



Chipping Away at Grief: Making Something Meaningful from Difficult Times

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The coronavirus pandemic has not left us alone. What appeared to be an end to it back in March and April this year, only opened the door to more questions. Will there be an end to it? Nobody knows. So, for now, we live with it.

When we first began getting information about the devastating state of affairs, it felt like a Tsunami. It seemed extreme. Extremely violent. The media went wild. There was no escaping the constant reporting on the mounting number of deaths, the over-filled hospitals, the exhausted medical teams, risk to first responders, the nursing homes, the children...Oh my God, what about the children?

There are so many unanswered questions. What is the psychological impact of so much devastation? Experts say it is too early to know whether the pandemic will lead to a surge of prolonged, dysfunctional grief.

Although some of the restrictions that were in place before the vaccine have been lifted, there is speculation that we may have to adhere to them again. If that is the case, we will again be denied the natural healers in life. For those who are hurting, typically relief comes from spending time with loved ones and engaging in social and physical activities.

For those who experienced the loss of a loved one since the pandemic began, the amount of people who could safely attend a service was minimal and, because masks needed to be worn, there was no safe way to be in fellowship over a meal. Rituals help keep us together and they're often the first step in the healing process. Without our loved ones to be by our sides, grieving is prolonged.

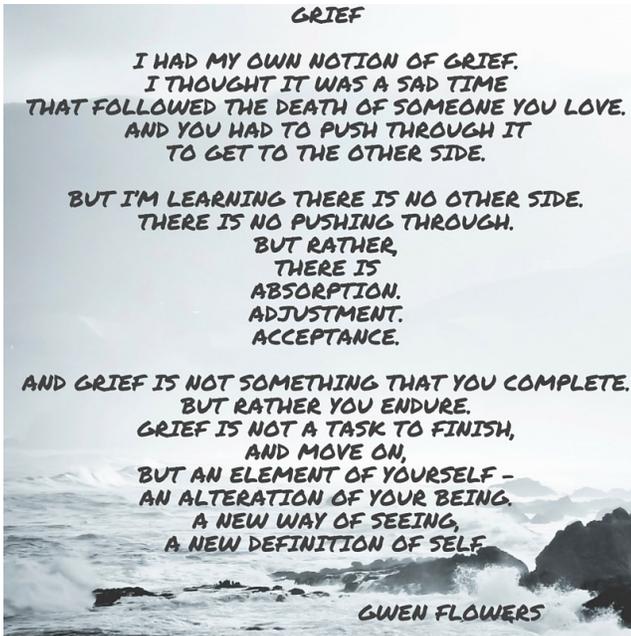
GRIEF

Respect it...

Embrace it...

*Do not attempt
to avoid it...*

Grief.



Grief...

At some time in our lives, we all need to be comforted and there is no more crucial time than a significant loss. Due to the pandemic, many have not had the touch of a hand on their hand or an arm around their shoulder as they grieved.

What is equally painful is not being able to comfort someone you love and care about when they are actively dying. Many people were denied the ability to do so because of Covid restrictions and that is undoubtedly a path that none of us want to walk.

I'm still grieving...

The above sentence is virtually useless...I'm **still** grieving. There are no time limits on how short or long someone should grieve. There is no such thing as "getting over it."

The loss of a parent or parents is considered one of the most difficult experiences that we face in life. Probably the only common element between us is that it hurts. Otherwise, the rest is unknown.

At best, we are supportive witnesses to one another. By that I mean we can only address what we can see, not what we think we know. Those waters run too deep.

Grief is a mystery. It effects each and every one of us differently. Never assume you know how someone feels when they are grieving because what you witness is just the tip of the iceberg.

When my mother died last year, it initially felt like a Tsunami—a huge tidal wave of sorrow that would come up suddenly from seemingly nowhere that threatened to drown me or knock me off center. It didn't happen all at once like it probably has for so many of you. But when my grief made itself apparent, it was too late to do anything about it and I just had to let it rip.

It didn't matter where I was or what I was doing, that powerful wave of emotion would wash over me and I would dissolve into tears. And then it would pass. Until the next time.

So, as the pandemic revealed more and more to us of the magnitude of its scope, that wound would open up again and again as I witnessed the insurmountable grief that has put the entire world in peril.

"We register in our psyches, consciously or not, the fact of our shared sorrows. Learning to welcome, hold, and metabolize these sorrows is the work of a lifetime and the focus of this book." — Francis Weller

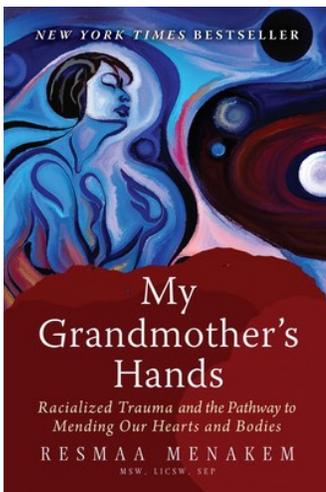
We not only grieve the loss of people who are no longer in our lives, we grieve the loss of things, situations, other folks hurt, pets, cars, and all kinds of inanimate objects that are only meaningful to us. Loss is loss and pain is pain.

When it comes to matters of the heart, that river flows deep.

Tears are a river that takes you somewhere

Tears are a river that takes you somewhere
Tears create a river around the boat that carries your soul life
Tears lift your boat off the rocks, off dry ground,
Carrying it downriver to someplace better
Oceans of tears we have never cried, exist in all of us
Crying has been considered dangerous
It loosens the locks and bolts on the secrets we carry
Tears initiate us into that timeless tribe
Of all colors, all nations, all languages
Tears are a river that takes you somewhere
~ Clarissa Pinkola Estes (adapted)

We carry grief from our ancestors, racism, sexism,



and ageism. We bear the pain and shame of losing a job, a home, a sense of purpose. If there is unresolved grief in your past, it will try and push through to get your attention. I know it hurts but when it is embraced and revealed, it will help heal.

I could go on and on...I dare not mention the losses that wound people for a lifetime. This is not a place for that. This piece of paper can't even hold the thought of the traumatic loss of a child or children, a stillborn, a miscarriage, an abortion, a loss of a limb, old age, premature loss of innocence, loss due to violence because it

seems so senseless, and the most tragic for most is suicide.

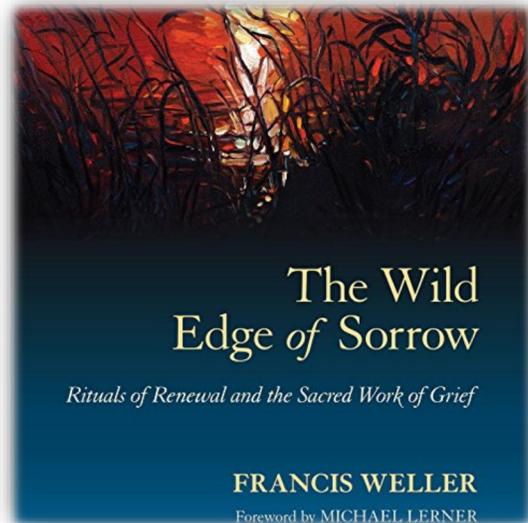
“There is often a feeling of shame attached to the survivors of suicide, a hidden doubt that they might not have done enough to prevent this death. This is a doubling of the pain. Their grief is bound together with shame, making it more difficult to talk with others and get the support they need. Finding the courage to share your experience with others is an essential piece in mending this profound sorrow.”

— Francis Weller

By the grace of God, some are able to find their way through in spite of these things, and some never do.

If you are feeling the weight of the pandemic and have experienced loss during this time, you are invited to participate in three online Zoom sessions that I will be facilitating starting Saturday, September 11th.

I will be offering basic exercises and spiritual practices to give you some relief from grief while navigating this difficult terrain. I hope to see you there.



Peace ♥ Rev San

Chipping Away at Grief: Making Something Meaningful from Difficult Times

The mountain of grief that has come in the form of a global pandemic threatens to suck the life right out of us. If you have lost a loved one, a pet, a job, a home, a



relationship, or a sense of peace, you are invited to three compassionate care grief sessions to help restore your balance and open your heart. Learn practical self-care practices to soothe and nurture your soul and to help you heal grief from the past and what is apparent in the present.

You can also share these practices with others who may be struggling.

Each session is for one hour at 10 - 11:00 AM Eastern on the following Saturdays:

Sept. 11 | Oct. 2 | Oct. 23

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Donations Welcome

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