

**BeyondEAP**

Specialist employee support  
for life's toughest challenges

# HOW TO DEAL WITH GRIEF

by Sandie Dennis

## What is Grief?

- Grief is the emotional reaction to a loss; mourning is the process we have to go through to adjust to the world after a person has died.
- Grief is intensely personal, contradictory, chaotic and an unpredictable internal process.
- Grief causes us physical and psychological pain and it cannot be avoided but instead navigated. It hurts!
- To grieve we need to find a way of ending the pain of loss, not to fight it or block it. It requires a lot of hard work and the process has to be worked through to enable us to move through and move forward to enable us to heal.

## How will grief affect me?

- Physically
- Emotionally
- Cognitively and intellectually
- Behaviourally and psychologically
- Socially and practically
- Philosophically and spiritually

## If grief were a person, what would their characteristics be?

- Punctual: always on time
- Dynamic: they don't miss a trick
- Consistent: they don't take a day off
- Once you've met them they never completely leave you
- Non-judgemental: they don't mind if you have a good thought or a bad thought
- Thoughtful: they never forget your birthdays, anniversaries or big days in the calendar
- A great listener: They'll sit with you in your darkest hours and not leave your side, catching every word.



## Summary:

- You don't get over a death as if it's a fence between you and the rest of your life.
- You move away from grief. You go through grief and move forward to reconciliation

# How long will my grief

- The first six weeks is dealing with the shock, then it can take between two to three years to formulate some normality.
- To heal properly, you must express your sadness for as long as it takes to release it. Tears are very healing.
- Grief work is hard work, the more open, share, tell people, have transparency, the more it helps you adapt to loss.

Grief is as  
much about  
finding as it is  
about losing

My new choices:

- Choosing to live again means taking charge of your grief
- I believe grief is essential to my healing and has an end
- I will be responsible for my own grieving process
- I will not be afraid to ask for help
- I will not try to rush my recovery

To successfully cope with personal grief, you have to decide....

- I will live
- It's ok and possible for me to have a full life after this
- I can take charge of my own grief
- I will find strength and hope
- I will reach the place where less tears appear and laughter
- 'I am in charge of my own grief 'starts the healing process.

If you keep too busy to face your feelings and avoid talking about them, you put yourself at a higher risk of illness following a major loss.



## What can I do to help me get through grief?

- Talk, talk, talk, talk about your loved one
- Cry - it is a healthy expression
- Let support into your life
- Write it down, keep a journal
- Make plans to return to work
- Have an evening sharing memories
- Collate photos and create albums



## What are the benefits of expressing grief?

- Improved mental health
- Healthy memories
- Less guilt, anger and resentment
- Thought obsessions pass
- Move to go forward
- Make new choices and decisions
- More confidence
- Reconciliation and a return to the stream of life

## How unexpressed emotions can affect your well-

- Unexpressed internalised grief can lead to depression.
- Depression - is unexpressed anger
- Guilt is ANGER drawn inwards
- Anxiety

‘Death ends  
a life, not a  
relationship’

- Morrie Schwartz

## In what ways can you express anger?

- Write in a journal
- Scream in a park
- Bash a pillow
- ‘Lion breathing’



## What grief has taught me



- Love doesn't have an expiry date – so neither does grief, we just move to acceptance
- Talking about my loved one (or to them) keeps my memories and love for them alive
- 'Moving on' is not 'getting over it' but instead, moving forward
- If we dare to love, then we know we will grieve
- Never try to 'shut off' the pain but accept it and express it
- When I feel grief wash over me, use the strategies I've learnt that serve me best:





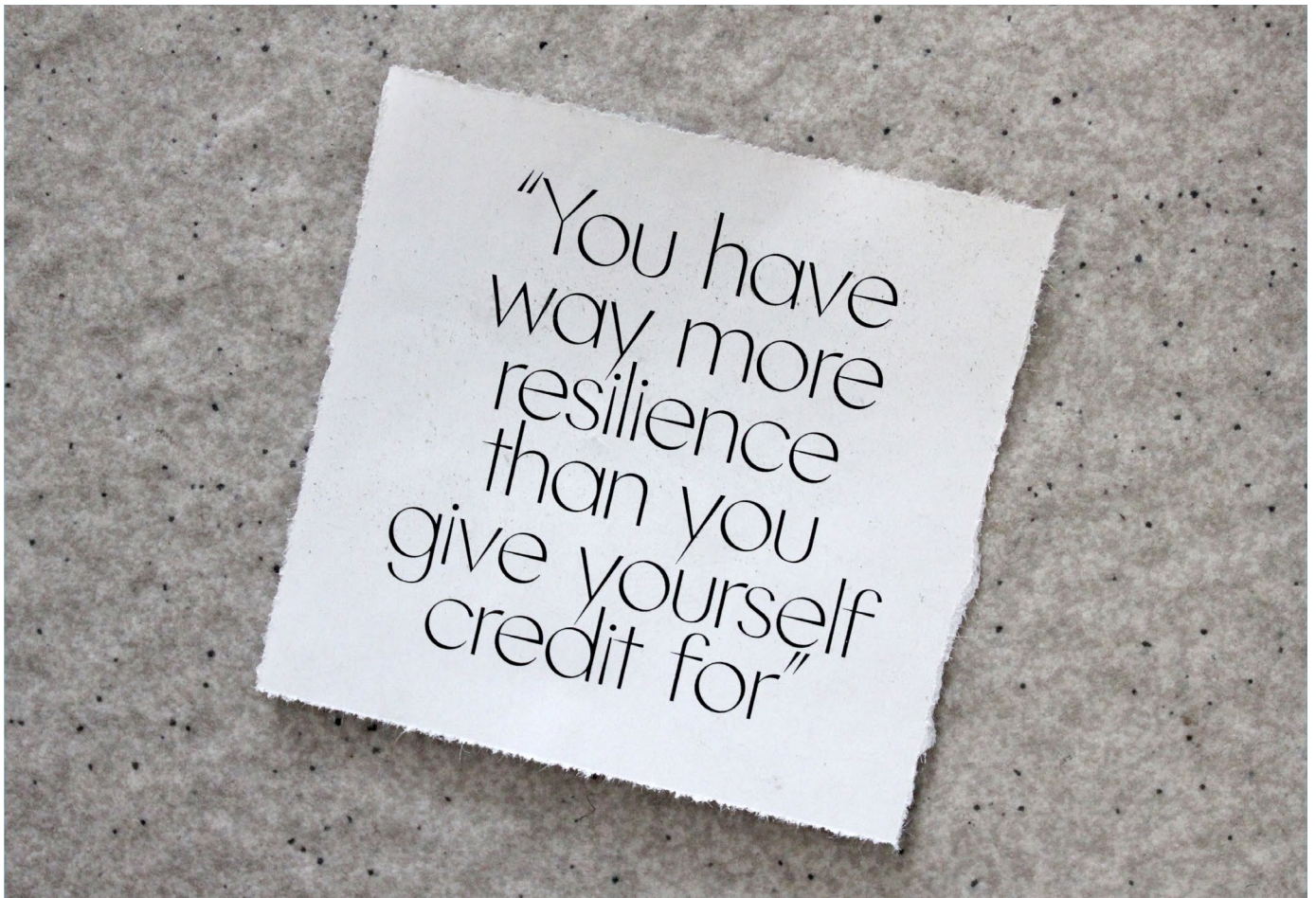


## Ideas for remembrance:

- Plan an occasion – balloon release
- Remembrance meal
- Photo album of memories
- Do something for charity
- Create something to honour that person – garden
- Plant a tree
- Buy a bench in a special place
- Ask their place of work to name a room or support a charity
- Making loved one's clothes into a cushion or blanket
- Candlelight vigil

‘Once you choose hope,  
anything is possible’

- Christopher Reeve



## Adjustment:

- Try and focus on what you had, more than what you're missing
- Incredible years with that person
- Happy memories
- Remember, if you focus on your loss = lost
- We have a choice to move forward
- We are our own healer
- Giving yourself permission to heal
- Look back at how far you've come
- Stronger than you think
- More resilient now

Time is the vehicle that takes  
us through the stages, but  
the direction point is in our  
control





# BeyondEAP

Specialist employee support  
for life's toughest challenges

For full details visit our website or call Sandie on +203 751 4784 for a chat



[letstalk@beyondeap.co.uk](mailto:letstalk@beyondeap.co.uk)



[www.beyondeap.co.uk](http://www.beyondeap.co.uk)



[beyondeap](https://www.linkedin.com/company/beyondeap)

