

Grief

The Definition

Simply defined, grief is the normal and natural reaction to significant emotional loss of any kind. While we never compare losses, any list would include death and divorce as obvious painful losses. Our list also includes many others; retirement, moving, pet loss, financial and health issues, among them.

The range of emotions associated with grief are as varied as there are people and personalities. There is no list of feelings that would adequately describe one person's emotions, much less an entire society.

Grief is individual and unique. As every relationship is unique, so are the feelings and thoughts each person will have about the relationship that has been altered by death, divorce, or for other reasons.

The Problem

While grief is normal and natural, most of the information passed on within our society about dealing with grief is not normal, natural, or helpful. Grief is the **emotional** response to loss, but most of the information we have learned about dealing with loss is **intellectual**.

The majority of incorrect ideas about dealing with loss can be summed up in six myths which are so common that nearly everyone recognizes them. Most people have never questioned whether or not they are valid. The misinformation is best described in the following:

Six Myths

- ♥ Time Heals All Wounds
- ♥ Grieve Alone
- ♥ Be Strong
- ♥ Don't Feel Bad
- ♥ Replace the Loss
- ♥ Keep Busy

Just looking at the myth that "time heals" creates the idea that a person just has to wait and they will feel better. We have known people who had waited 10, 20, 30, and 40 years, and still didn't feel better. And, we know that they would tell you that not only had time not healed them, but that it had compounded the pain. The other five myths carry equally unhelpful messages.

The Solution

Recovery from loss is accomplished by discovering and completing all of the undelivered communications that accrue in relationships. We are all advised to "Let Go," and "Move On," after losses of all kinds. Most of us would do that if we knew how.

Completion of pain caused by loss is what allows us to Let Go and Move On. It is almost impossible to Move On without first taking a series of actions that lead to completion.

Before taking the actions to complete, it is important to look at and often dismiss some of the ideas for myths that we have tried to use with loss, but are not working.

Safety and Correct Actions

The Grief ♥ Recovery[®] Program creates the safety and the correct action choices that help people Move Beyond the pain caused by loss. It is a seven to twelve week program, which creates a safe environment in which to look at old beliefs about dealing with loss; to look at what other losses have affected your life; and to take new actions which lead to completion of the pain attached to a recent loss, or one that occurred long ago.

The Grief Recovery Handbook, *The Action Program for Moving Beyond Death, Divorce, and Other Losses*, (released by HarperCollins in 1998), and an accompanying format written by Institute founders, John W. James and Russell Friedman is used as the text for the Program.

To Get Started

The Grief ♥ Recovery[®] Program is led by Mary Ann, who has been trained and certified by The Grief Recovery Institute[®]. To ensure your success within this program, she has direct access to the founders of the Institute.

As of now, she is doing individual sessions. Eventually, there may be group sessions.

43 Losses

There are 43 losses which can produce the range of emotions that we call grief.

The long list includes:

- ♥ Death of a Loved One
- ♥ Divorce, or the End of a Relationship
- ♥ Loss of Health
- ♥ Major Financial Changes
- ♥ Moving, and many others

Grief is Normal and Natural but many of the ideas we have been taught about dealing with grief are not helpful.

Moving Beyond Loss

If you have experienced one or more losses, and you wish to move beyond the pain, this program offers you the probability of a richer and more rewarding life.

For information about the program, contact:

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Grief ♥ Recovery[®] **Specialist**
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The Grief ♥ Recovery[®] Outreach Program

**The Action Program For
Moving Beyond Loss**