

A COACHING GUIDE

Restoring the Soul

A Compassionate Journey with Grief & Loss

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“You are not falling apart. You are learning to carry what you cannot put down.”

DIANE
MITCHELL-MILLER

COACH • CONSULTANT

If you're holding this guide, something has happened. Someone is missing. And you may be wondering whether you have the strength to read even one more page about it.

I want to say, gently, at the very start: you don't have to read this all at once. You don't have to read it in order. Skip around. Put it down and pick it back up in a month. There is no wrong way to move through a book about grief, because there is no wrong way to move through grief itself.

Grief — I don't see you, but I feel you.

If you have ever lost someone you love, you already know that no writing can touch the pain you carry. Words don't go where grief goes. I write this knowing that — and knowing some of you are reading this while the loss is still raw, and others are reading it while carrying something older that never quite settled.

I am not writing this from a distance. I have lost people I loved deeply, starting when I was young — and I have spent much of my life since then learning, and helping others learn, how to carry what doesn't go away. What follows isn't theory to me. It's lived, and it's still being lived.

Grief is not something we get over. It is something we learn to carry.

When my mom died, my grief felt like a 75-pound sack strapped to my back. Unbearable. Relentless. I cried at the most unexpected times — at the grocery store, in the middle of conversations, even when I thought I was doing okay. The weight wasn't just emotional. My body carried the grief just as much as my heart did. I found myself navigating years of chronic pain as my loss settled into my muscles and bones.

At first I didn't know how I could live with it. But over time, with support, reflection, and healing, the weight shifted. Grief didn't go away — it changed shape. The 75-pound sack became a heavy tote bag. Eventually it transformed again into something smaller, like a purse. I still carry it every day. But now it feels more like a part of me rather than something crushing me.

Grief is not just an emotion. It is an emotional tectonic shift — the kind of internal movement that rearranges everything underneath the surface. The landscape of your inner life shifts. What felt solid no longer holds in the same way. What you thought you knew about yourself, about others, about God, about the future — all of it moves. This is why grief cannot be rushed. You are not just processing a loss. You are recalibrating an entire interior world.



Writer and illustrator Mari Andrew captured this beautifully in a simple hand-drawn image — grief as three bags of decreasing size: first a heavy burlap sack, then a bulky briefcase, and finally a small purse. Each labeled grief. Loss never truly leaves us. But it does change shape. Some days it feels light, barely noticeable. Other days someone slips a brick inside and it becomes unexpectedly heavy again. That is the nature of grief — it ebbs and flows, always present but not always overwhelming.

Quick Truths About Grief

- Grief isn't a problem to be solved. It's an experience to be carried.
- Grief is part of life's curriculum. It doesn't come with a rulebook or formula. It is not one size fits all.
- Death ends a life. It does not end the relationship. Grief is sacred — it shows us that we have loved well.
- Time does not heal all wounds. It is what you do with your time that matters.
- Toxic positivity helps no one. Compassion and empathy are the greatest healers of all.
- Grief can be life's greatest teacher. It reveals you. It can define you or refine you.
- Grief can make you feel porous and vulnerable — everything affects you.
- Grief imposes a mental tax. You literally have less bandwidth to think clearly.

When we lose someone we love, we must learn not to live without them — but to live with the love they left behind.

PART ONE — WHAT IS THIS? — Naming the Experience

Grief Is One of Life's Greatest Teachers

There is a grief that lingers in the shadows — a sorrow that does not come from a single loss but from something unresolved, unfinished, or slipping away. It's something we will all experience, yet we are rarely given the tools to deal with the burden it creates.

Almost everyone I meet carries some form of grief or loss. Yet most of us lack the tools or language to talk about it. Many were taught in childhood to suppress these feelings. We are grief illiterate. And grief illiteracy is one of the greatest silent epidemics of our time.

What if, instead of avoiding grief, we embraced it as a teacher? What if we built foundational grief practices that allowed us to navigate life's inevitable losses with greater strength and peace

The great paradox of grief is that it has both the power to destroy and the power to transform and resurrect. It is not a pathology to be fixed — it is a doorway into meaning.

We repeat what we don't repair.

Let me say that again: we repeat what we don't repair. Full stop.

Consider how your family dealt with early losses — animals, grandparents, friends — and how you see that showing up today. Our family of origin is typically the environment that shapes our understanding of normal coping. This is fundamental to understanding your own ways of expressing and carrying grief. We don't learn to grieve because the people who raised us were never taught either. The pattern gets passed down silently, generation to generation, until someone decides to break it.

History of Loss

- *My first loss:*
- *Age:*
- *My response:*
- *My family's response:*
- *The strengths that helped me:*
- *The challenges I faced:*
- *Does this loss still feel tender?*
- *How has it influenced your life and the way you grieve today?*

A Silent Epidemic

Grief is a silent epidemic because so many of us carry its unspoken weight. Unexpressed grief can contribute to chronic stress, muscle tension, emotional numbness, and other physical symptoms. Over time, it can also harden into anger or resentment. This silent epidemic of stuck grief affects individuals and entire communities, shaping how we relate to ourselves and others. True healing comes not from ignoring the pain but from acknowledging it, moving it through the body, and allowing it to transform.

Grief Is Not Just Death

Here is something our culture gets profoundly wrong: we treat grief as if it only belongs to death. It does not.

Grief is found in losing anything that is meaningful. The job you built your identity around. The marriage that ended. The friendship that quietly dissolved. The health you once had. The version of yourself you had to leave behind to become who you are now. The child who left for college and took a particular season of your life with them.



Loss is not just the absence of something — it is the presence of a void. And the losses that go unspoken, undefined, unnamed are often the hardest to carry. If you are carrying a grief right now that the world has not named — I want to name it. Your loss is real. Your grief is real. And it deserves to be met with honesty rather than silence.

The Five Stages

Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's five stages of grief — Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, Acceptance — help us name what we're feeling. But they were never meant to be a step-by-step prescription. Grief is not linear. You will not pass through these stages in order, and you may revisit some of them many times.



- **Denial** — A natural reaction. A way of protecting ourselves from pain we cannot yet hold.
- **Anger** — Why did this happen? Who is to blame? Anger comes from unmet needs and a sense of injustice. It deserves to be expressed.
- **Bargaining** — Make this not happen and I will...
- **Depression** — I can't bear this. I'm too sad to do anything.

- **Acceptance** — I acknowledge this has happened and I cannot change it. This is not resignation. It is the beginning of choice.

Beyond the Stages: Finding Meaning

Meaning isn't the final destination of grief. It is something that may slowly emerge as we learn how to carry what happened.

Man's Search for Meaning

Psychologist, Viktor Frankl survived the Nazi concentration camps — losing his wife, his parents, almost everything. What he discovered inside that suffering became one of the most important books ever written: *Man's Search for Meaning*.

His central insight: we may not be able to control our circumstances, but we always retain the freedom to choose our response to them. He called this logotherapy — the belief that our primary drive in life is not pleasure or power but the discovery of meaning.

Grief, when approached with intention, can become a catalyst for transformation. That is not toxic positivity. That is testimony.

When Grief Has No Name: Ambiguous Loss

Researcher Pauline Boss introduced the concept of ambiguous loss — grief that lacks closure or clear understanding. Two forms:

- **Type One: Physical Absence, Psychological Presence** — Someone is bodily gone but still deeply present in our minds. Estrangement, adoption, missing persons.
- **Type Two: Physical Presence, Psychological Absence** — Someone is physically here but emotionally or mentally absent. Alzheimer's, addiction, mental illness.

Ambiguous loss is in some ways the hardest kind — because it gives you nothing clean to grieve. No clear moment of ending. No permission to mourn. If you are here right now — grieving someone who is still here, or someone whose absence was never officially acknowledged — you are not stuck. You are in one of the most complex and least supported forms of human grief. And you deserve the same compassion as anyone whose loss the world recognizes.

PART TWO — WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE? — The Full Body Experience

Grief Is a Full Body Experience

It moves through your emotions, your body, your mind, and your nervous system all at once. You've just seen what grief is. Now let's look at what it actually feels like from the inside — because naming it is the first step to carrying it with more grace.

Grief makes you feel porous — like the boundaries between you and the world have thinned, allowing everything to seep in more deeply. It manifests on five levels:

- **Physical** — Exhaustion, aches, a heavy weight in the chest, lowered immunity, sleep disruption.
- **Mental** — Clouded focus, disrupted memory, reduced bandwidth. If you get one hundred units of brain power each day, grief can consume 99 of them.
- **Emotional** — Waves of sadness, anger, numbness, fear, guilt, shame.
- **Social** — Isolation, withdrawal, the strain of feeling unseen or misunderstood.
- **Spiritual** — Challenged beliefs, deepened searching, the question of meaning.

In my work with clients, the back and shoulders are where I see this most, though it shows up differently in everyone. One client I worked with came to me a few months after losing her husband, describing months of tightness across her upper back and shoulders that came and went without warning — sometimes after a hard day, sometimes for no reason she could name. Her doctor found nothing structurally wrong. As we worked together, she started to notice a pattern: the tension eased on the days she let herself cry, and tightened on the days she pushed the grief aside to get through work. Other clients carry it elsewhere — headaches, a tight chest, exhaustion that sleep doesn't touch. But the pattern shows up often enough that I no longer find it surprising. Left unprocessed, this can compound over time: chronic tension, disrupted sleep, a suppressed immune system, elevated inflammation, even cardiovascular strain. The body is not separate from the loss. It is one of the places the loss lives.

Common Signs and Symptoms of Grief

Grief shows up differently in everyone. You may experience some of these, all of them, or move between them. There is no right way to grieve. The symptoms below reflect the full spectrum of the body's experience of loss.

- **Shock and disbelief** — It's hard to accept the loss. You may feel numb, or still expect your person to call, write, or show up.
- **Sadness** — Profound sadness is universal. It can lead to feeling alone or isolated — the sense that no one can understand the depth of what you carry.
- **Loneliness** — Grief can disconnect you from others even when you're surrounded by people. The loss creates an absence not just of the person but of the shared moments, conversations, and emotional support and protection they provided.
- **Guilt** — You may feel guilt over things said or unsaid, done or undone. Nothing can stand in the way of a final decision made by someone else. Over time we have to acknowledge and accept that — even though it is one of the hardest things a human being is ever asked to do.

- **Shame** — Brené Brown defines shame as the intensely painful belief that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love and belonging. Shame says: I am bad. Guilt says: I did something bad. Both deserve compassion, not judgment.
- **Anger** — Anger often comes into play regardless of how someone died. Anger comes from unmet needs and a sense of injustice. It deserves respect and space to be expressed.
- **Rage** — Anger denied or silenced for too long. When grief has no outlet, it can harden into something that feels less like sadness and more like fury. This too deserves space, not shame.
- **Fear** — Loss can trigger anxiety about your own mortality, about losing others, about facing life without the person who died.
- **Physical pain** — Grief manifests physically. Nausea, fatigue, lowered immunity, weight changes, aches and pains. The body often tells the story the mind is still trying to understand.



Brain Fog

You may find yourself moving through water — thinking slowly, forgetting things you would never normally forget, losing words mid-sentence. Clients often think something is seriously wrong with them. Nothing is wrong. This is your brain under extraordinary load. It will lift. The full explanation of what is happening neurologically is in Part Three — and it is worth reading because understanding it takes away some of its power.

You are not losing your mind. You are carrying more than any mind was designed to hold at once.

Insomnia

Sleep and grief are in direct conflict. Grief activates the nervous system. Sleep requires the nervous system to settle. The result is a cruel paradox — the very time when your body most needs rest is the time it is least able to find it.

Grief plus insomnia is like trying to grieve with one hand tied behind your back. Everything is harder. The brain fog deepens. The emotions feel more raw and less manageable. The days feel longer and the nights feel endless.

This is why sleep hygiene becomes not optional but essential in grief. Small, consistent practices — a consistent wake time, darkness, no screens before bed, the 4-7-8 breath when anxiety wakes you at 3am — are not luxuries. They are lifelines. Your body cannot

process grief on empty. See the Sleep and Grief section in Part Three for specific practices.

Those quiet 3 a.m. hours can become the place where everything your mind held at bay during the day comes rushing back.

Ruminating Thoughts

Many grieving people find themselves reliving the loss again and again — replaying the final moments, rerunning conversations, asking what if and if only. This is the mind's attempt to make sense of something that doesn't make sense. It is trying to find the place where it could have intervened. It is trying to understand what cannot be fully understood.

Ruminating thoughts are exhausting and they can feel like a sign that something is wrong with you. It is not. It is grief doing its work. The goal is not to stop the thoughts — it is to notice them with compassion rather than resistance, to gently return to the present, and over time to find that the loops become less frequent as meaning begins to form.

The loop is not punishment. It is your mind's way of loving someone it cannot let go of yet.

When Grief Floods the Brain

Grief doesn't just weigh on your heart — it floods your nervous system.

Many people describe feeling foggy, forgetful, or like they're not themselves in the wake of loss. This is not just emotional — it is biological. When we experience deep pain, The amygdala, responsible for fight, flight, freeze, or appease responses, activates to protect us. We feel flooded, reactive, disconnected. Rational thought becomes difficult. Emotional regulation feels out of reach.

Think of a pot of water on the stove. When the heat is low, the water simmers — stable, contained. But when grief surges, the heat cranks up and the pot boils over. Everything spills. You lose access to the calm, reflective part of yourself. And even after the spill, it takes time for the system to settle.

This is grief brain. You are not imagining it. You are not weak. Your brain is doing exactly what it was designed to do: protect you from overwhelm.

When the amygdala goes into overdrive, it activates the limbic system, which stores emotional memory. The brain begins recalling similar past hurts and losses, weaving them into an internal movie. Without realizing it, we begin projecting old pain onto new situations. This is one of the reasons grief can feel so all-encompassing. It's not just this loss — it's every loss, echoing in the nervous system.

The Wisdom of the Heart

The heart is not just a pump. Researchers who study the connection between heart rhythms and the nervous system have found that the two influence each other constantly. The basic idea: when we feel threatened or overwhelmed, our physiology tends to amplify emotional reactivity. But when we feel safe, supported, or connected — even briefly — our nervous system has an easier time settling and bringing the thinking brain back online.

The Holy Pause

“Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space lies our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

— Viktor Frankl

Grief is the stimulus. It comes uninvited, shaping our days with sorrow and uncertainty. But in the space between our pain and our reaction, there is a holy pause. A moment where we can either surrender to despair or step into faith.

“Be still, and know.”

Psalm 46:10 — echoed across many spiritual and ancient traditions

Perhaps that is the deeper invitation in this verse: to be still is, in some way, to know. To know God, to know yourself, to know what is true — however you name the sacred in your own life.

In that pause, there is room to choose — faith over fear, presence over panic, what you can release over what you cannot control.

Grieving vs. Mourning

This distinction is one of the most important things I can offer you.

The Difference

- Grief is the internal experience — the emotions that arise when we lose someone or something deeply meaningful.
- Mourning is the outward expression of that grief — the tears, the storytelling, the journaling, the reaching out, the movement — yoga, stretching, walking, whatever gets the body involved.

Without mourning, grief can become stuck in the body with no place to go. Emotions have energy. They need somewhere to go. Transforming grief into mourning is not weakness. It is how healing begins.

Not everyone mourns the same way. External grievers process out loud — through talking, tears, and connection. Internal grievers process more quietly — through thinking, writing, or problem-solving. Neither is wrong. Both are valid. What matters is that the grief moves rather than stays buried.

Buried grief becomes carried grief. And what we carry unprocessed, we eventually pass on.

Grief Styles

- **External grievers** — Focused on sharing feelings, talking through grief, seeking emotional support. May find comfort in rituals or communal grieving.
- **Internal grievers** — Tend to focus on problem-solving or understanding the why behind the loss. May keep grief more internalized and focus on practical aspects of moving forward.

Understanding your grief style — and the grief styles of those around you — helps prevent misunderstanding. An internal griever is not unfeeling. An external griever is not falling apart. They are simply moving through grief differently.

Ongoing Triggers

Grief doesn't follow a timeline. Even after the initial waves have passed, certain moments can pull you right back into the depths. These are grief triggers — and they show up in expected and unexpected ways.

A birthday, a holiday, an anniversary. But also the scent of a familiar perfume, the sound of a song, the smell of a favorite meal. Suddenly you are transported. Secondhand grief is also real — someone you hardly knew dies, and your own grief is triggered again. A developmental milestone can open grief all over again.

These are normal. Treat yourself with kindness, compassion, and without judgment. You have the right to grieve. No one — including yourself — can tell you when it is time to end that process.

PART THREE — THE BODY HAS TO GRIEVE — Moving It Through

The body is not separate from grief. It holds everything you have lived through — every loss, every fear, every moment of love — stored in the tissue, the nervous system, the breath. And what the body holds, the body must be given the opportunity to release. This is not a list of things to try. This is the understanding that grief lives in the body — and the body needs pathways to move it through.

Soul Care — Put on Your Oxygen Mask

Soul care is holistic, intentional kindness toward yourself across all five levels — physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual. In grief, this is not indulgence. It is survival.

Physical

- **Move your body** — Walk, stretch, swim, dance in your kitchen. Movement helps the body complete the stress cycle that grief activates.
- **Breathe** — Deep breathing resets the nervous system. The 4-7-8 breathing practice is especially powerful in grief — inhale 4 counts, hold 7, exhale 8. Do four cycles. Your nervous system will begin to settle.
- **Rest and sleep** — Prioritizing sleep is essential for healing. Your body repairs itself in sleep in ways nothing else can replicate.
- **Eat and hydrate** — Fuel your body even when you don't feel like it.
- **Somatic practices** — Grounding exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, gentle movement — engaging the body to release stored tension and restore a sense of safety.
- **Take a shower** — Water has a natural way of cleansing not just the body but the weight of emotions we carry. Envision the water carrying away your pain, refreshing your spirit, offering a small but powerful reset.

Sleep and Grief

One of the most common things I hear from clients in grief is this: I can't sleep. I wake up at 3am and I can't get back to sleep. If this is you — this is one of the most universal experiences of grief. Your nervous system is working overtime. Your brain is processing enormous amounts of emotion, often while you sleep. And sometimes it wakes you up to do more of that work.

Grief disrupts sleep. Sleep disruption amplifies anxiety. Anxiety intensifies grief. Understanding this cycle doesn't break it immediately — but naming it takes away some of its power.

The lack of sleep also deepens the brain fog you're already carrying — that heaviness, the inability to think clearly, the feeling that you're moving through water. And the anxiety that comes with lying awake makes sleep even harder to find. You are not broken. You are grieving.

Sleep psychologist Dr. Michael Breus — known as The Sleep Doctor — offers practical wisdom for this season:

- **You don't need exactly eight hours** — Sleep need is individual. Stop chasing a number and start paying attention to how you actually feel.

- **Waking in the night is not failure** — Resting quietly — even if you're not fully asleep — still provides recovery.
- **If you've been awake for twenty minutes, get up** — Do something quiet and calm — read, pray, journal — then return to bed. Lying awake in frustration trains your brain to associate bed with stress.
- **Consistency matters** — A regular wake time helps regulate your body's internal clock more than sleeping in unpredictably.
- **Your environment matters** — A cool room, darkness, no screens before bed.
- **Morning light is medicine** — Sunlight soon after waking helps regulate your circadian rhythm and your mood.
- **When anxiety wakes you at 3am** — Don't fight it. Acknowledge it. Write it down. Breathe through it. The 4-7-8 breathing practice was made for exactly this moment.

Grief is exhausting work. Your body needs sleep to heal. Be patient with yourself when sleep is disrupted — and gentle with the practical steps that can help restore it.

Mental

- **Write your loved one a letter** — Express what is unfinished, unsaid, still alive in you.
- **Name what you feel** — Name it to tame it. You cannot process what you cannot name.

Emotional

- **Connect** — Grief cannot be done alone. Reach out even when you don't feel like it.
- **Cry** — Let the waves come. Fighting them takes more energy than allowing them.
- **Journal** — See the prompts in this guide.
- **Meditate and pray** — Practices that provide presence, solace, and perspective.

Spiritual

- **Go deeper** — Seek meaning and guidance through faith, community, and personal practice.
- Whatever your tradition or practice — or none at all — you do not need to have your grief neatly defined before comfort can reach you. You are met exactly where you are.

Social

- **Spend time with safe people** — Those who don't rush you, fix you, or hand you a timeline.
- **Engage with pets** — Animals provide unconditional comfort.
- **Shared activities** — Talking, creating, spending time with others — connection reminds you that you are not alone.

Nourishment vs. Calories

When grief becomes overwhelming, many of us reach for something — anything — to make the pain stop. Food. Alcohol. Shopping. Scrolling. Busyness. Overworking. These are calories — they provide temporary relief but no real nourishment. They quiet the feeling for a moment without actually moving it through.

This is not judgment. This is one of the most human things we do. But it is worth paying attention to.

There is a difference between a walk that restores you and a bottle of wine that silences you. Both feel like relief. Only one is healing.

Ask yourself honestly: what am I reaching for when grief gets intense? Is it nourishing me — or just numbing me? Numbing is not healing. It is postponing. And what we postpone, we eventually have to face — often with more weight than before.

Nourishment vs. Calories

- *Activity I reach for when grief gets intense:*
- *How often:*
- *What I was feeling before:*
- *What I actually needed:*
- *What I could choose instead:*
- *The impact of choosing something more nourishing:*

Soul Care Plan

This is your coaching tool. Fill it out on a day when you have some clarity and calm — then keep it close for the days you don't. Grief has a way of making us forget the very things that help us most. This plan is here to remind you.

"Have I been as kind a friend to myself today as I would be to someone I love?"

Nourishment vs. Calories — My Non-Negotiables

The basics I need every day — not the goals I'm aiming for, just what keeps me functioning.

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-
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HALT Check-In

Hungry. Angry. Lonely. Tired. Before reacting to a hard moment, pause and check which one is driving it.

Energy Boosters

My personal energy drink — the things that genuinely lift me, even a little.

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—

—

—

My Board of Directors

Who can I call, text, or sit with?

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—

Distractions

Healthy places for my brain to rest when it needs a break, not an answer.

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Peaceful Places

Where can I go that helps me feel calm, even briefly?

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—

Other Resources

Support I know I can turn to.

—

Journaling

When you lay it all out on paper, it often allows you to see things more clearly. Begin with something creative to get you out of your thinking mind and into the deeper truth of your heart. Name it to tame it.

Starting Prompts

— *What are the elements of a life well lived?*

— *What would healing look like?*

- *In what ways do you feel stuck?*
- *What kind of person do you want to be?*
- *What do you hope for?*

Going Deeper

- *If you are stuck, start with: I need to tell you what happened...*
- *I find the most comfort in...*
- *How do you express your grief — your mourning?*
- *I carry grief in my body in these places...*
- *What do I find most helpful in my grief?*
- *Reasons why you loved them...*
- *Your favorite qualities about them...*
- *I really miss...*
- *What were the gifts this person gave you? How might you honor those gifts in how you live?*
- *Letter to the one you have lost: Dear _____. I am writing to you because I have so much to share...*

Laughter Is Good Medicine

One of the questions I hear most often from clients is: is it okay to laugh again?

Yes. Absolutely yes.

Moving forward and living with joy does not mean you are leaving your loved one behind. Laughter is not a betrayal of your grief — it is one of the most ancient and effective medicines we have. It releases endorphins, reduces cortisol, and gives the nervous system permission to exhale. Watch a comedy. Call the friend who makes you laugh until you cry. Give yourself permission to feel the full range of what it means to be human — including delight.

Grief and joy are not opposites. They can exist in the same heart at the same time. In fact, they must.

Play and Distraction

Distraction from grief is a healthy coping strategy. It is not necessary to experience grief intensely one hundred percent of the time to move through it in a healthy way. Taking a break is good medicine. Play helps the brain process the tough stuff. The word adult just means big kid. Give yourself permission.

- Spend time outside. Nature restores what the indoors cannot.

- Try something new. Your brain is still growing. Take the plunge.
- Get your hands dirty. Gardening, baking, building, creating — working with your hands reduces stress and brings you back to your body.
- Move your body in ways that feel like freedom, not obligation.
- Express yourself through music, writing, art, movement, conversation. What we keep bottled up affects how our bodies function.
- Serve. We rise by lifting others. Helping others helps us.
- Pamper yourself. You deserve care.
- Read. Rest your mind in someone else's story for a while.

PART FOUR — MOVING FORWARD — You Are Not Alone in This

Grief Demands a Witness

Grief is a deeply personal experience that often requires others to be present and acknowledge it. One of the critical factors in healing from grief is the support of other people. Support from family, friends, church, or a community of others who have also experienced grief allows you to feel that someone else gets it. Being able to share your story and your feelings is vital to the healing process.

Faith, spiritual practices, and community support — prayer, meditation, mindfulness, ritual — can help individuals cope with the intensity of grief, whether that support comes from a church, synagogue, mosque, temple, meditation group, or another spiritual home altogether. Drawing on faith and spiritual community, in whatever form it takes for you, can promote emotional balance, provide a sense of calm, and foster connection to something greater.

Finding Grief Support

- **Support and faith-based groups** — Many types of support groups exist for both general and specific types of loss. You can attend and just listen. You won't be forced to speak until you're comfortable.
- **Therapists and counselors** — Sometimes talking to a professional with experience in grief counseling helps you work through the intensity of what you're feeling.
- **A grief coach** — Grief coaches are compassionate individuals trained with a deep understanding of grief and its impact on every area of life. A coach's main objective is to help you plan for your new life in a purposeful and meaningful way.

| If it costs you peace, it's too expensive.

When Grief Needs More Support

Grief can bring profound sadness, withdrawal, sleep disruption, and difficulty functioning. If those experiences become overwhelming, persist, or leave you feeling unsafe or unable to care for yourself, reaching out to a licensed mental-health professional or medical provider is an act of care, not failure.

Healing Is Not Forgetting

There comes a time when moving forward creates new hope, new meaning, and a life that feels whole again — not because the grief is gone, but because you have learned to carry it differently.

Healing is not about forgetting. It is about integrating. Grief will always be a part of you. But so will love, resilience, and the ability to build something new.

You are not leaving your loved one behind. You are carrying them forward in a way that honors both their memory and your own continued journey.

Something must break for us to have a breakthrough. And the breaking is never the end of the story. It is the beginning of a truer one. We don't have to make the loss good in order for something good to eventually grow beside it. And that growth is never the end of the story. It is the beginning of a truer one.

“Grief is the price we pay for love.”

— Queen Elizabeth II

Resources

Websites

- [Transform Your Life After Loss by Heather Stang \(Mindfulness & Grief Podcast\)](#)
- [Loss of a Father](#)
- [Open to Hope Online Website](#)
- [Center for Loss & Life Transition](#)
- [Refuge in Grief — Megan Devine](#)
- [Speaking Grief](#)

Videos

- [Speaking Grief Documentary](#)
- [A Journey Through Life and Grief — TED Talk](#)
- [We Don't Move on From Grief, We Move Forward — TED Talk](#)
- [How to Help a Grieving Friend — 3 minute video by Megan Devine](#)

Podcasts

- [Grief Unfiltered](#)
- [It's OK to Not Be OK — Megan Devine](#)

- [Mindfulness & Grief Podcast](#)

Books

- [It's OK That You're Not OK — Megan Devine](#)
- [How to Carry What Can't Be Fixed — A Journal for Grief by Megan Devine](#)
- [Man's Search for Meaning — Viktor Frankl](#)
- [Ambiguous Loss — Pauline Boss](#)