

WHOLISTIC HEALTH

From the Inside Out

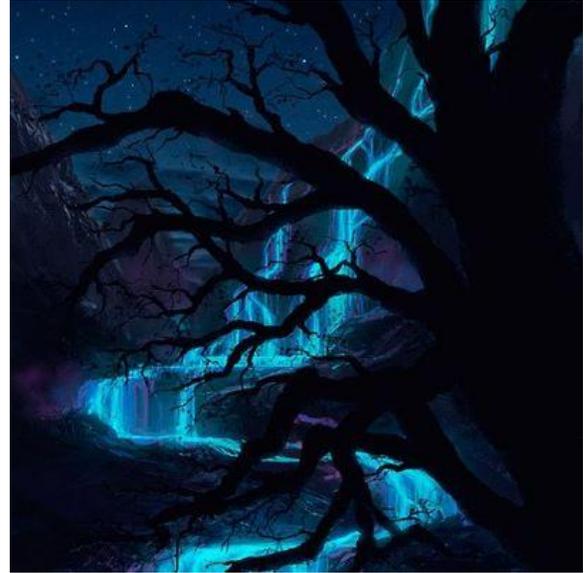
Grief & Loss

At some stage of our lives we will all go through a loss of some description. Whether it be a loss of a relationship or loss of a loved one through death.

The pain in our heart will feel the same. The emptiness and hollowness and the proverbial feeling of having a *broken* heart.

Although I have recently experienced this, I can honestly say there is no blueprint for the stages of grief, nor a time frame attached to each stage. What I do know is they come in waves and some days we will experience all stages in the same day.

The first stage of SHOCK & DISBELIEF is very anesthetic. We function without realizing it and run on autopilot. We can appear to be coping while the anesthetic is still running through our bodies, but like



true anesthetic it does wear off and the pain kicks back in.

When the numbness wears off we feel the enormity of the LOSS & PAIN. We are now feeling the second stage of our grief with all its force. This stage often feels so painful that it is easy to want to numb ourselves back into the first stage to lessen this. Alcohol can often be tempting to ease the pain, but in reality, whilst it may take the edge off, the alcohol is a depressant and will only amplify the wounds power. The feeling of hurt in our chest is likened to the breaking of our hearts. Some will use this time to *overdo* using adrenalin to push us forward, whilst some will choose to succumb to the wound and prefer to sleepwalk their way through this stage.

In this stage we also may want to skip to the third stage of ANGER. It feels better than pain and less powerless than numbing. Or does it? The anger is again another mask to attempt to deflect this hurt. It's another distraction to fend off those feelings that we desperately are trying to avoid.

The anger actually feels like we are back in control but this is a false reading. It is merely a deflection, albeit temporary. Avoidance of unwarranted blame is paramount at this stage as permanent damage can be done to relationships. It is important to own our own feelings and not look for a scapegoat to unload our pain onto.

Just when our anger seems to subside a little we are hit by a wave of LONLINESS & DEPRESSION. Here comes stage four. We can become very apathetic and withdrawn and reflective, often wanting to isolate ourselves from others so that we can spend more time with our loved memories. We can become very protective of our precious and treasured memories. Well meaning friends can often feel the wrath of that

need to be alone with our thoughts and memories.

Friends and family members are wise to allow this space as it's an important part of the healing process, and not push too early to a return to the land of the living.

The final stage of recovery is an adjustment to a new and different life without our loved one, often having to make some restructuring changes and ACCEPTANCE of the reality of what has occurred. It is learning to rejoice in the happy memories more and not focusing on the loss. More and more we will be able to talk about our loved one without the overwhelming sadness.

Please note that there is no hard and fast rules for any of this process. No one can tell us when it's time for us to move into another stage. What I would suggest though is, if we find ourselves stuck in one particular cycle of this grief process that we believe to be detrimental, then please know that we are not alone and maybe should seek out group support or professional counseling.

Some tips for handling this time, although may seemingly be pretty

obvious, often go by the wayside in times of stress and grief.

Firstly, take as good a care of our physical body as possible. Make an effort to nurture ourselves by getting rest and good healthy food choices.

Allow ourselves time to do what feeds our souls. Whether it be sitting in the sun, reading, journaling, writing, being in nature, creative activities like drawing or craft. These activities will put the colour back into our souls.

Don't try to repress our grief. Repressed emotions have a way of resurfacing at the most inopportune moments without warning.

Allow friends to support us. They are feeling helpless and torn between giving us space and not wanting us to feel like we've been deserted.

Whatever our religious or spiritual beliefs are, please take comfort in them at this time and open our heart to the possibility of our loved one still being around us. Ask them for signs, speak to them, write to them. Use whatever comforting means we can to bring us some tranquility and peace.

Tears can be therapeutic rather than disempowering. It is a sad time so

allow ourselves that time to feel all our emotions without judgment or feeling like we have to run to a schedule of the appropriate time to cry or laugh or even to move on with our lives.

Remember everyone deals with pain and loss differently. Be respectful of others methodologies as hopefully they will ours.

My quote for today is:

Perhaps they are not the stars, but rather openings in Heaven where the love of our loved ones pours through and shines down upon us to let us know they are happy.



With Love, Light and Passion

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