Understanding Grief

By Debbie Homewood

What is grief?

Grief is the pain we experience when there is a **loss** in our lives

- not just the loss of a loved one
- loss of independence
- mobility
- self-image
- loss of a job
- loss of dreams
- loss of hope
- loss of energy

What is this pain we feel when there are losses such as these**?**
Sadness,
fear,
emptiness,
anger, despair,
a broken heart,
meaninglessness,
confusion,
hopelessness…

Grief is a complex experience and it is different for everyone, and for different losses.

Serious illness brings many losses with it and all those losses, for the patient, and family, bring the experience of grief.

Grief is the emotional experience we most **fear.** For the most part, we don't understand it but we know it **hurts.** We are afraid the pain will overwhelm us, destroy us, or incapacitate us. So we tend to avoid it and yet avoiding it causes more suffering.

We cannot grieve in our mind, our intellect. Our emotional intelligence or heart is equipped to handle grief. We must consciously and intentionally connect with our heart and work with grief in our heart. This is so important to understand and to work on, because in our lives there are many times we are faced with grief.

The amazing thing about grief is that when we are able to grieve, a little bit at a time, it changes the pain; it transforms it into something different and brings little bits of peace. It certainly brings strength and acceptance.

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On this website there is a guided exercise to help you develop the ability to connect with your heart, experience compassion and meet the pain of grief with the healing, transforming power of compassion.

Compassion is a quality of loving kindness that is the tender acceptance of even that which might be otherwise unacceptable; a respectful, kind understanding of suffering; a soft, gentle appreciation of suffering. Compassion comes from the **HEART, not the head,**

One of the greatest ways you can take care of yourself is to strengthen your connection to your heart.

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