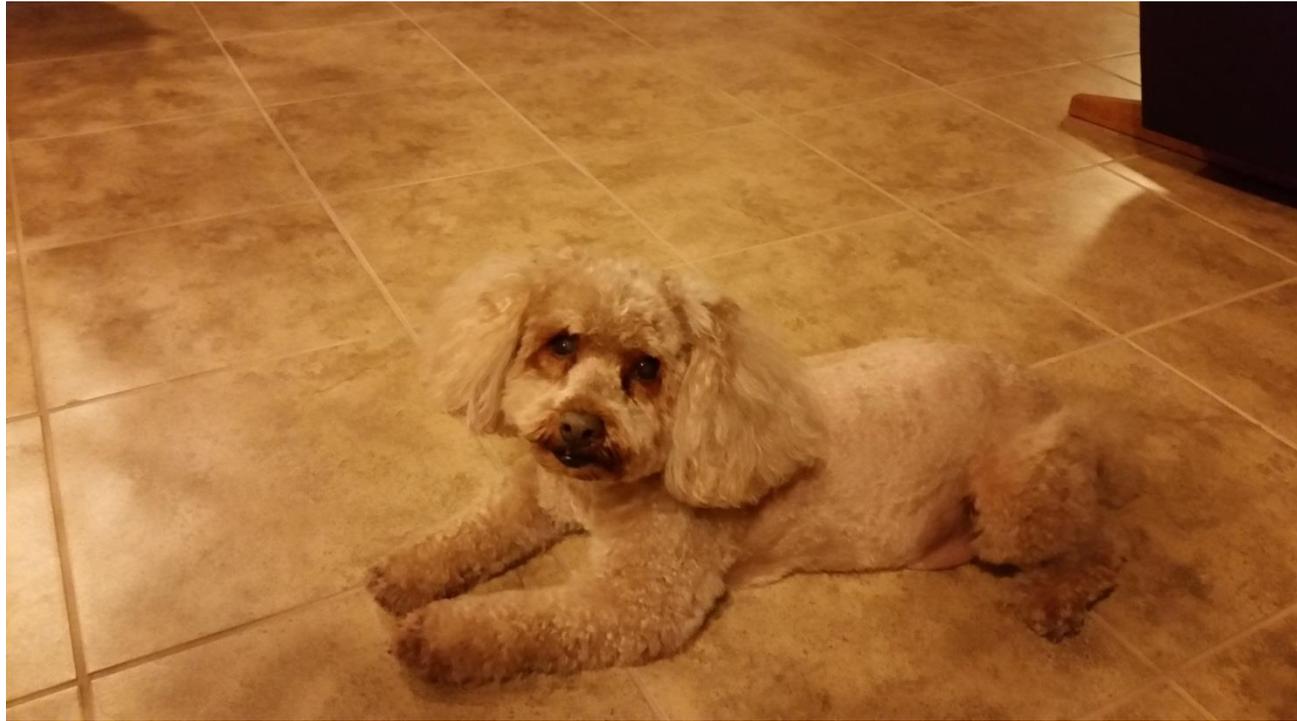


The Journey Through Grief

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**THE HARDEST THING
IS NOT TALKING
TO SOMEONE
YOU USED TO
TALK TO EVERYDAY.**

QUOTESLIFE101.NET

What is Grief?

- * Grief is the normal response to a significant loss
- * Grief is a process that takes time and attention
- * Grief affects us on every level

- 
- * We don't "get over" grief
 - * Eventually we integrate it and learn to live with it
 - * Grief is the price we pay for love

Grief, Mourning, Bereavement

- * Grief is the internal emotional response
- * Mourning is the outward expression that Alan Wolfelt calls “grief gone public”
- * Bereavement is that period or state of grief and mourning

Types of Grief

- * **Anticipatory Grief**

- * Ex: When your loved one is sick for a long time and you begin experiencing symptoms of grief

- * **Normal (or) Uncomplicated Grief**

- * Bereaved experiences common symptoms of grief but eventually integrates the loss and moves on

Types of Grief (cont'd)

- * **Complicated Grief**

- * Common symptoms do not subside over a long period of time, or are suppressed
- * Bereaved may resort to harmful behaviors in order to avoid the pain of the loss

- * **Disenfranchised Grief**

- * A loss that cannot be openly acknowledged or publicly shared because it may not be socially sanctioned.

What does grief feel like?

“I don't think anyone is ready for grief. But when it hits you, it knocks you out cold. I was told that tears and the sorrow would come in waves. For me, it's been more like a riptide or a tornado, constantly circling around me, whipping me in the face. Sometimes it stabs; sometimes it punches; sometimes it drowns me.”

Jessica Dunne, a producer at CNN

Overview of the Grief Process

INITIAL SHOCK

- * Denial
- * Sense of unreality
- * Numbness
- * Stunned
- * It's all a bad dream
- * Hallucinations
- * Auditory visions

PROTEST

- * Anger
- * Guilt
- * Relief
- * Sleeping and eating disturbances
- * Replaying the events in your mind
- * What if's
- * Should's
- * Feeling crazy
- * Apathy

DISORGANIZATION

- * Confusion
- * Sadness
- * Fatigue
- * Aimlessness
- * Lack of identity
- * Loneliness
- * Loss of purpose
- * Forgetfulness
- * Hallucinations
- * Intense dreams

REORGANIZATION

- * New interests and skills
- * Renewed confidence
- * Increase in socialization
- * Maneuvered the *Year of Firsts*
- * You can laugh easily again
- * Philosophical resolution to the loss
- * Find new meaning and purpose

William Worden's Four Tasks of Mourning

- * To accept the reality of the loss
- * To work through the pain of grief
- * To adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing
- * To emotionally relocate the deceased and move on with life

Time heals all things Truth or Myth?

- * Time alone does not heal all things
- * It's what we do with that time
- * In order to heal, we must engage our grief

How to engage Task One – To accept the reality of the loss

- * By repeatedly telling the story
- * By looking at family pictures/home movies
- * By developing rituals
- * By visiting the gravesite

How to engage Task Two – To work through the pain of grief

- * Allow yourself to feel the pain
- * Know that it will pass
- * Let grief wash over you
- * You've suffered a huge emotional wound
- * Remind yourself that others have survived, and so will you

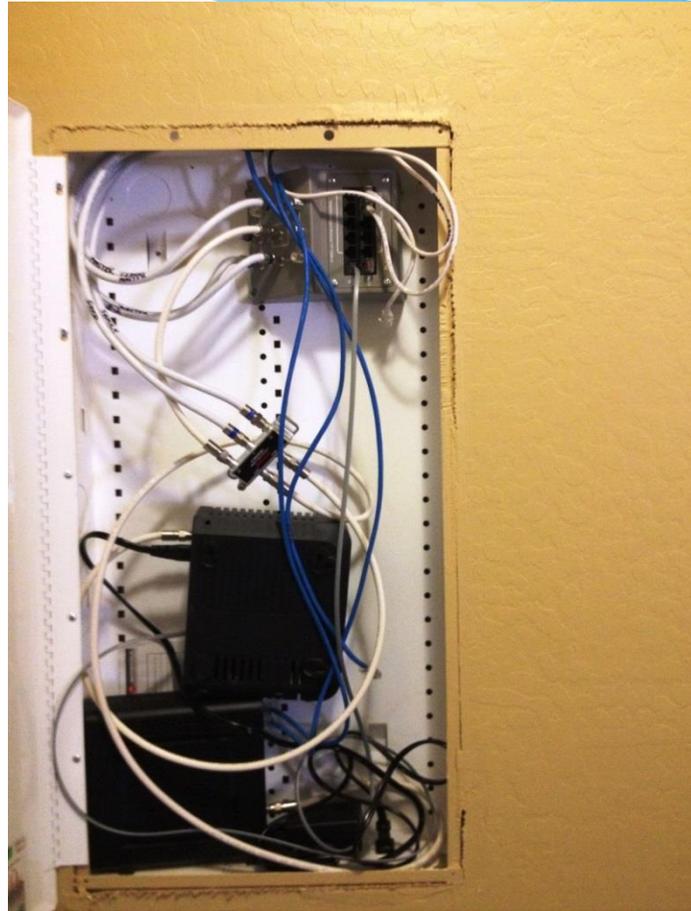


YOU CAN'T BE STRONG
ALL THE TIME. SOMETIMES
YOU JUST NEED TO BE
ALONE AND LET YOUR
TEARS OUT.

How to engage Task Three – To adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing

- * Learn new skills (you can do it)
- * Ask for help when you need it
- * Decide what to do with loved one's clothes and other possessions

What's this? you ask



How to engage Task Three (cont'd) – To adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing

- * Don't isolate yourself, however tempting
- * Learn who you are now
- * Assess your strengths and talents

How to engage Task Three (cont'd) – To adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing

- * Some deaths may challenge spiritual assumptions
- * Talking with a spiritual counselor may help
- * It's okay to be angry with your loved one
- * It's okay to be angry with God

How to engage Task Four – To emotionally relocate the deceased and move on with life

- * Stay emotionally connected to loved one by
 - * Talking about him/her
 - * Making sure he/she will always be remembered
 - * Keeping a few tangible items as symbols of him/her
- * Memorializing
 - * Attend church/hospice annual memorial service
 - * Develop meaningful rituals to mark special days (anniversaries, date of death, etc.)

Life Goes On

While staying emotionally connected, move forward realizing

Life goes on

Life is still worth living

Life is a gift

Some notes about the grief process

- * Tasks are not linear
- * Think of them in a circle
- * You could be working on more than one at a time
- * You could bounce back and forth all over the circle
- * You may revisit tasks after you thought you'd completed them



Rabbi and death educator, Earl A. Grollman, writes,
“Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness.
It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the
price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to
grieve.”

How do we know we're healing?

- * We're healing when we can talk about our loss without feeling pain
- * At first a widow may talk to her husband as if he's still alive
- * She progresses to planning her life according to what she feels he may have wanted
- * Finally, she makes decisions according to her own wishes

Ways to Express Grief

Tell your story to:

- * trusted friends
- * grief counselor
- * bereavement support group

Journal

Paint

Run

Sing

Dance

Walk

Do anything to express your feelings

Grief Bursts (or Recurrences)

- * Out of the blue - a song, a smell, a memory can bring back the pain of grief again
- * Expect it; it's normal
- * But the pain will not last as long
- * Know that you have not regressed
- * You have done the work
- * Be proud of yourself!

quote:

Grief never ends But it changes. It's a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith It is the price of love."
~Author Unknown~

How Can We Help Those Who Mourn?

- * Starting a question with “At least,” can be perceived as minimizing the loss.
- * Questions that elicit information can be seen as insensitive.
 - * How old was she?
 - * What kind of cancer was it?
- * Theological statements can be delicate.
 - * He’s in a better place.
 - * It’s God’s will.

How Can We Help Those Who Mourn (continued)?

- * Better to say something like
 - * Tell me what you're going through.
 - * How did you feel when the doctor said that?
 - * How are you coping now?
 - * I'm so sorry.
 - * I don't know what to say, but I'm here for you.



We do not want you to be unaware, brothers, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 1

Thessalonians 4:13-14



Because of our faith in the Resurrection, is it realistic for Christians to expect to grieve differently from those who have no hope?

- ❖ It appears the answer is yes, but . . .
- ❖ Don't expect the pain to be any less intense.
- ❖ As long as we're human, we don't get a free pass.
- ❖ Jesus wept at the loss of his friend Lazarus.
- ❖ Grief is the other side of love.
- ❖ Our hope in the Resurrection and seeing our loved ones again can be a hedge against despair.

How does our own grief affect our ministry?

When we ask God to use us, God will use our particular situation to help others facing the same circumstances.

It is imperative that we process our own grief in a healthy manner so we can minister to others.

QUESTIONS?
COMMENTS?