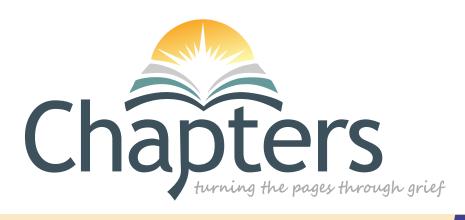


www.familyfuneralhome.net







Courtesy whatsyourgrief.com

whatsyourgrief.com is an online community that promotes grief education, exploration, and expression in both practical and creative ways.

know this might sound controversial. Or, at minimum, unexpected from a grief writer and therapist. If you've spent any time online you're probably all too familiar with messages about 'healing from grief.' You've likely scrolled the hundreds of grief influencer videos promising to help you 'recover from grief' or 'heal your grief' via retreats, essential oils, coaching sessions, classes, and Facebook groups (all while making green juices in their pristine William

Sonoma kitchens). 'Unhealed grief' and 'unrecovered grief' are talked about like some sort of boogeyman, hiding under our beds waiting to grab our ankles and hold us down as we try to emerge from the rubble of loss.

Every time I hear this language I cringe.

Grief is Not a Wound

When we grieve, it is because we have experienced a devastating and unimaginable loss. That loss is what has

shattered us. Grieving is our normal and natural human response to that loss. It is the physical, emotional, cognitive, relational, existential, spiritual experience we all go through, in varying degrees and in various ways, after a loss. Grief and grieving are not the source of our pain. The source of the pain is the loss itself.

Grief is how we process this loss. After loss we open our eyes to a world that in no way resembles the world we

once knew. In this new world, grief is how we come to understand who we are, how we feel, and how we will survive in this new world. In grieving we create a relationship with a person who died. We develop the continued bonds that will evolve with us as we move forward in a world without that person. Grief allows us to turn inward and assess what we need from ourselves and others in this life after loss. It has the power to clarify our values and our priorities. In grief we begin to make sense of who we are in a world without a person who defined us.

"Hey everyone, the answer is love! You can start climbing back down now."

continued...

APRIL 2024

Grief is itself a medicine.
—William Cowper

WWW.ANDERTOONS.COM



...continued from front

Grief is the Healing

Perhaps it sounds like semantics, my saying we don't need to "heal from grief." Especially when I so strongly believe that we heal through grief, that grief is healing. But I think it is far more important than semantics. If the language I hear early after my loss is that I must 'recover from grief' or 'heal from grief', I see grief as an adversary. That language molds my understanding of grief itself, seeing it as a problem. Or worse, as a threat, something that has, in and of itself, caused harm, a thing to escape. It is no surprise that I might then avoid my grief. Or I might interpret signs of ongoing grief as a sign of failure.

If I hear, early after my loss, that we 'heal through grief' or that 'grieving is an ongoing and evolving process of healing', my understanding of grief is shaped in a fundamentally different way. Grief is no longer my adversary, a boogeyman hiding under the bed. Instead of something to escape, battle, or eliminate, grief is a companion. And when I am no longer fighting against my grief, I am able to invite it in. I can listen to what it is teaching me about myself, about those I've lost, about how to live in this new world.

Grief as Companion

I understand that grief is the keeper of my most treasured memories and continued bonds. Grief is a trusted friend (albeit a cranky and temperamental one). The memories and bonds that live in my grief are what gives me the confidence that I can, slowly, rebuild. Knowing grief is a companion is what allows me to move forward without fear of moving on or letting go.

On a triggering birthday or anniversary years on, when my grief sidles up beside me and brings on a cascade of tears, I am not surprised or scared. I don't fear that I failed to 'recover' or 'heal' properly. Quite the opposite. I am grateful that I can still welcome grief in. We can share old memories and revisit the life I once believed I'd live, while still appreciating the life I am living. I am happy to let grief put her arm around me, to bury my face in her shoulder as I cry, knowing that together we will always be healing.

Sometimes the best advice is a break from advice. Enjoy your favorite beverage and these tidbits of this & that.



- The etymology behind the word "April" comes from the verb "aperire," which means "to open." It's commonly believed that the word refers to the season of trees and flowers begin to "open" or bloom.
- April is named for the Greek **goddess** of love, Aphrodite.



- Those who were born in April have a diamond as their birth stone, which represents innocence. Their birth flower is either a **Daisy** or a Sweet Pea.
- April is a great month for **meteor showers.** One of which is the Lyrids meteor shower, which appears from April 16th to April 26th each year. There's another one called the Eta Aquariids meteor shower that can be seen onwards from April 21st.
- April is also the month that the **birds** migrate north and settle down for the summer to mate.
- For all the **car enthusiasts** out there, Ford unveiled their first Mustang on April 17, 1964, costing \$2,368.
- April is **Humor Month**, watch your favorite comedy movie.
 - April 22 is **Earth Day**.

What Grief Has Taught Me...

That life goes on.

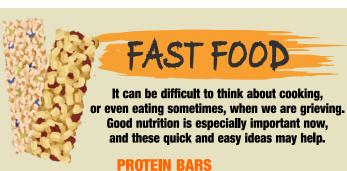
I learned that the real challenge is to simply to go on and do something positive with your new life. Minute by minute you can carve out joy and purpose. Start by doing

I've learned it's ok to cry... and cry again, never apologize!

whatsyourgrief.com

* * *

for others.



Protein bars are easy, delicious and come in practically any flavor you like such as peanut butter, chocolate, honey & oats, and a variety of fruits. Easy to eat on the go, or when your need some nourishment without the pots and pans. Read the labels for sugar content as some are higher than others.





