say to myself "What have I achieved in life?" Nothing really.