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"Providing Comfort To Families"

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Chapters

turning the pages through grief

Summon your

by Paulette LeBlanc

Strength

Grief can feel like trying to fly a plane in the midst of a snowstorm. If a lifelong inward strength has gotten you through everything up until now, it's likely that you'll turn to that same strength in your time of need. Perhaps your ability to deal with everyone's issues has been seemingly limitless up until now. The trouble with being human is that there are limits and bounds. The inner voice, on which you've always relied, just may be unusually quiet when you most need comfort and guidance for yourself. In the face of real tragedy, the things you've always done may not be working. In the face of this blinding snowstorm, you can't simply feel your way out. You'll need to read your instrument panel. There, you may find that the real strength you hold is steadier than you thought.

Perhaps you are one for whom

an answer quickly emerges when you ask yourself a question. However, when the question is, "how could this have happened?" and the answer is silence, you can end up feeling lost, afraid, and alone. Now may be a time when it's easier to hear the voice of strength and reason through someone else. If you're a person of faith, but find that you don't have the energy or

inclination to attend a church service there are many spiritual resources that can be downloaded onto a smart phone, tablet, or a computer. Some devotionals are presented as sermons that you can listen to whenever you'd like. You can even choose a subject that is especially meaningful to you now, such as grieving.

If you prefer not to turn to religion, there are certainly other helpful groups and

continued...



**"He also left us a card for a
local chimney sweep."**

DECEMBER
2022

Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.
—Mother Theresa

...continued from front

online resources where you may share your experience or just sit and listen. Knowing others are going through similar situations is often comforting and helps us to recognize that we are never truly alone.

If you are someone who has always been a shoulder for everyone else in a time of need, you may find that you're the one who needs a shoulder now. Though this may be new for you, it should not be viewed as a sign of weakness. That inner voice may be waiting to emerge anew. It may simply be a matter of time. Just like a broken bone grows back stronger than it was before, seemingly broken strength can do the same thing. While a mighty oak may stand straight and tall, the willow is often referred to as nature's strongest tree, because of its ability to bend in the wind. Adjusting to a new kind of strength in a grieving season is not uncommon. After all, the circumstances in your life may have been forever

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altered, changing everything about you; it's only fitting that you would change too, though it may not feel like that as you are going through it. This is where we must read our instrument panel. If that inner voice is trying to tell you that you need a break from being everyone else's rock, listen to it.

Reading your particular instrument panel may mean relying on your inner voice, even when the focus is on you, rather than others. You can draw on the same courage, the same strength you've had for everyone else, for yourself, and in fact, you should. For some of us, it's easier to be counted on, than to admit we need someone else to count on. If this is you, it may be time to relax and let someone else care for your emotions now.

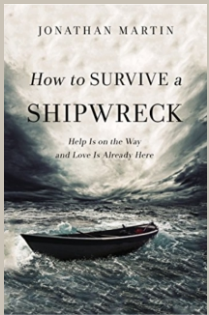
Please remember to be kind to yourself in this time of healing.

bookmarks

How to Survive a Shipwreck: Help Is on the Way and Love Is Already Here
By Jonathan Martin

Amazon Review:

Life is turbulent. On that, we can all agree. Disappointed dreams, broken relationships, identity crises, vocational hang-ups, wounds from the past—there are so many ways life can send us crashing up against the rocks. In this deeply personal book, Jonathan Martin draws from his own stories of failure and loss to find the love that can only be discovered on the bottom. *How to Survive a Shipwreck* is an invitation to trust in the resilience of your soul. Jonathan's clarion call is this: No matter how hard you've fallen, no matter how much you've been hurt, help is on the way—just when you need it most.



DECEMBER Birthstone: Sapphire Flower: Holly or Narcissus Color: Turquoise



How to Enjoy Your Life More

Epilogue

by Susie Moore, Life Coach
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Regardless of life's ups, downs, disappoints, joys, or heartaches, life does indeed go on. Here are some ideas on how to like your life more, just as it is:

1. Focus on what's going right.

Even if you just got fired or ghosted (and the date went so well!), do you still have the funniest best friend on the planet? Do you still have the comfiest chair in your living room? Are you spending the holidays with a parent or two who did their very best for you? As Wayne Dyer said, "When you change how you look at things, the things you look at change."

2. Count your years and average out what's left.

Anyone who lives to 83 gets 1,000 months. My mother-in-law recently told me she was looking

at photos of herself with her three kids 20 years ago. At the time of the photos, she was thinking, *I'm so overwhelmed! I'm not doing a good job!* But now she wishes she had thought, *Look at my figure! I was a fun mum! I was in my prime!* Will you be thinking something like this in your later years? Think of all the things you want to do with your life—what are you waiting for? Today is the youngest you'll ever be.

3. Decide it's the best time of your life.

Say it aloud. "Now is the best time of my life." Say it in the mirror. Repeat it 3-4 times. What comes up for you? Probably the thing that's been holding you in a negative pattern for some time—your weight, your belief you're not smart or attractive enough, or your deep fear that maybe other people are just better or more normal than you are.

Guess what? We all feel that way: uncertain, lonely, scared sometimes, a bit of a fraud. It doesn't stop the clock from ticking or your life from passing. Say to yourself, "I'm willing to release the belief that..." and share with your reflection what's holding you back from fully enjoying your life.

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