



Grief
Is a
Spiritual Practice

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Loss can change the trajectory of a life. It shifts our days and interrupts our nights. It breaks open our hearts and forces us to reckon with the big questions of life: Where is God? Who am I now? How do I pray?

Over time, grief actually becomes a spiritual practice.

At Unity, we hear from people whose grief is fresh as well as those who miss loved ones from years ago. We hear anguish and gratitude, darkness and light from those in the valley of the shadow of death.

We offer this booklet as spiritual support for those who are grieving and those who love them. Our writers have explored the many aspects of grief as they lost parents, spouses, and children—sometimes suddenly, or after a long illness, or even by suicide.

Beautiful poems here express the depths of grief, and classic messages from *Daily Word* have comforted the grieving for nearly a century.

Grief takes as long as it takes, and there is no right or wrong way to express it. Nor does it really end; instead we gradually take new shape around it.

We hope this booklet not only comforts you but illuminates your journey of grief, so you can see clearly that you are not alone.

Your Friends at Unity



Section One:

The Journey Through Death






I Wish It Had Been Different: Guilt and Regrets

By Rev. Patricia Gulino Lansky

At 15 years old, while most of my high school friends were concerned with finding a date for the sophomore dance, I had been living through my father's three-year illness. I thought he would get well the way anyone else does after being sick. I didn't know that having cancer meant he wouldn't recover.

We never talked about it. I now know my parents were trying to protect my little brother and me from the pain of that discussion, but the lack of knowledge left me totally unprepared for Dad's death.




One morning during my father's illness, I promised to relieve my mother at the hospital after she stayed overnight with him. I couldn't wake up that morning. It was as if I were drugged with sleep, drowning in quicksand.

When I finally was ready to leave the house, my mother arrived at home and said, "It's okay. You don't have to go to the hospital. Dad died this morning."

I wish it had been different. I didn't know he was dying. I deeply regretted not being prepared for this moment, not being able to ask questions or understand his dying process. I felt like an outsider unable to come to resolution alongside the rest of the family. I was angry that I had been kept in the dark, but I wasn't emotionally prepared even to admit that anger to myself.

Although I didn't know it then, dying is a natural part of life. However, no one wanted to talk to me about it.



Maybe It Was All Perfect

I blamed myself. If only I had gotten to the hospital earlier, I would have been there for him. My heart broke because I wasn't able to say goodbye. I felt my father had been stolen from me. My guilt for not being with him was tremendous. It took a long time to identify, sort out those feelings, and come to resolution.

Regrets and guilt are burdens that keep us from living fully in the present. Our thoughts are filled with "shoulda," "woulda," "coulda." If only I'd insisted that he see a doctor sooner. If only I

had said those things I wanted to say. If only I had gotten to his side while he could speak to me.

The list of regrets can go on and on, but the feelings underneath include powerlessness, sorrow, and even anger. It can be difficult to accept the reality of what is. We may blame ourselves when there is no one else to blame. Our regrets and guilt may be our attempt to hold on or control something we have no control over.

Part of the grieving process may be wishing that our loved one hadn't died, that they hadn't endured any suffering, and that we didn't now have to experience the pain of losing them. We might wish everything were different.

What if we could allow a new spaciousness of knowing there is a divine purpose to whatever happens? There might have been lessons, unanticipated gifts, expansions of the heart, and even healings that would never have occurred if life hadn't unfolded just as it did.

How to Avoid Regrets

There's an old saying that graveyards are littered with guilt and regrets. Yet it is possible to have no regrets when death comes. Sometimes we lose a loved one suddenly, and sometimes we have the mixed blessing of time during a longer dying process. If we want to remain regret-free, it is up to us to stay in the present with our relationships.

This takes a commitment to keep current with what we need to say, to clean up our messes, and to make amends quickly. When

a loved one is ill, you can tie up all the loose ends as long as your disclosure doesn't bring unnecessary pain to a dying person.

One of the most fulfilling things we can do with a loved one who is seriously ill is to ask questions that give witness to their life, to their successes, and to some of their challenges. It can be a blessing for them to know that someone has heard and knows who they have been and that in some way their story will live on.

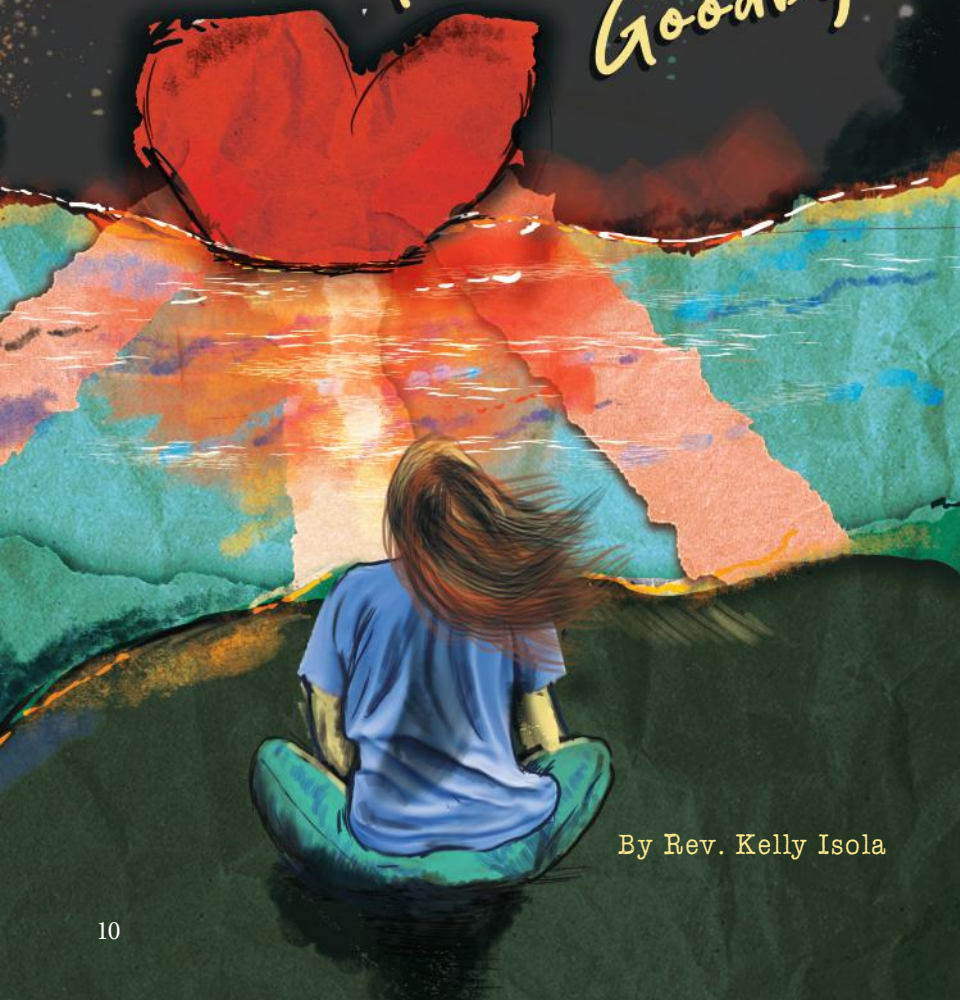
Have those talks with your loved ones and begin them early and often. Clear up misconceptions, heal whatever needs to be healed, forgive, release, and complete unfinished business together. Tell the person you love them, if that is your truth.

Leave nothing undone. Act as if this is the last day. Be in the present because the present is the only time we have. Love is the only thing that is important. Create times of sharing and unconditional love. Listen without judgment or criticism.

Just sit and listen. Let the ears of your heart lead you in everything you do with and for your loved one. Losing them will still hurt, but your time together at the end may be something you treasure forever.

Rev. Patricia Gulino Lansky is a Unity minister in Charlottesville, Virginia, and author of the book, *Accepting Death, Embracing Life: How Death Teaches Us to Live*. Read more at embracingyourlife.net.

Lessons From a Long Goodbye



By Rev. Kelly Isola

When I see pictures on social media that poke fun at us human beings, I generally save them to my phone. It's a spiritual practice for me, especially on days when grief is very alive. It's a way to smile during moments when all I really want to do is hold the loved one I've lost when I am feeling so alone.

One of my favorite graphics reads: "If I manage to survive the rest of the week, I would like my straitjacket in hot pink and my helmet to sparkle."

Navigating the landscape of grief often requires moments of silliness and levity, especially when death has come after a very long illness. I lost my beloved of 15 years, Frank, to AIDS.

He lived with the illness for 22 years, and my 15 years with him sometimes felt like a slow march to death. Other days, gratefulness was the menu of the day. It changed the way I lived then and even now.

You learn to make plans and then get comfortable with last-minute changes. You learn to laugh whenever you can and not to leave anything unsaid. You learn to do the things you've always wanted to do, and you learn to cancel those "bucket list" ideas. You allow exhaustion to wash over you as you reach your threshold, and then begin again the very next day, finding rejuvenation in unexpected places. You learn to "pack lightly" because you have no way of knowing where life, or death, may take you that day.

Being Tenderized

I refer to all of this as my spiritual practice of living life unheard, which results in “being tenderized.” I’ve learned that being tenderized is where the juiciness of life is, and it was how I lived with my beloved through illness and death.

Those 15 years brought the yo-yo unpredictability of the illness; an emotional and psychological roller coaster too complex to describe; many illnesses and symptoms of “unknown origins”; and the ever-present shame, stigma, and misunderstanding our culture holds around HIV/AIDS and projects onto anyone near it.

It was 15 years of the reality that suffering and pain are always around me and emerging from within me, breaking my heart open.

Breaking open can happen in ways that are tender or it can shatter me into thousands of shards. If I had lived our life dodging the pain, then my heart would have become dry and brittle and easily broken into pieces. Instead I had to choose to face the harsh realities of our life, including the immense likelihood of his leaving me at any moment from a horrible, painful, frightening illness.

Tenderness is alive as a result of allowing moments in life that are hard, unpredictable, and scary to be placed on my heart. Being tenderized was allowing the joys and the sufferings of our lives to touch me, to stretch me, to soften me.

Living Life Unrehearsed

Having a life that was unexpectedly rearranged and choosing to be tenderized gave me greater capacity to hold suffering, which then stretched me even further into living our life together in new ways. Like plants, we created tendrils. Those buds represent new life, climbing and reaching to other plants for support and love, which is what life is about.

In his book *Letters From a Modern Mystic*, Frank Laubach says, “Somebody was telling me this week that nobody can make a violin speak the last depths of human longing until that soul has been made tender by some great anguish. I do not say it is the only way to the heart of God, but I must witness that it has opened an inner shrine for me which I have never entered before.”

Living life unrehearsed is to step into the unknown and face myself, as well as others, with deep and abiding tenderness. I must allow everything to come into my heart with no anesthesia—the end of a friendship, the laughter of a stranger, the sound of rain, a child’s failure at a task, the smell of freshly baked bread, or the death of my beloved—because tenderness is what the world is yearning for and depending on from each of us.

Rev. Kelly Isola is a Unity minister and chair of the Greater Kansas City Interfaith Council. Read more at kellyisola.com.

When a Loved One Is Dying

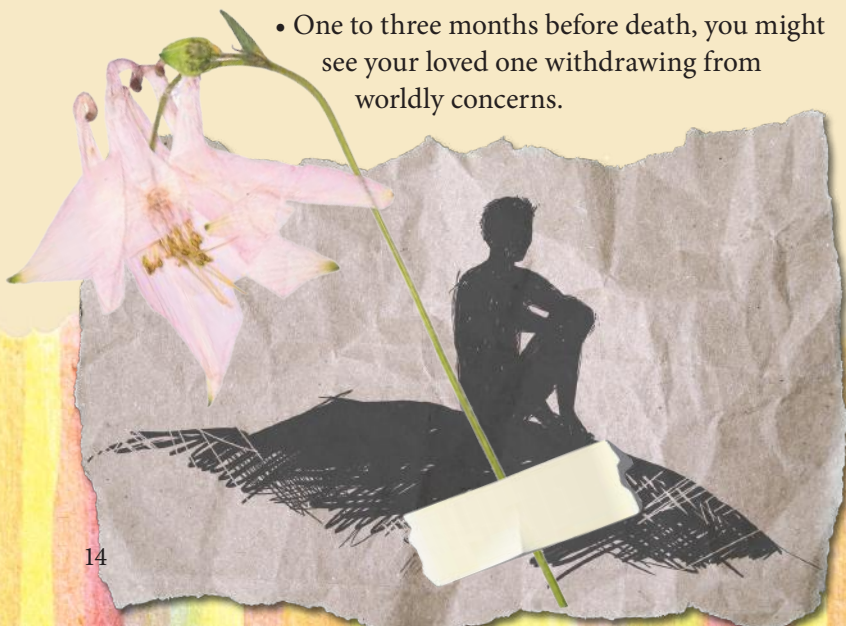
By Rev. Patricia Gulino Lansky

On his deathbed, William Hunter, a leading Scottish anatomist and physician (1718-1783), said, "If I had the strength to hold a pen, I would write down how easy and pleasant it is to die."

Talking about the actual process of dying is often uncomfortable in our culture, but knowing what to expect can remove many of our fears. Demystifying death can make caring for your loved one—and your own dying—lighter.

Although every death is unique, some predictable behaviors can occur in the dying process:

- One to three months before death, you might see your loved one withdrawing from worldly concerns.



- One or two weeks before death, the “veil” is lifting. They might seem to move back and forth from this world into the afterlife, seeing angels, colors, or images of light.
- Your loved ones might have end of life hallucinations—I call them spirit visitations—when they seem to see and speak with invisible people or spirits nearby. There is no need to correct them; simply be a witness to this process. Their statements can be interpreted as metaphors for the journey they are experiencing.
- Days or hours before death, the “death rattle” is loud, rattling breathing caused by congestion in the airway. It’s important for the caregiver to know there is nothing wrong or painful about this. It is a natural part of the process.
- The heart slows down, the outer extremities may feel cold to the touch as they release circulation bit by bit, and the heart finally stops.
- The body goes limp like an outfit discarded. Any pain has ended. There is nothing to fear in dying. It is as normal as breathing, as natural as being born.

Of course, it is not always easy to be with a loved one who is dying. Emotions can surface, and caregiving can be stressful. However, as we center in our faith and honor our loved ones and ourselves, we can grow in appreciation of this beautiful process of life.

Hold tight to Love

By Rev. Mindy
Lawrence Curtiss



After a death, one of the most delicate situations that surviving loved ones must maneuver is the dividing of the deceased's personal belongings.

The “who-gets-what” dilemma can be an emotional minefield that sparks years of bad feelings. It can also become a time of solidarity and healing when done with care.

If you have ever lost someone you hold dear, you know that a mix of emotions starts to cascade. Great sorrow, loneliness, a hole in the heart—each person's experience is unique. Everyone comes to terms with the loss at their own pace and adjusts to the change in their own way.

Not handled wisely, choosing new ownership of

possessions amid such a mix of high emotion can jeopardize peace in even the most cohesive circle.

So how can the task be done with care?

Before examining that question, I will share three of my core beliefs surrounding the matter. I hold firmly that:


- ❁ The very reason our souls incarnate is to learn the lessons of love.
- ❁ The great sorrow and grief we feel at a loved one's passing is in direct relation to the depth of our love.
- ❁ The objects our departed loved ones handled and enjoyed in life carry power to comfort us, if we allow ourselves to be comforted.

When faced with emotions triggered by death's seeming finality, we often reach out to take hold of something tangible, something that brings to mind the person who was once at our side.

The mixing bowls Grandmother used to make special treats. The garden hoe Uncle wielded in the garden. The pretty pearl-drop necklace Mother wore and the old milk pitcher that sat on the table. These are not trivial objects.

Like most families, my siblings and I—all 11 of us—faced the dilemma after each of our parent's passing.

When Dad died, we chose to not move a thing, not even a handkerchief in a drawer, because keeping his things within reach brought solace to Mom. A few years later our mother passed at



89, and we were left with decades of family treasures to divide among us.

Perhaps our system will help suggest a way for your family to approach your own situation.

Our process began with a shared intention inspired by our parents' teachings: Love the family and always treat one another with respect.

Two of my sisters sorted and tagged items, then posted photos on a family website. Every sibling was invited to rank 25 things in order of how much they wanted each one.

On two Saturday afternoons, the local siblings sat around the old family dining table, and out-of-towners joined by conference call. Starting at the top, each of us stated the item we wanted most. Then down the lists we went. We negotiated at times—sometimes trading and occasionally dividing sets.

That process worked for us. Seven years later, the harmony in our family remains strong and we remember our Saturday meetings with gratitude, even some laughs.

Whatever system your family and friends adopt, the important point is to be certain it fairly balances every person's wishes and honors the emotions each is feeling at the time.

Rev. Mindy Lawrence Curtiss is the associate minister of pastoral care at Unity of Houston, where she facilitates grief workshops.

Daily Word

January 19, 1928

This is my watchword for today: I cannot be alone. The comforting presence of God is ever with me.

I am free from all sense of loneliness. I cannot be alone because God is ever within me and about me. I am free from all belief that God can be separated from me. Knowing that God is always with me, I cannot be lonesome.

The presence of God inspires and comforts me at all times. There can be no situation in which God is not at hand. All I need to do is simply to recognize His presence and to make myself at-one with Him.

The comforting presence of God relieves me of all sorrow, all sense of loneliness, and all grief over personal limitations. With God at hand there can be no sorrow or adverse thought about me. My mind and my soul are filled with the peaceful assurances of the Spirit and I am delighted and satisfied.

I am never alone when in the consciousness that God attends me. He walks beside me just as a friend would walk with me and go my way. He lifts me up. I rest in His arms.

I am sustained and soothed by the knowledge that, in Truth, I am eternally unified with my Father. My Spirit is buoyed up by the Spirit of God.

In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.—Psalm 94:19

Acknowledging

Our Grief Anniversaries

By John Pavlovitz



I always struggle on sunny Saturday mornings.

It was a brilliantly blue-skyed September Saturday four years ago, when I bounded down the stairs on the way to the gym and noticed my phone vibrating on the hallway table. The caller ID told me that it was my youngest brother Eric and so I rushed to it, eager to catch up. Had I known what he was going to tell me 10 seconds later, I wouldn't have answered it.

That was the moment I found out that my father was gone. As only those who mourn the loss of someone they love deeply understand, sunny Saturday mornings have never been the same for me. They are now a Grief Anniversary; a perpetual, involuntary holiday where my heart marks its injury over and over and over again without me getting a say in the matter.

Since that terrible day there has rarely been a Saturday morning regardless of what I've been in the middle of, when I have not found myself reliving it in some way, my mind jarred from its routine to momentarily eulogize my father once again.

I wish it were the only such occasion, as I could probably handle feeling this horrible once a week, but that's not how this works.

Most people think that grieving is about the big annual events—about Christmases and birthdays and the like, and of course it is. But the brutal truth (one that only those who continue to live after someone dear to them is gone can rightly fathom), is that these other quiet anniversaries are equally devastating and far more frequent.

In the wake of losing a loved one, everything in your life becomes a potential surprise memorial. Out of nowhere you are broadsided by days of the week or times of day or numbers on the calendar, or songs that were playing or cologne you were wearing or the feel of the grass beneath your knees as you fell at the news. These seemingly incessant reminders force you once again to observe the loss anew.

And since these days and times and triggers aren't obvious to most people in our lives (and since we don't have the time or the words to describe them all), they are usually unaware of just how much and just how often we mourn. Even those who are closest to us and care for us greatly remain largely oblivious to our recurring sadness. Our grief can feel like a very lonely journey, which in many ways it is because it is specific to us and to the one we've lost. It is a customized but hidden wound.

I've tried to remember this because it helps me to realize that most people I encounter every day are doing this continual memorializing of someone they love too. They, like me, have these constant pinpricks to the heart that they are experiencing at any given moment. They, like me, could be internally reeling for what seems to be no apparent reason. This very ordinary day for me could be a day of extraordinary mourning for them.

When someone you love deeply dies, the calendar of your life is altered forever. It gets divided into the time before and after that moment. I'll probably never have another uninterrupted sunny Saturday morning ever again. My mind will likely always find a way of marking the occasion and reminding me once more that normal is a very relative term now.

In this way each moment is another chance to grieve my father, another potential opportunity to measure the depth of my love for him by the level of the loss in his absence.

Today, for a million reasons you might very well find yourself observing the absence of someone you miss dearly, and though it will be a rather uneventful day to the world around you, it will be a National Day of Mourning in the center of your own aching heart.

Please know that you are not alone, dear friend. I acknowledge the pain within you and I observe this day along with you.

Peace, on this Grief Anniversary.

Be encouraged.

When someone you love deeply dies,
the calendar of your life is altered
forever.

This piece first appeared in John Pavlovitz's blog, "Stuff That Needs to Be Said," in 2016 and is reprinted with permission. He is a writer and pastor in Wake Forest, North Carolina. johnpavlovitz.com

Help ^{for} the Holidays— and Every Day

By Rev. Mindy Lawrence Curtiss

When someone you love dies, occasions that were once special can become the worst days on the calendar.

Birthdays, holidays, and anniversaries might leave you feeling more sadness for the loved one who is absent than joy in the friends and family who are with you.

If you anticipate such emptiness, I urge you to take a bold step: Replace some of the sorrow with new traditions to honor a dear one who has passed.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS

For major occasions, involve friends and family to join in acknowledging the one no longer with you.

- Place an extra chair at the table.
- Bless the meal and include gratitude for the ways the now-departed person enriched your lives.
- Put special things in places of honor. Cherished candlesticks work well on the table. Add the loved one's most requested dish. Their favorite music enriches the atmosphere.



Your thoughtfulness is likely to inspire lively “remember-when” stories.

FOR EVERY DAY

Create a memory altar or a place where you can honor the one you have loved. A shelf or small table are good spots. Or venture outside and choose a garden or beautiful tree.

You might add small treasures: a perfume bottle, thimble, favorite beer mug, or work gloves. For appropriate occasions, read a greeting card that expresses your feelings. Lighting a candle adds a sacred touch.



When the anniversary of the passing comes around, spend some time at the memory altar speaking aloud—not about grief but about joy and gratitude for the good fortune of living your lives together in ways that brought love and connection.

KEEP TALKING

When I became engaged to my husband Carl, the two of us sat together and shared our joy with our parents. Our moms and dads each had left this world long before, yet we felt their presence as we spoke.

Carl and I treasure that moment of connection and affirm that love shared here on earth continues after this life ends.

Listen carefully, or simply sense your loved ones' presence. When you honor the places in your heart that are still filled by special people now gone, you are likely to find new comfort in knowing their most important gifts will always stay with you.

The Seamless

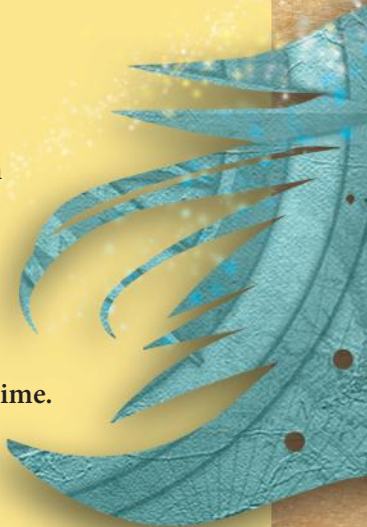
By Rev. Paul John Roach

The ancients, when misfortune arose,
Or sacred codes were broken,
Tore their clothes in anguish.
With white fingers of blame,
They poured ashes on their hopelessness.

When Jesus died
The curtains of the Temple, it is said,
Were rent in two.
The sky darkened, the thunder roared
As if the elements felt disgust in that hour.


Yet, at the Master's endgame
None of the crowd dared
To rend his seamless robe.
Craven, reductionary, yes,
Happy to scour the whipping ground,
Still, they recognized the garment's worth
And drew lots to preserve the whole.

Death has its place,
Its dividing line
Between what is possible and what is not.
But the seamless is beyond a place and a time.
It is a shimmer of recognition
Amid bitterness.
Its calling card reads, "With us."
It whispers, "Always home."



Rev. Paul John Roach is a Unity minister and host of *World Spirituality* on Unity Online Radio.





Daily Word

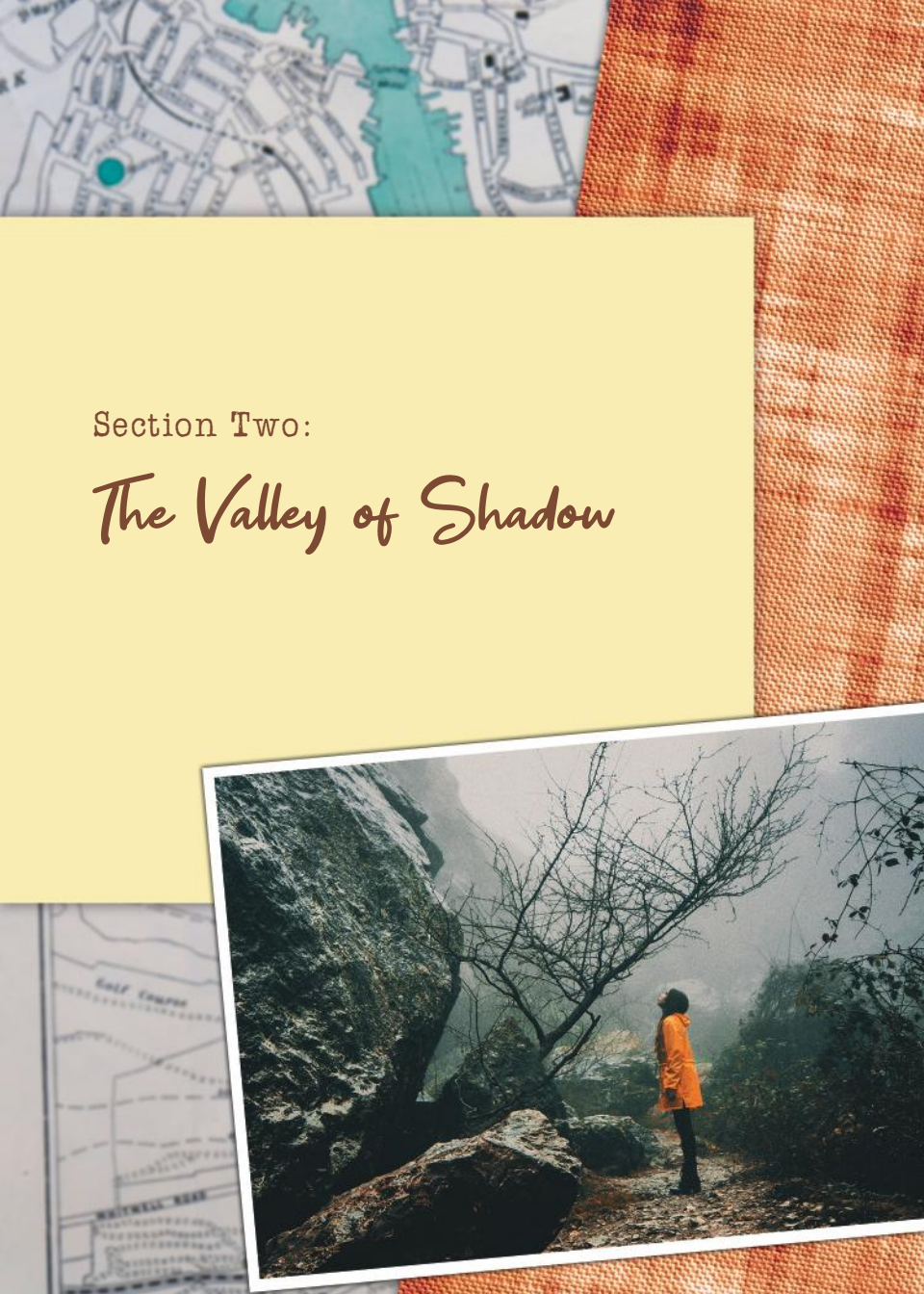
August 27, 1947

*Through my understanding of God's love and truth
I am comforted and sustained in every experience.*

An understanding of the truth that life is eternal, the realization that God's loving presence is ever with us, sustains and strengthens us in time of grief or seeming loss. Persons without this understanding are sometimes defeated by grief, wasting months, even years, of their lives because of their inability to meet the experience courageously and understandingly. While human grief is an emotional release, it must be controlled and understood in the light of Truth if it is to bring enrichment rather than devastation.

The understanding that there is never an end to life, to the goodness of God, enables us to look past the appearance of loss, to know that each life contributes in a measure to the sum total of good. An understanding of Truth helps us to meet every experience courageously, to rise out of grief or regret, and to carry on our lives in a way that enriches and blesses us and those about us.

**And he shall give you another Comforter,
that he may be with you forever, even the
Spirit of truth.— John 14:16**



Section Two:

The Valley of Shadow



Grief as a Spiritual Practice

By Rev. Ogun Holder



Four years later and the pain of losing my wife to cancer still hits me like a swift punch to the gut; like an unexpected thunderclap on a clear day; like a sudden, bone-jarring drop into an invisible manhole in what I thought was smooth pavement.

I say “still” as though I should be experiencing anything other than what I am. I know better. I know that time loses meaning in the face of grief. I know others who suffered loss seven, 11, 35, 48 years ago, and they continue to pour tears into the void left behind.

They say nature abhors a vacuum. Did anyone ever bother to tell grief?

We tend to grieve in terms of who or what we lost. Every subsequent loss triggers the first loss or the most traumatic loss. It feels as if we are caught in a weird time vortex, experiencing life's progress while stuck reliving the loss and its associated feelings.

We turn to our tried-and-true spiritual practices to break free from our Groundhog Day grief loop: We meditate, we pray, we sage, we affirm and deny, we walk the labyrinths, we beat drums, we seek counsel of the clergy, we pry wisdom from the sages, we seek out those who channel the departed back to us.

We find, however, that all this may not help much. Eventually we tire of efforts to salve our suffering. Eventually, inevitably, we find ourselves at the place where all healing begins, the place we couldn't have found any sooner because we were so blinded by the shock of loss: surrender.

SURRENDER TO THE FEELINGS

Quick sidebar: *Healing* implies a restoration to wholeness, a repairing of the broken, a righting of wrongs. No. We are never not whole, which we understand as spiritual seekers. We are never truly broken, even though we might feel we are. There are no wrongs to be righted, which might be the most challenging truth to embrace.

To *heal* is to make peace with what is, to cease struggling against the current experience, and to release any desire that the loss

never happened, that they never left, they never died. To heal, we have to surrender to the very thing we have been trying to avoid. We have to surrender to the grief. When we do, paradoxically it becomes the only spiritual practice that allows us to heal.

What is a spiritual practice other than a repeated activity or process that enables us to meet and know the deepest parts of ourselves, and in so doing, meet and know All That Is, which we sometimes call God?

To surrender to grief means we feel and express every emotion that comes up, as often as it comes up, and let those emotions be the turn-by-turn directions that lead us to the parts of us that require the most healing.

Feel and express the anger, because anger shows us the resentments we didn't know we were still holding on to.

Feel and express the loneliness, because loneliness shows that we are still afraid to be alone, that we are afraid we might never be loved again, that we are afraid to love again, that we still don't fully love ourselves.

Feel and express the confusion, because confusion leads to seeking answers, and all answers lie within, and the only answer is always love.



MOVE THROUGH THE VALLEY

Psalm 23 is one of my favorite Bible passages, especially the line: “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me” (Psalm 23:4). That’s the New Revised Standard Version, but I grew up on the very outdated King James Version, and I think its translation is even more apropos: “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.”

I can’t think of a better image for how grief feels: walking through a dark valley or living in the shadow of death, defined by a loss so pronounced that we now mark all time as Before and After the Loss.

The truth is, when we grieve, we’re not waiting to feel love again; love is waiting on us to embrace it fully. Fortunately, as another Bible verse reminds us, “Love is patient; love is kind ... It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Corinthians 13:4, 7).

Love got us into this in the first place. We grieve because we love, and the more we love, the greater the grief.

If we let it, grief takes us back to love. Love is all there is.

Rev. Ogun Holder is the minister at Unity on the River in Amesbury, Massachusetts, and the author of *Rants to Revelations: Unabashedly Honest Reflections on Life, Spirituality, and the Meaning of God*.



What to Expect When You're Grieving

By Rev. Patricia Gulino Lansky

After experiencing a loved one's dying process and death, our emotions can be raw and fragile. As we face the loss of a significant person, feelings can be confused and heartbreaking as we not only deal with their loss but with our own mortality.

We might prefer to escape into a cave and wait out the storm. But we can't.

What if we could discover instead that our emotions are our friends, that they are the language of the heart? Our feelings

are our heart's internal wisdom speaking to us. Emotions help us by giving voice to what we need and giving us strength and resolve to take appropriate action through this morass of illness, decision-making, and loss.

Many of us question the way we feel at this time. Be assured there is no one right way to grieve. Each person and each relationship is unique. Grief could never be formulaic, as there is no time limit on grieving.

Grief is a normal and natural reaction to a significant loss. Grief is the way we deal with and move into recovery. It is a period of healing.


The Many Symptoms of Grief

We grieve because we have loved, but levels of intensity vary with each individual. Crying is not required. Some may not have tears, while others might think they will never stop crying. Most important is to be honest and authentic with whatever you are feeling.

Each person experiences grief differently, yet there are some common responses.

One jarring response to witnessing or learning of a loved one's death is losing focus. We may feel a physical reaction to loss by losing concentration and feeling numb. A typical situation is finding yourself unable to remember what you were looking for when you came into the room. This is normal as your mind is consumed with the loss of someone you love.





Other physical and mental responses may occur such as numbness, forgetfulness, and agitation. After a shocking loss, my friend couldn't remember how to behave—to walk or stand or sit. Eventually, she was able to shift from this frozen state by calling a friend to help her navigate what to do next. Asking for help can make all the difference in moving through grief.

Sleeping and eating patterns can swing between extremes. For weeks after my mother's death, her final breath revisited me in my memory. I'd lie down to sleep and I'd hear her exhale and then I'd wait—wait for the inhale that never came.

In grief there is often a roller coaster of physical and emotional energy. It is usual to have intense sorrow, be distracted and forgetful, and even experience physical pains in the chest or have trouble breathing.

You may not want to be with other people, or you might be frightened to be alone.

You may be confused to discover that you are angry. It's possible to be angry with someone for dying, and you can certainly feel angry at the circumstance—being abandoned, witnessing their suffering, and other situations. Your emotional process has its own logic and individual time frame.

When a beloved one dies, other losses that have not healed may also rise to the surface. That's why our grief can often feel bigger than the present loss. Grief says, "Okay, now that I have your attention, now that your heart is broken open, let's address the

unfinished business of healing your whole heart.” Grief needs time to unfold and bring its healing to you.

Spiritual Gifts of Grief

Those who understand the spiritual potential of healing through grief may echo Jacob’s words in Genesis 32:24-31, when he wrestled all night with an angel and said, “I will not let you go, unless you bless me.”

We will want to delve deeply into processing and resolving our grief to discover how suffering will become a blessing. It might teach us compassion, trust, joy, and how ultimately through death we can learn to treasure life. We will come to know who we are at the core of our being is so much greater than any circumstance we may face.

We will learn that all honest expressions help shift the psyche into balance and wholeness. Welcome them all—these emotions, these friends, these extensions of your soul. Let them come to feel at home in your expanding heart. As uncomfortable as these expressions can be, they invite you to be on good terms with them.

Continue to surround yourself with life, to cultivate life, to express whatever emerges in you.

No emotion will erase the love that you shared. Love is eternal. Your emotions are part of you and can bring great blessings. Wrestle with your angel until you are blessed and transformed.



Living With the Loss of a Child

By Tracie Loux

If I could go back and write a letter to my husband on the day our son took his last breath and tell him how he could love me best during the years that would follow, it would read something like this ...

My Beloved,

Today our beautiful boy took his last breath, and we are left wondering how we will keep on breathing. I know for sure I cannot breathe unless you take my hand and breathe with me. I will need you to hold me, and I will hold you. I will need you to cry with me. Don't hold it in. I will need you to sit in the horrible space of not being able to fix this hellish mess.

I want you to know that you will always have permission to fall apart, and you will be required to watch me fall apart too. When it's time to stand, I will need you to take my hand. I will be reaching for yours.

There will be fearful times when you worry whether I will ever be the same. You should know now that I will not. But as you have known since the day you met me, I am fierce and I am strong.

So with that knowledge, please trust that I will rise again. You will watch me rise and fall, rise and fall, rise and fall. You will catch me on days when you have strength of your own, and you will fall with me on days when our hearts collapse under the simultaneous rhythm of grief.

It will crush you that you cannot lift this pain from my heart. It will tear at your very being that you cannot fix this thing we are now forced to endure for the rest of our lives.

I will become the safest place and the most terrifying place to fall. I will be the one who can be present fully and understand your pain like no one else; yet I will also be a constant reminder of your own pain. My pain will trigger you. Your pain will trigger me. And we will both have a choice—to lean in and live it together or to drift apart. I'm begging you today to always lean in to me, to hold on tightly to us.

You will have to learn the very fragile dance of knowing when to give me space and when to pull me close. You know me well enough now to know that mostly I need to be pulled in close.

You will see me panic on days when I feel you drifting away. You will see fear in my eyes when I worry about you. I'm begging you to live. Don't give up on you, on me, on us—we are all we have, my love. And when it's all too much and you need to escape, please always come home. But whenever possible, escape with me.

Let's take care of each other. I'm going to need you to remind me to eat and drink, I'm going to need you to take me to the gym. I'm going to need you to help me hold our crying children and parent them in the midst of our own brokenness. I'm going to need you to find a good show for us to binge-watch. I'm going to need you to go buy more wine. I'll need you to talk to me—about your feelings, about my feelings, and about our beautiful son's life.

Then the day will come when I will need you to dream with me. Dream about a future that looks far different from what we had planned, a future that somehow will allow us to grab ahold of his spirit as we live, heal, create, grow, and explore.

In this space of pain and healing, I will need you to love me more deeply than ever. I will need you to love me as if I am not one, but two—because from this day forward, I am me and I am him.

Death cannot separate either of us from this boy who stole our hearts. So as I love you and you love me, we continue to love our son who is woven into the very DNA of our souls.

Today as we hold his body for the last time and find ourselves holding our breath, I ask you to learn how to breathe again with me and love me—knowing I am no longer one, but two.

Tracie Loux of Kansas City, Missouri, lost her son Matthias when he was not quite 4 years old. This article first appeared in 2017 in her blog at tracieloux.wordpress.com and is reprinted here with permission.

Daily Word

February 11, 1956

The holy comforter heals my heart of grief.

When a dear one passes from our sight we are often left with a sense of loss and grief. Then it may seem to us that all that we thought we understood about life has lost its meaning. But because our hearts reach out for strength and help from God—the only true help at such times—we may gain deeper insight and understanding than we have had before.

Jesus said, “I will not leave you desolate.” “But the Comforter, *even* the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.”

Many persons have found that in the times when they most needed reassurance, they were the closest to God. They felt upheld and strengthened, they felt more sure than ever of the good purposes of God and of the reality, the endlessness of God’s life. This strength and assurance are what the Holy Comforter, the Spirit of truth, stands ready and waiting to impart to our hearts and minds. “Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.”

I will not leave you desolate.—John 14:18

Grief

By Rev. Patricia Gulino Lansky

I wade through swirling white foam
laughing, jumping in dark, dense surf.
Catching a wave, instantly I am upside down,
not knowing which way is the surface,
which way holds my oxygen.
Indifferent, the wave rolls on,
tossing me like an eggbeater.
All alone, heart racing, fighting,
eyes wide seeing only black,
with no sense of movement at all.

Suddenly I'm dropped on the shore,
weighted down, graceless,
shaking with fear, lungs sucking air,
hot salt tears swallowed in sand,
safe, yet angry and embarrassed,
grateful, yet horrified.
It's not fair!

I have spent enough time in grief.
I want to get on with my life
without the dread of repeat performances.
When will it be
finished?

Everyone else is frolicking by the sea.
Once more, I am upside down in a black wave,
thrown down in wet sand
like a clump of tangled seaweed.
Will I ever again glide happy and carefree,
skim the surface with long, easy strokes?
Will I once more languish on my back seeing sky,
legs fluttering while slow, graceful arms
dip into the water,
arching up and back?

When the Death Is Suicide

Suicide as the cause of death carries more stigma in our culture than any other cause. The shock, guilt, and feeling of senselessness felt by those who know and love the one who passed are amplified by what is often perceived as a preventable death.

While grief is a process that each goes through in his or her own way, if you are dealing with someone's death by suicide, it may hasten your healing to know that all are surrounded by love across the veil, no matter how they passed.

After my stepdaughter Susan was killed when she was struck by lightning, I embarked on a journey to discover whether she still exists. A visit with a respected medium provided my husband and me irrefutable evidence that Susan does indeed continue to exist at a higher level of consciousness.

After Susan's death, I began meditating daily in hopes of connecting with her myself. In doing so, I discovered a reality far greater than this limited physical world and that all of us are part of this indivisible field of intelligence, creativity, and divine love. I learned that those who pass are alive, well, and actively engaging with us at a soul level. I also learned that I can communicate with these "spirit people" quite clearly.

I now serve as an evidence-based medium, which is a far cry from my former career. I am a retired U.S. Navy commander. I served as a commanding officer and as the aide to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the head of the United States military. I am a no-nonsense woman, and nothing short of overwhelming evidence of the continuity of consciousness would allow me to

make the bold statements I share with you here. Trust me: The preponderance of evidence leaves no doubt that death is merely a transition to another chapter in our eternal lives as souls.

In my work, I have communicated with hundreds of people who passed by suicide. In every case, they validate their presence by sharing with me things I couldn't have known, such as the exact manner of their death, what kind of work they did, and special memories that one could never find on Google. I feel their distinct personality quite clearly and I'm able to share their essence in a way that leaves their family members saying, "That's them!"

The most important thing I have learned about suicide is that those who took their own lives are not burning in hell. In more than 10 years of doing this healing work, every person who hastened their own death has shared with me that they were met with nothing but love. In most cases, there is instant regret. In all cases, they are shown how their decision to leave Earth School early cut short the opportunities for their soul's growth and the effects of their decision on those who love them.

Most souls who pass by suicide find themselves in a healing place with a soft blue light. They are ministered to by loving guides who specialize in this kind of situation. Just like all souls who cross the veil, our loved ones do their best to send signs to those they left behind that they still exist. As they heal, they wish for their loved ones to forgive them and to find healing.

I have learned that souls agree to take on certain challenges when we come into human form, but souls do not deliberately

plan to take their own lives. We may, however, sign up for greater challenges than others, with the awareness that these tests may push us to the brink. We are always encouraged from across the veil to stay and use these challenges as opportunities to grow, but with the gift of free will, not everyone makes this choice. Many people adjusting to a loved one's passing equate the amount of grief with the amount they loved. Don't make this mistake.

Knowing that your loved one feels your pain, show them that you are doing your best to adjust and work to establish a new kind of relationship without their physical presence. Talk to them and trust that they hear you.

Find a support group so you will know you're not alone. One such group for parents of children who have passed, *helpingparentsheal.org*, encourages the open discussion of the afterlife. These members find hope and healing by sharing stories of their loved ones' continued presence in their lives, no matter how they passed.

The No. 1 question asked by those affected by a loved one's death by suicide is "Why?" Stop yourself from asking "why" and focus instead on what you can do to make the world a better place for your loved one having been in it. Move forward knowing they are still in your life, if only in a different form.

Suzanne Giesemann is an evidential medium, prolific author, and host of the *Messages of Hope* show on *unityonlineradio.org*. Her website is *suzannegiesemann.com*.



Using Spiritual Principles in Grief

By Rev. Therese Lee

Using the ancient spiritual principles taught in Unity has allowed me to walk through my mourning. Seven years after my husband's sudden death, I am no longer trying to get through my grief because these teachings let me walk alongside my grief.

I have been a Unity Truth student since 1989. I was hungry back then to learn spiritual principles and now I am committed to living my life intentionally within them.

In 2004 when Tom Lee asked me to marry him, he suggested going on a two-year honeymoon with him through the Unity ministerial education program.

As a newly married ministerial student, I am not sure I was awake to the gift of being mindful. Believe me, Tom's unexpected death in 2012 forced me to become aware. I needed something to ground me, something to hold on to. I was searching for something that gave clarity to my being a widow at 53.

My go-to question was and is: “What does my soul want me to know so much that it would have me be in this situation?” Of course, after my husband, cominister, and spiritual partner made his transition, I asked myself the question. And the answer I heard was, *You’ve got to live what you know. You’ve got to live the Unity principles.*

Principle 1 is: God is Absolute Good, everywhere present. My task was to get myself back to knowing this not only in my head but also in my heart. Even in the midst of my greatest life transition and suffering, God was present. I had to recognize I was the one who had forgotten, not God. This reawakened awareness for me. I remembered who I was.

Principle 2 says: I have a spark of divinity within me. I am inherently good. Being a widow did not change this Truth of me. Being a widow did not, could not, and would not diminish my spark.

Principle 3 states: I create my experiences by the activity of my thinking. I recognized I had let the grief in my heart influence my thinking. I began to ask why I had distanced myself from my spiritual knowledge. This was a big *aha* for me. I was then able to shift my thinking and live from conscious intention.

Principle 4 says: Prayer is creative thinking that heightens the connection with God-Mind. I had let go of my once-dedicated prayer life. Just because my prayer partner, Tom, was physically gone did not mean I had to stop praying.

Because of my grief, I was inspired to return to prayer and what felt like communion with God. God-Mind is where I needed to be and where I want to be today because the principle continues, “It brings forth wisdom, healing, prosperity, and everything good.” I say, “Yes, please!”

Actively choosing my thoughts after prayerful consideration, remembering who and whose I am, and knowing God is present are all allowing my new life tapestry to be created and woven with the threads of peace and wholeness.

I am filled with gratitude, which today is outpicturing as my living and *being* the fifth and maybe the most important teaching.

Principle 5: Knowing and understanding the laws of life, also called Truth, is not enough; we must live the Truth we know.

Living the Truth is my commitment to my husband’s memory and his rich Unity legacy. I am God expressing today as a stepmom to three and grandmother (Nana) to seven, a minister, and forever Truth student. I continue to live through my grief with the foundation of spiritual principles as my five guideposts on this path I call life.

Rev. Therese Lee is the minister at Unity of Hilton Head, South Carolina. To learn more about these spiritual teachings, Unity invites you to read the book *The Five Principles* by Rev. Ellen Debenport.

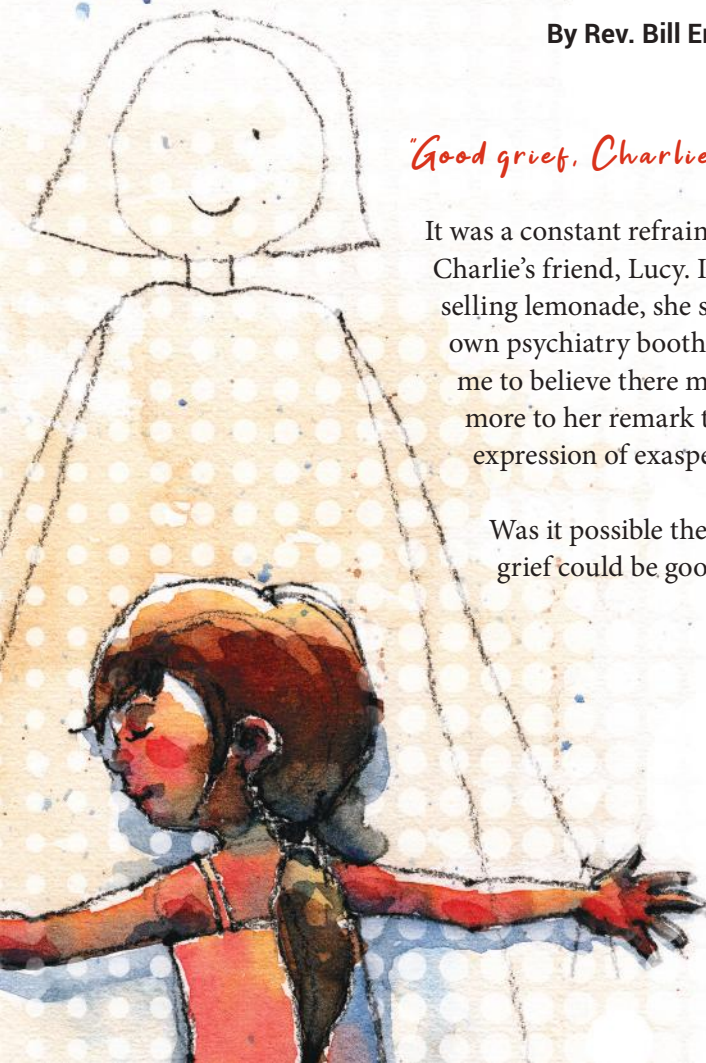
The Many Griefs of a Lifetime

By Rev. Bill Englehart

"Good grief, Charlie Brown!"

It was a constant refrain from Charlie's friend, Lucy. Instead of selling lemonade, she staffed her own psychiatry booth. That led me to believe there might be more to her remark than just an expression of exasperation.

Was it possible the concept of grief could be good?



I now believe firmly that learning to grieve is an essential skill for us all to learn. When we do, we facilitate the process of not only integrating loss but finding and reconnecting to the joy that the person, situation, or circumstance brought to our lives.

Grief is a fact of life. Yet we tend not to talk about or acknowledge it. We are socialized into thinking that denial, delay, and avoidance are coping mechanisms to deal with grief. These are not effective strategies.

I once spoke with a woman who shared this story:
“While standing in line at the grocery store, I smelled the scent of my late mother’s perfume on the lady in front of me. The feelings of grief and sadness arose within me like a wave. But I stamped them down.”

She continued, “I can’t cry in the grocery store—others will be uncomfortable!”

She put it off until later. We set up this pattern, and avoidance becomes a coping strategy. I believe if we were willing to feel what we feel when we feel it, we would actually set a positive example for others who also feel grief but are not expressing it.

We tell ourselves if we start to cry, we may never stop. Be assured, eventually we do. It’s better to allow the feelings of grief and loss to arise whenever they are triggered so we can grieve in real time.

Another avoidance strategy is turning to drugs, alcohol, sex, or work to distract us from feelings we don’t want to feel.

Then there's the "No Talk Rule." Other people don't seem comfortable with the topic of grief, so there's a lack of communication and we suffer in silence.

None of these are effective strategies.

LOSSES IN LIFE ADD UP

Grief is most often associated with the end of physical life, but that is only one aspect of this experience. Anyone who has lost a job or a career, been through a divorce, lost their freedom due to incarceration, entered retirement, or grappled with infertility shares this common thread. All involve grief.

Here is a little realized truth: Grief is cumulative. What we do not fully grieve does not go away. It is still within us, waiting to be given expression. And trust me, it will not be denied. If we attempt to deny it, we end up creating our own dis-ease, which is often expressed as anger, illness, and/or depression. Sooner or later we will need to let out the pain or suffer the negative consequences of unexpressed grief.

As a child I had no problem feeling my grief and letting the energy flow through me in real time. When my first dog died, I could not hold back. When my first girlfriend rejected me, I also did not attempt to contain my feelings, tears, and emotions.

They ran their course. I grieved in real time. Tears are God's pressure relief valves. I for one always feel great relief when the tears have come through. At the end I feel peace.

Grief wasn't a problem until I got older and was socialized into hiding my feelings.

HOW TO PRACTICE GRIEVING

So what is a positive strategy for dealing with grief? I believe practice and a willingness to feel our feelings are the best strategies we can choose.

Grief is a natural occurrence. Over the course of a lifetime we will likely encounter it innumerable times. By practice, I mean we should fully grieve the smaller and medium losses as they arise. When we're in the habit of grieving as a part of our life experience, we are much more prepared to grieve the significant losses.

Let's develop the habit of feeling our feelings as they arise. Even when we are in the supermarket! Let's be gentle with ourselves as we allow these feelings expression. We can never heal what we are not willing to feel.

Feeling grief in real time makes us spiritual alchemists. We turn the loss—that lump of coal we are handed—into a diamond of remembering the blessings. Now that's Good Grief!

Rev. Bill Englehart is a Unity minister based in Southern California and teaches an online course called *Good Grief* through Unity Worldwide Spiritual Institute at unity.org/spiritualexplorers.



Mistaken Myths About Grief

By Molly Steel

Grief is a natural and normal reaction to loss but is often misunderstood. Most of what we were taught isn't useful, and mistaken myths about grieving only set up unrealistic expectations.

I became familiar with these myths through my own experience and while working with hospice families and other grievers throughout the years. In the past, I believed most of them myself.

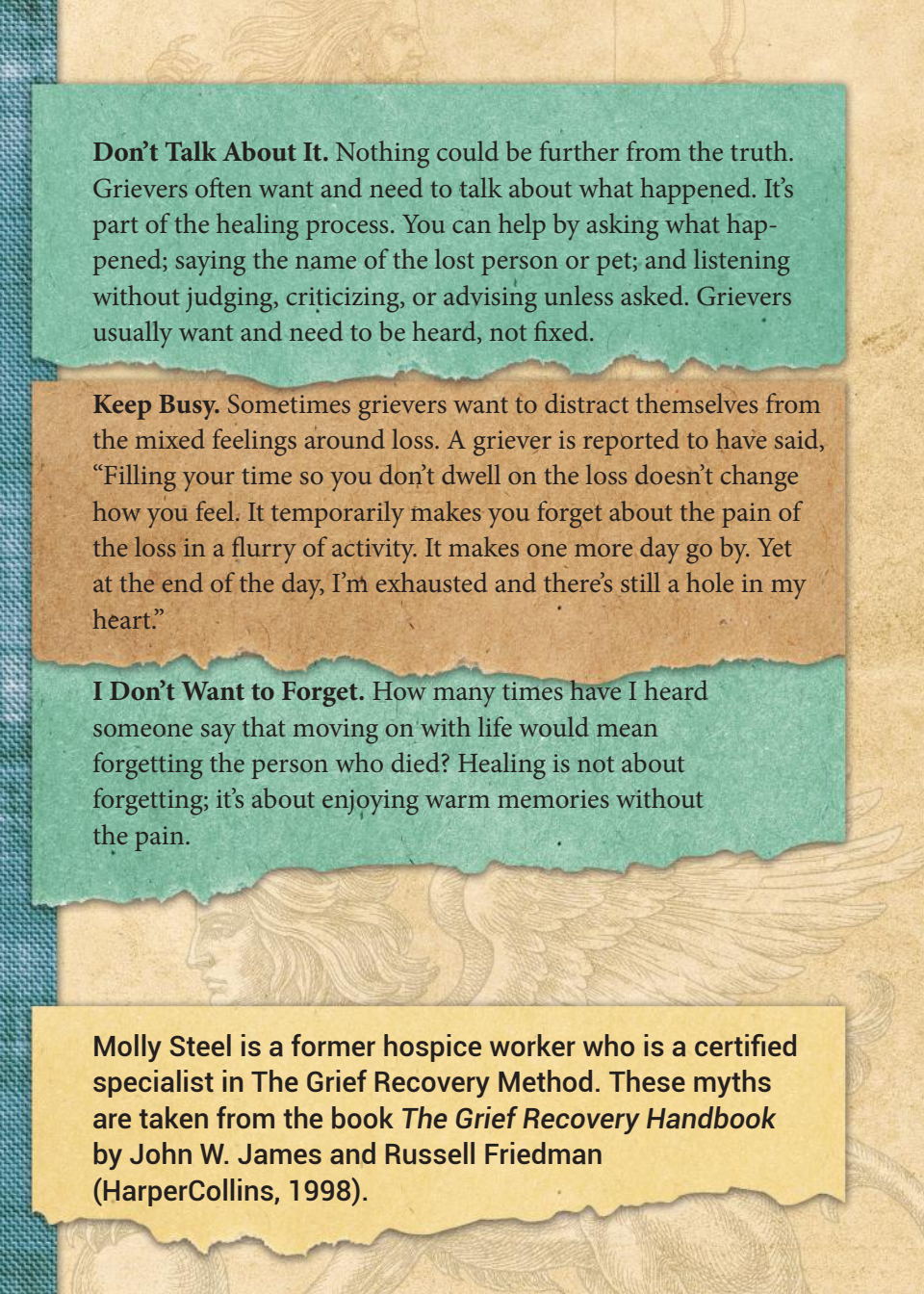
Be Strong for Others. Upon learning my mother had terminal cancer, I began to cry. I quickly wiped away my tears to comfort my dad, believing I had to be strong for him. In truth I was sad and scared, yet relieved to know what was wrong with my

mother. Honestly expressing feelings not only helps you heal, it gives others permission to express their feelings. This is especially important when children are grieving. If the adults bury their feelings, the children learn to bury theirs. These feelings can show up in unhealthy ways later.

Replace the Loss. In the aftermath of my mother's death, my dad quickly remarried. After the initial joy of beginning a new relationship, he was once again sad and talked of missing my mother. Lightbulbs are replaceable; relationships are not. Having another baby, finding another partner, buying another dog, or taking another job doesn't replace what was lost.

Just Give It Time. Rose Kennedy, who lost a husband and four adult children, said, "It has been said 'Time heals all wounds.' I do not agree. The wounds remain." Time can no more heal grief than time can fix a flat tire. A widow once shared that she had burst into tears upon hearing a store clerk's voice because he sounded just like her husband, who had died 15 years earlier. Hearing the voice brought back all the pain she had felt while caring for him during a long illness and death, even though many years had passed.

Grieve Privately. Grievors often isolate. It seems some of us have taken to heart that old saying, "Laugh and the world laughs with you. Cry and you cry alone." Friends and family may unwittingly encourage the isolation, thinking they should give the griever some space.

The background of the page features a faint, artistic illustration of a person's head and shoulders in profile, facing left. The person has long, wavy hair and is wearing a garment that appears to have large, feathered wings or a shawl extending from the back. The style is reminiscent of classical or religious art, rendered in a light, sketchy manner. The page is divided into several horizontal sections by torn-edge paper borders in shades of teal, brown, and yellow.

Don't Talk About It. Nothing could be further from the truth. Grievors often want and need to talk about what happened. It's part of the healing process. You can help by asking what happened; saying the name of the lost person or pet; and listening without judging, criticizing, or advising unless asked. Grievors usually want and need to be heard, not fixed.

Keep Busy. Sometimes grievors want to distract themselves from the mixed feelings around loss. A griever is reported to have said, "Filling your time so you don't dwell on the loss doesn't change how you feel. It temporarily makes you forget about the pain of the loss in a flurry of activity. It makes one more day go by. Yet at the end of the day, I'm exhausted and there's still a hole in my heart."

I Don't Want to Forget. How many times have I heard someone say that moving on with life would mean forgetting the person who died? Healing is not about forgetting; it's about enjoying warm memories without the pain.

Molly Steel is a former hospice worker who is a certified specialist in The Grief Recovery Method. These myths are taken from the book *The Grief Recovery Handbook* by John W. James and Russell Friedman (HarperCollins, 1998).

When You Don't Know What to Say

I am standing in a receiving line after my father's funeral, face after face appearing before me. In my hazy memory, I can see their mouths moving and I know they are speaking to me earnestly. I don't remember a word they said. I only know they came.

What you say to someone who is grieving is far less important than the simple fact you showed up—attended the service, visited the home, wrote a note. Don't let the fear of saying the “wrong” thing keep you from making the connection.

True, some people remember keenly one or two helpful things that were said to them after a loss. The ones who uttered those words weren't trying to be profound and probably have no idea they made an impression. In my view, they just happened to be standing there when Spirit needed a human voice.

So I developed a practice I would like to share with you.

Before you meet someone who is grieving, say a simple prayer: “I am willing to be a voice for Spirit.” Then let go of any nervousness—it's not about you, after all—and say whatever seems right in the moment, trusting your words are perfect.

Whether your words are remembered forever or evaporate instantly doesn't matter. What's important is that you showed up with love.

—Rev. Ellen Debenport



How to Be With the Grieving

Don't avoid people in grief because you feel awkward. They likely won't remember what you say; they'll remember you were there. Show up for the funeral, visit the house. Let them know you're aware of the loss and that you care.

Listen closely and let them talk at length if they want. The grieving often need to review the final days in great detail. Listen even if you've heard it before.

Talk about the person who died and use their name. What do you miss about them? What stories do you remember? Let the grieving know their loved one is not forgotten.

When you ask, "How are you?" let them know you mean it. However, be aware they might be tired of answering the question. Let them take the lead on how much they want to share. They might be very chatty one day and reticent the next.

Don't say or write a sentence that begins with, "I know ____," such as, "I know you will miss her" or "I know how much you loved him." You really don't know the inner workings of someone's relationship. Even if you've experienced deaths, too, you don't know exactly what they are going through. Respect that everyone is different.




Ask "How can I help you right now?" Better yet, anticipate needs and make specific suggestions. Volunteer your teen to mow their grass, offer to take the dog to the dog park, bring a case of bottled water for guests.

Bringing food may be old-fashioned but is still appreciated, even if you pick up something on the way over. Bring a meal to share with later visits too.

Show up four to six weeks later when all the hoopla is finished and the reality of loss is setting in. Keep checking in as months go by. Acknowledge the birthday of the one who died.

Don't expect someone else to grieve the way you would. Don't impose a timetable to "get over it" and also don't judge if they seem happy "too soon." Grief takes as long as it takes and is never really finished.





Daily Word

June 6, 1980

I take the wings of the morning.

Out of night's darkness, I awake to a new day. My soul takes the wings of the morning. I rise out of feelings of grief or loss; I soar in spirit above earthly care. Sorrow turns to joy. The dawn breaks in my soul. Yesterday's fears, yesterday's problems, yesterday's needs are as nothing; they dissolve and disappear in the clear shining of the morning. I take the wings of the morning and view my world from heights of Truth. I see the beauty hovering over all, the light that casts a lovely glow. I see the grandeur of the universe, the marvelous spirit of the people of the world.

Joyous and free, unfettered and unbound, I take the wings of the morning, I rise on wings of prayer. I am one with God, God is one with me.

If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.—Psalm 139:9, 10

Grief Resources

Bookstores and the internet are filled with resources for those who are grieving. Below is an assortment of helpful books, websites, and podcasts recommended by the writers who contributed to this booklet:

Books

Books by Russell Friedman and John W. James

Moving Beyond Loss

The Grief Recovery Handbook

When Children Grieve

The Grief Recovery Handbook for Pet Loss

Graceful Passages is a book and two-CD set with spoken words from wisdom keepers such as Ram Das, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, and Thich Nath Hanh, and instrumental music composed by Gary Malkin.

A Year to Live: How to Live This Year as If It Were Your Last by Stephen Levine

Healing After Loss: Daily Meditations for Working Through Grief by Martha Whitmore Hickman

Messages of Hope: The Metaphysical Memoir of a Most Unexpected Medium and other books by Suzanne Giesemann

When a Man Faces Grief/A Man You Know Is Grieving by James E. Miller and Thomas Golden

When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times by Pema Chodron

Getting Grief Right: Finding Your Story of Love in the Sorrow of Loss by Patrick O'Malley with Tim Madigan

I'm Grieving as Fast as I Can by Linda Feinberg

Websites

The Sacred Servant with Nada Frazier is for end-of-life issues as well as grief.
thesacredservant.com

Rev. Chaz Wesley is a Unity minister and an expert in the field of end-of-life and grief/bereavement education.
chazwesley.com

Grief Recovery Method has resources such as blogs, webcasts, articles, videos, and books.
griefrecoverymethod.com

Have the Talk of a Lifetime, free downloadable workbook for end-of-life conversations
talkofalifetime.org

What's Your Grief is an all-purpose website run by mental health professionals in Baltimore. They started the website after finding few resources for their own grief.
whatsyourgrief.com

David Kessler is a death and grieving expert who worked with Elisabeth Kubler-Ross.
davidkessler.org
grief.com

Open to Hope Foundation with Gloria and Heidi Horsley offers articles, videos, podcasts, and books.
opentohope.com

Beyond Your Loss—Georgena Eggleston is a grief and trauma specialist whose son and brother committed suicide.
beyondyourgrief.com

Helping Parents Heal sponsors local and online meetings for parents who have lost children, especially those interested in connecting with loved ones on the other side.
helpingparentsheal.org

Widower's Grief is a blog by Mark Liebenow, whose wife died and who writes about many forms of grief. widowersgrief.blogspot.com

TAPS offers assistance to military families, casualty officers, and caregivers. taps.org

Unspoken Grief brings together those touched by stillbirth, miscarriage, and neonatal loss to share stories and offer resources. unspokengrief.com

The National Center for Victims of Crime advocates for victims and offers resources and referrals to individuals, families, and communities touched by crime. victimsofcrime.org

Suicide Grief: News and Comment has a list of resources. suicidegrief.save.org/resourcelibrary

For Grieving Children: scholastic.com/childrenandgrief
childrengrieve.org

Pet Loss: scientificamerican.com/article/why-we-need-to-take-pet-loss-seriously

Podcasts

The archived program *Grief to Grace* with Rev. Chaz Wesley on Unity Online Radio unityonlineradio.org/grief-grace

What's Your Grief with Lisa Williams and Eleanor Haley whatsyourgrief.com/grief-podcast/

Compilation of grief podcasts: player.fm/podcasts/Grief

How May We Serve You?

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Through prayer, publishing, and events, Unity is always here to support you in expressing your divine potential for a healthy, prosperous, and meaningful life:

Prayer Support

Call Silent Unity® at 816-969-2000 for personal prayer anytime, day or night, or visit silentunity.org to submit your prayer request online.

Inspirational Publications

Call 816-969-2069, Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (CT), or visit unity.org.

- *Daily Word*® in regular, large type, digital, or Spanish (*La Palabra Diaria*)
- *Unity Magazine*®
- Books, both in print and e-books
- CDs and DVDs

Unity Retreats and Events

Call 816-251-3540, Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (CT), or visit unityvillage.org to see detailed information for workshops, retreats, and special events.

Online Resources

- Articles, prayers, meditation, news, and information at unity.org.
- Spiritual programming 24/7 at unityonlineradio.org.
- *Daily Word* messages and related content at dailyword.com.

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