

Formulating a Recipe for Good Grief

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Acknowledgements

- *The Grief Recovery Handbook* (20th Anniversary Expanded Edition), John James and Russell Friedman, Collins Living, 2009
- *Tear Soup*, Story by Pat Schwiebert and Chuck DeKlyen, Illustrated by Taylor Bills, Grief Watch
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“Good Grief”

Does any particular character come to your mind when you hear that expression? (would a hint help? Intitials C. B.)

His friend, Lucy, would offer psychiatric help for, how much?

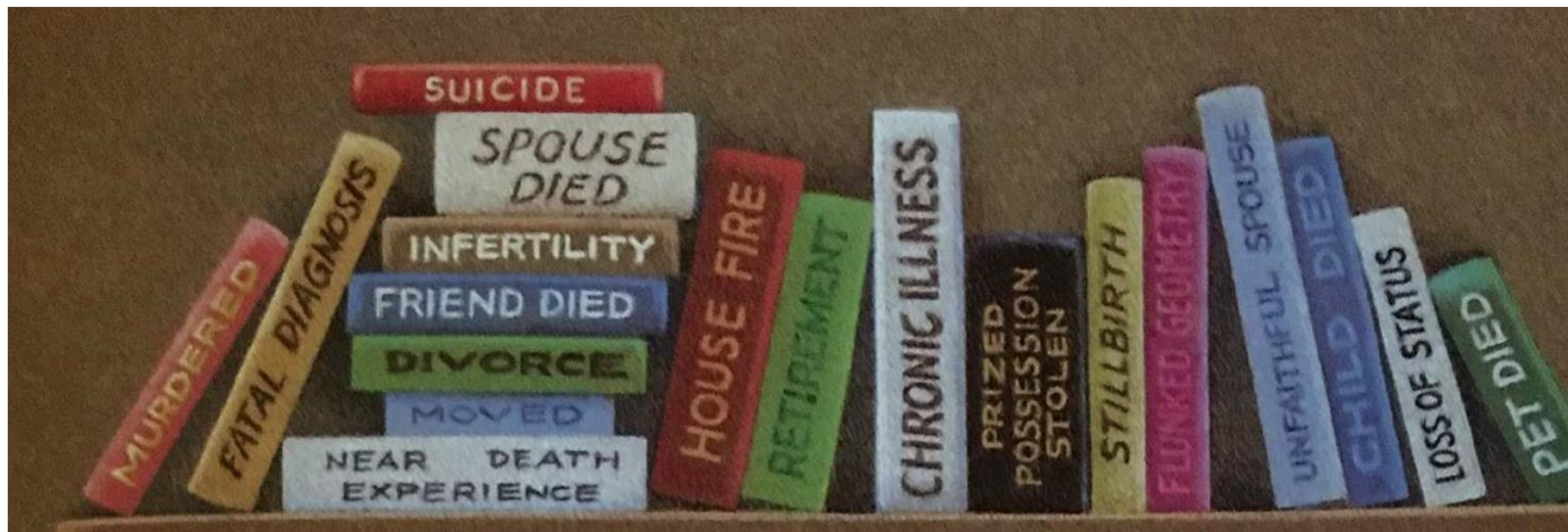
STORY
BY
PAT
SCHWIEBERT
AND
CHUCK
DEKLYEN

ILLUSTRATED
BY
TAYLOR
BILLS



“Grief is the normal and natural reaction to loss of any kind.” *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, John James and Russell Friedman (GRH)

What words stand out to you in this statement?



“Grief is the conflicting feelings caused by the end of or change in a familiar pattern of behavior.” (GRH)

Can you think of a time when you’ve had conflicting feelings about a loss?



There once was an old and somewhat wise woman whom everyone called Grandy.

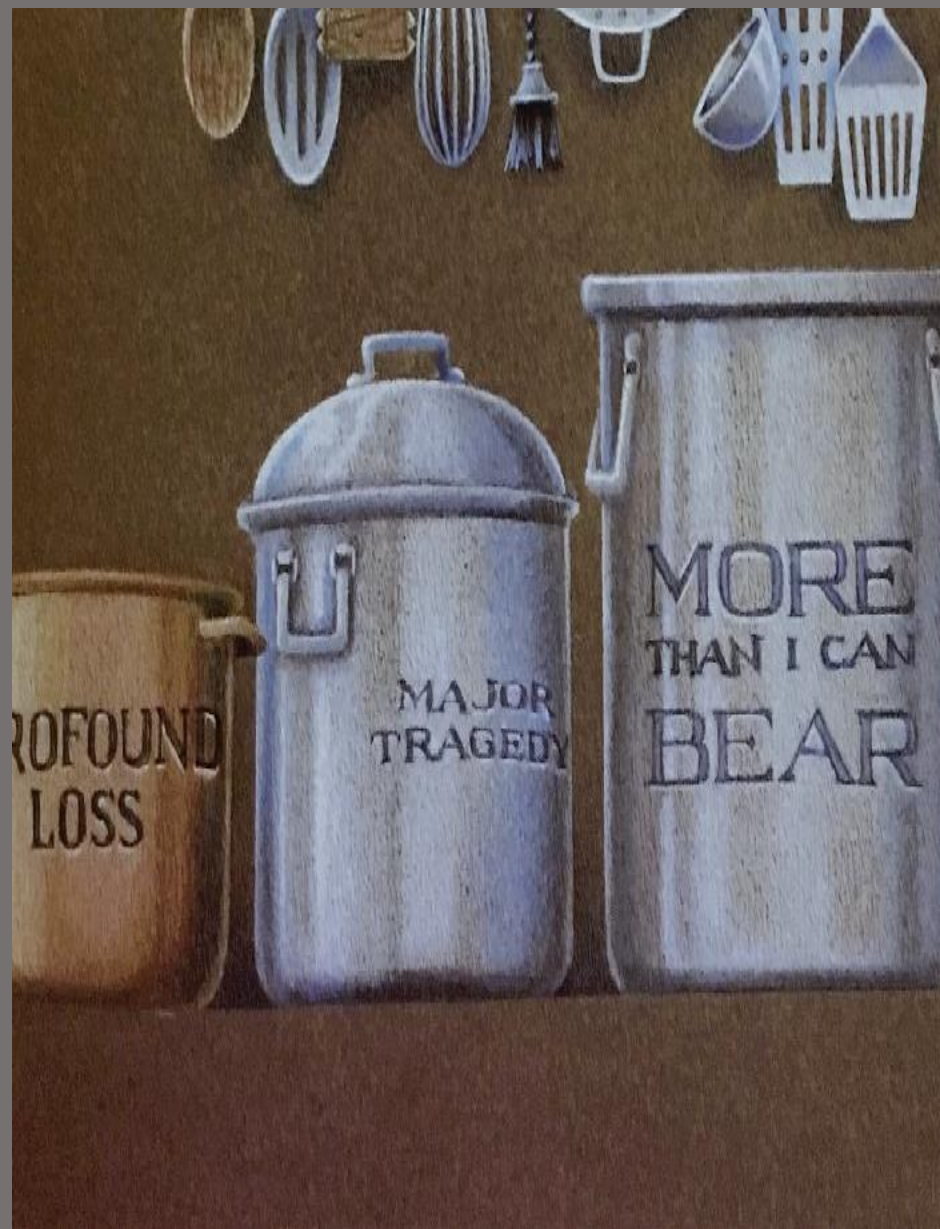
She just suffered a big loss in her life. Pops, her husband, suffered the same loss, but in his own way. This is the story of how Grandy faced her loss by setting out to make tear soup.

THE UNIQUENESS OF GRIEF

Grief is unique because of the uniqueness of the relationship.

When two people share the same loss, they (may not) grieve the same way. “In other words, you are in it together, but you are in it alone.” - *Tear Soup*

What examples can you think of where this principle is evident?



Comparing Loss

Why is it not usually a good idea to compare loss?

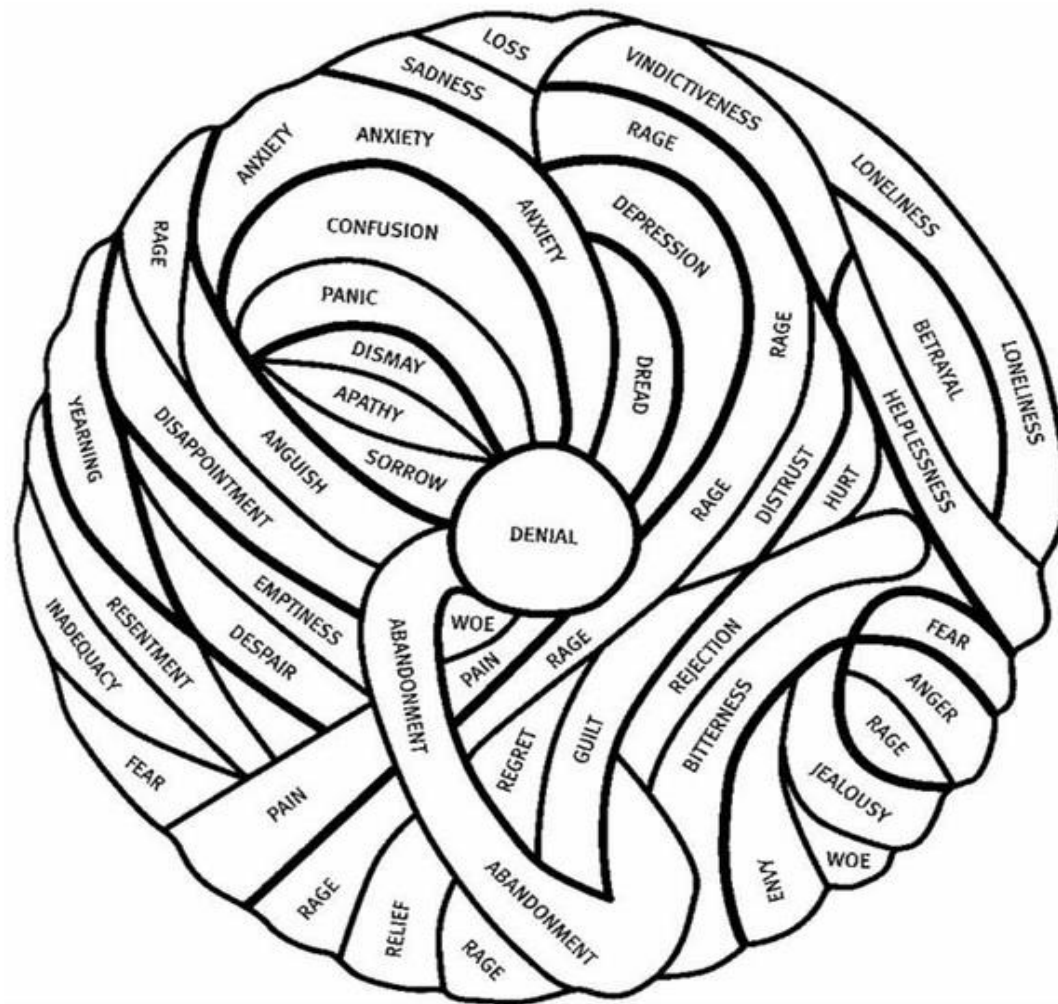
Comparing Loss

Why is it not usually a good idea to compare loss?

It could lead us to either minimize or maximize our feelings.

Grief — A Tangled Ball of Emotions

From H. Norman Wright



*GUARD
AGAINST
MAKING
YOUR
SOUP
TOXIC*

There are some ingredients we need to avoid because they will take away the flavor of the soup, or, because of their toxicity, could “kill” the soup all together.

Myths

- *Don't feel bad
- *Replace the loss
- *Grieve alone
- *Just give it time-Time heals all wounds
- *It's been a year so you should be over it
- *The first year is the hardest
- *God needed another angel
- *Be strong for others
- *Keep busy
- *Others (?)

Intellectual Truths

- *He/she is in a better place
- *All things must pass
- *She/he led a full life
- *Be grateful you had him so long
- *At least you can have other children
- *At least they did not suffer
- *The living must go on
- *Be thankful you have another child/children
- *God will never give you more than you can handle
- *Others (?)

Myths and Intellectual truths
contribute to and help to build our

B

S

Myths and Intellectual truths
contribute to and help to build our

Belief System

“Buying in” to the myths and
intellectual “truths” can produce
feelings of confusion, frustration,
failure and isolation. (GRH)

Therefore, we may need to
challenge our belief system
regarding GRIEF.

**ARE YOU UP FOR
THE CHALLENGE?**

Some beliefs
to challenge
(that might
keep us stuck)

#1-“This is the
worst thing that
could ever happen
to me.”

How might that be
re-framed so that I
can live forward?

Some
beliefs to
challenge
(that might
keep us
stuck)

#1-“This is the worst
thing that could ever
happen to me.”

Changed to

“This is the worst thing
that HAS happened to
me.”



When the pressure builds....



Confusion Pain
Rage Anger
Hurt Resentment
Bitterness Loneliness
Fear
Betrayal Relief
Guilt
Regret Disappointment

In order to relieve the pressure...

We may...

...drink

... _____

...use drugs

... _____

...work all the time

... _____

... _____

... _____

... _____

... _____

... _____

... _____

Why do we do those things?

Because they work (or APPEAR to work).

Unfortunately, they are sometimes unhealthy and can become addictions.

And, they are SHORT-TERM.

S-T-E-R-B-S

Other common responses to grief.

- Reduced Concentration
- A Sense of Numbness
- Disrupted Sleep Patterns
- Change in Eating Habits
- Roller Coaster of Emotional Energy
- Fatigue
- Anxiety
- Isolation

Another belief that may keep us
“stuck” if we hold to it...

- The five “stages” of grief.
 - Denial
 - Anger
 - Bargaining
 - Depression
 - Acceptance

Recognize Triggers

Two main types:

Anticipated, which
include (name some).

Unanticipated, which
include (name some).

Setting the stage for recovery.

“Recovery from loss is achieved by a series of small and correct choices made by the griever.”

--James and Friedman

Challenge this basic assumption

- The death or other loss is responsible for me staying (stuck) in the pit (of grief).

If this is true, how long will I be in the

How to begin?

- Give yourself permission to grieve— permission to feel and permission to express those feelings.
- Don't let others set your time frames.
- “Recovery from loss is achieved by a series of small and correct choices made by the griever.” (GRH)



Some of Grandy's friends over the years had not tended to their tear soup. Their soup boiled over and the pot scorched.

What a mess. It took them a long time to clean up their pots and to start over. The smell of burnt soup still lingers in some of their homes.

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