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Chapters

turning the pages through grief



Spending Grief ALONE

By Paulette LeBlanc

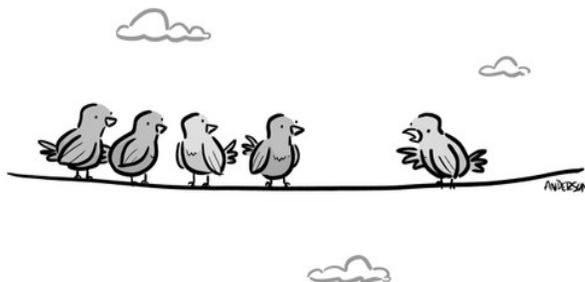
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By now you have likely heard from more than one person that there are support groups for people in the midst of grieving. When my parents died on the heels of my divorce, many well-meaning friends predicted that I would become overwhelmed in my grief if I didn't get help from somewhere. Because I am a talkative, outgoing person by nature, I suppose it's only fitting that those who know me best assumed I couldn't possibly go it alone through the grieving season in which I found myself. I received calls, letters, and a fair share of visits from people encouraging me to talk out my grief, either in a group setting or with a therapist. While I may have agreed with them before my season of grief, and to some degree, I do now, in the midst of it all, I simply wanted to curl inward and be alone, for the most part. Don't be surprised if you

find that you become the opposite of who you thought you were when someone dies and your life is turned upside-down. There is no way to know how any of us will respond to grief until we are faced with it.

It is easy to become upset, or even angry when people are trying to force you to do something that you simply have no desire to do. During my greatest season of grief, I had to alienate myself from certain well-meaning people, in an effort to survive emotionally. In all honesty, their advice regarding my grief began to stress me out more than my actual grief. I did have one friend, however, who offered me fantastic advice. He said, your new circumstances now dictate that you will likely spend enormous quantities of time by yourself. Try to enjoy those moments of solace, and also, be with people whenever an opportunity arises that you find palatable. It's still some of the best



**"I know we're birds of a feather,
but I need some me time."**

continued...



What a lovely surprise to discover how
unlonely being alone can be.

—Ellen Burstyn

I found that I was more comfortable being around other people where the whole point of the function was not the subject of my or anyone else's grief.

advice I've ever heard. There was nothing pointed, or "judgy," or demanding about it. He simply realized that my parents were gone, my marriage had ended, and my children were grown. Life was going to look very different from then on and he wanted me to

deal with it in a way I found comforting . . . but he wanted me to deal with it. I began attending parties and small gatherings here and there. In an effort to avoid complete isolation, I accepted invitations to those things that I found palatable, just as my friend had suggested. In doing this, I found that I was more comfortable being around other people where the whole point of the function was not the subject of my or anyone else's grief.

So, can you go it alone if you choose? Absolutely. Support groups and therapy sessions are not for everyone. In the midst of hurting, you may not have the energy to explain to people that even though they are trying to help, right now you would prefer to be still in the quiet and think and hurt and cry, all by yourself. They may or may not understand, even if you do try to explain it, and it doesn't matter anyway. This is not about them. If you do decide to curl inward and hibernate for a season, just remember to "try to enjoy those moments of solace, and also be with people whenever an opportunity arises that you find palatable." Above everything else, Please remember to be kind to yourself in this time of grieving.

What **Grief** Has Taught Me...

I was surprised at how many life options are still open and wonderful. I miss him but there ARE awesome life choices and possibilities still all around.

The amount of time for grieving is always! You just do the best you can.

whatsourgrief.com

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



• March is the month that might **come in like a lion and go out like a lamb**. It's no surprise to learn that the Anglo Saxons called March "Hlyda", meaning "loud", for all of the roaring winds and thunderous storms.



• March 12 – **Plant A Flower Day**. Floral arrangements date back to as early as 2,500 BC in Egypt, where they were used as decoration and to honor both the dead and the living.

• The "**Ides of March**" was a day in the Roman calendar equivalent to March 15th. It was considered a deadline for settling debts. It was also the day Julius Caesar was assassinated.

• March's birth flower is a **daffodil**.

• One of March's birthstones is bloodstone which symbolizes **courage**.

• March is the equivalent of September in the Southern Hemisphere.



• Statistically, March is the most unproductive month of the year in the U.S. This is the result of "**March Madness**" which is the season of NBA. Some companies lose up to \$1.9 billion in wages paid to workers who were not productive and instead spent company time on betting on NBA games.



FAST FOOD

It can be difficult to think about cooking, or even eating sometimes, when we are grieving. Good nutrition is especially important now, and these quick and easy ideas may help.

PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICH

This high plant-based protein snack isn't just for kids! Peanut butter packs antioxidants that help decrease your risk of several chronic diseases, such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes, and supports a healthy immune system. Plus it's easy and likely in your kitchen cabinet right now.

