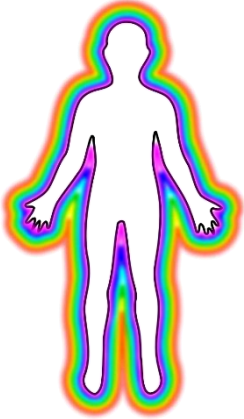


# Top 10 Things to Know about Grief:

- 1. **Grief is unique to us all and impacts our entire body.** Like a finger print, grief is experienced by everyone in different ways. There is no "right" way to grieve. There is no "right" length of time.



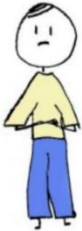
Grief impacts our entire body:

- **Physically**-headaches, body aches, digestive issues, tension, jumpiness, etc.
- **Emotionally**-moody, irritable, roller coaster of emotions, picking fights, arguing, inconsolable crying, etc.
- **Mentally**-inability to concentrate, lack of focus, poor memory
- **Spiritually**-questioning long-held beliefs, reevaluating purpose of life, searching for meaning
- **Behaviorally**- regressive behavior- bed wetting, baby talking, hyper-maturity

- 2. **Everyone has their own style of grief**

## Instrumental Grief

based on work by Terry Martin & Kenneth Doka



- \* Grief is experienced in more physical or cognitive ways
- \* Grief is expressed in more physical, cognitive or behavioral ways
- \* More thinking than feeling
- \* Focused on doing and actively responding to grief
- \* More "masculine" way of grieving

www.whatsyourgrief.com

## Intuitive Grief

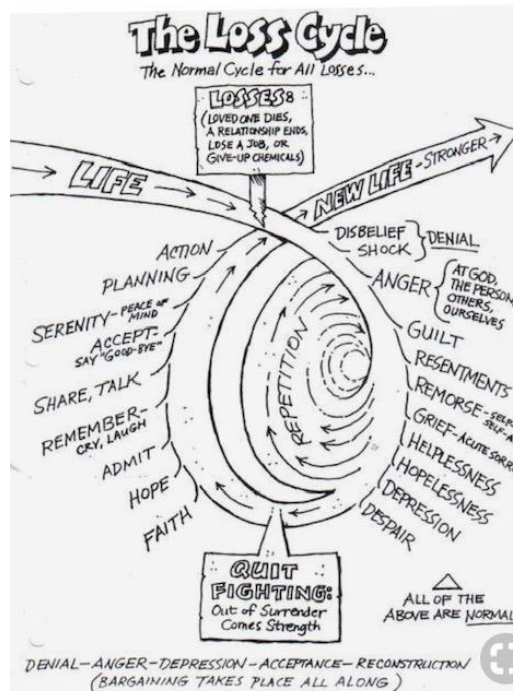
based on work by Terry Martin & Kenneth Doka



- \* Grief is experienced as waves of emotion.
- \* Grief expression mirrors inner feelings and emotions.
- \* More feeling than thinking
- \* Focused on exploring and expressing feelings and processing emotions
- \* More "feminine" way of grieving.

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- 3. **Grief is ongoing** and will be triggered again and again- a smell, a memory, a date.



## Acute Grief (Time Limited)



- Disbelief
- Yearning; sorrow; intense emotions
- Insistent thoughts
- Sense of insecurity
- Disengaged from ongoing life

## • 4. There are different types of grief:

**Acute Grief**- raw, overwhelmed, constant thoughts; approximately first 6-9months.

• **Disenfranchised Grief**- grief that is unacknowledged, unrecognized, and

unsupported. The loss of a pet, loss of a job, loss of an opportunity, etc.

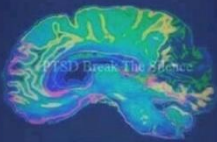
- **Carried Grief**- unaddressed grief that impacts our present.

## The Silent Grief!

Unacknowledged  
Unrecognised  
Unsupported

[www.jesmry.com.au](http://www.jesmry.com.au)

## Trauma is



anything that overwhelms the brain's ability to cope.

## • 5. Chaos and lack of control is really scary.

- **Structure** and keeping a schedule of some kind will help provide some control

- **Choices**- when things are too overwhelming break things down into choices: Will this be important a few hours from now? Will this be important tomorrow? Next week?

- **Acknowledge** feelings but don't become them. "This is what worry feels like."

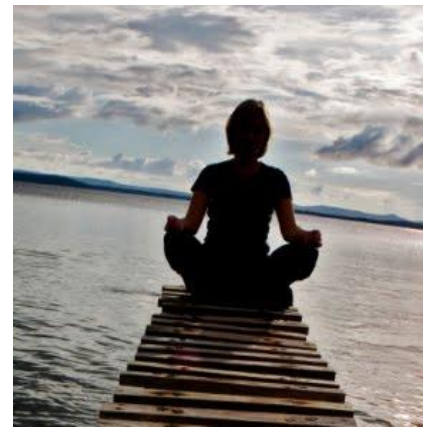
"This is what confusion feels like." Know that these feelings will pass just like weather changes. Observe; acknowledge; understand that your feelings are temporary and not who you are. Judgement and preoccupation of feelings can create holes that we fall into. Avoid the holes!



- **6. Be Prepared with tools and coping skills**- be aware that unexpected waves of emotion will crash into you. When this happens, know that it's normal and expected and that it will eventually pass. Take a break; if possible get outside and breathe deeply; walk, move in some way and release the emotions. Find something that soothes you. Maybe a scented hand lotion, or a doodle pad that you can color, or something to squeeze and release, anything that will give you a way to have a few minutes to yourself until you feel ready to reengage.



- **7. Mindful Meditation can be very helpful.** It has been proven to help with anxiety and depression, insomnia and even addiction. Mindful Meditation helps train our brain so that we can thoughtfully respond instead of immediately reacting. It teaches us how to be present instead of buried in our thoughts, feelings, worries, etc.



- **8. Kindness and Gratitude can be keys to helping us feel better.** Believe it or not, when we are kind to others it actually helps us. Demonstrating **kindness** helps us stay in the moment and provides a way to focus on something other than ourselves. It gives us a purpose and a sense of satisfaction. Therefore, volunteering, showing random acts of kindness, donating talents to charities can all be ways to feel better.

**Gratitude**-be it journaling or simple reflection of the day also helps us by focusing on all the good in our life even when we feel so bad. "I'm grateful for having a car that runs and gets me to where I need to go." "I'm grateful for my family who help me take care of my kids." Simply recognizing the good and feeling grateful for it helps us avoid negative think holes.



- **9. Continuing Bonds are ways we can remember, honor, and stay connected to our loved ones.** We may no longer be able to see our loved one, but that doesn't mean our relationship is gone. All the love you shared remains. Therefore, sharing stories, memories, advice, and special moments we had with our loved one gives us an opportunity to feel connected. This is especially important during holidays, significant life events, and anniversaries. It is helpful to do something to recognize and honor the dead instead of ignoring them.



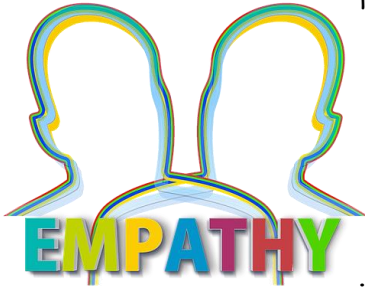
- **10. Support Circles are essential.** No one should have to grieve alone. It's just too hard. We need family, friends, co-workers, teachers, coaches, pastors, and leaders to provide guidance, encouragement, and help for all the times we are overwhelmed.



# Care givers:

## How can you help?

- **Avoid "fixing" things**-Well-meaning people often want to say something that will make things better. Avoid doing this. There are no words that will make this better. Simply saying, "I have no words, but I want you to know that I care about you." is far better than starting a sentence with "At least...." "At least you had a son." "At least you had twenty years together."



- **Listen, listen, listen**- Asking a specific open-ended question to invite a conversation is helpful. The goal is to help them talk and express themselves. "How are you feeling right now?" "What's really difficult right now?" "What is your grief like?"
- **Follow through and be there**- Stop saying things like, "Let me know if I can help you." Instead, be specific in your offer. "Can I stop by tomorrow with lunch?" "When could I come over and cut your grass? Tomorrow or this weekend?" Your presence is what will provide comfort. Your willingness to help with errands and chores will be appreciated. Do something instead of saying something.
- **Be patient and non-judgmental** - grief is messy and complicated. Don't rush someone through their grief because "X" amount of time has gone by. Rather, be someone they can talk to, someone they feel safe saying whatever they need to say.

