

5 Uplifting Ways to Heal Grief: One Couples Story

It was mind-boggling what happened when Art was driving home from a hockey game in Vail, Colorado, with his wife Kathy and their two young sons. As he drove through the Glenwood Canyon, high up in the Rocky Mountains, a boulder leapt off the canyon wall, crushing his car and instantly killing his wife and sons but leaving Art unharmed.

Allison's brother committed suicide three days before she was due to get married. The marriage ended in divorce. Art and Allison met several months later, became friends, and married.

Ed's mother died when he was five days old. His father married his mother's sister and she died when Ed was 14. As death is such an intimate subject for us both, our meeting with Art and Allison forged an instant and deep friendship.

Healing from profound grief, which is one of the hardest of life's challenges, is not easy. Friends exhort us to get busy, get back to work, keep the mind occupied, as if doing this is somehow going to replace the emptiness inside. But grief demands attention, it needs to be known, so that we can keep on living. As our friend Jacqui says, "Do you shatter like a teacup, or like an egg and be reborn?"

As Art writes in his and Allison's heart-wrenching book, *OUT OF THE CANYON, a True Story of Loss and Love*: "How do I do this? How do I survive, how do I move on, through and beyond this awful grief, this darkness? I learned the answer was one hour at a time. One day at a time. Taking your eyes from the ground and looking a little higher each day until suddenly there is a glimpse of blue sky, of a star, and the world very gradually becomes brighter."

Grieving is often a frightening and overwhelming time, one of fear of the future and yet also a rediscovery of ourselves. Whether it is our own loss or that of someone we know, here are some guidelines that may help you through the unknown landscape. The quotes are from Art and Allison's book.

1. Support from Others

This is so essential: Don't hesitate to seek help. In the first few days after the loss of his family, friends and loved ones took over the details of Art's life, such as food and filtering phone calls. "I am normally quiet happy when I'm by myself, but in those early days it would not have been good for me to be alone, and in truth I didn't want to be." Without such support, seek it through your church or grief support groups.

2. Support from a Grief Counselor

Although many think that they do not need to go to a "professional" for help, it can be the best thing to do. Grief may make us unaware of how much shock we are in. "Blindly twisting and falling down the rabbit hole of grief is a scary thing, and it is immensely reassuring to know that you are not going crazy."

3. Take Your Time

Grieving is so personal and each of us have to find our own way and in our own time. There is no set moment of time when grief should be over. It takes immense patience and great love for ourselves. "Above all, wrap your arms around yourself and turn your love and compassion inward, where it is really needed." Become your own best friend.

4. Remembering

Remembering those who have died is essential to healing: They were deeply loved and that love does not die the moment the body does. Celebrating birthdays and other special moments reminds us of the love that was shared and is still in our hearts. "Probably nothing has been more important to my recovery than remembering my family."

5. Solitary Time

Spending time alone is also vital. Only then can we sink into that quieter place that connects us to that place that is beyond both life and death. Meditation enables us to make peace with ourselves and our circumstances. You can read more in our upcoming book, *BE THE CHANGE, How Meditation Can Transform You and the World*.

Do you have any stories of healing grief to share? You can receive notice of our blogs every Thursday by checking *Become a Fan* at the top. And you can pre order *BE THE CHANGE, How Meditation Can Transform You and the World*

Ed and Deb Shapiro's new book, ***BE THE CHANGE, How Meditation Can Transform You And The World***, forewords by the Dalai Lama and Robert Thurman, with contributors such as Marianne Williamson, astronaut Edgar Mitchell, Byron Katie, Michael Beckwith, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Jane Fonda, Jack Kornfield, Gangaji, Ellen Burstyn, Ed Begley, Dean Ornish, Russell Bishop, and others, will be published November 3rd 2009 by Sterling Ethos.

Deb is the author of the award-winning book ***YOUR BODY SPEAKS YOUR MIND***. Ed and Deb are the authors of over 15 books, and lead meditation retreats and workshops. They are corporate consultants, and the creators of **Chillout** daily inspirational text messages on Sprint cell phones. See: www.EdandDebShapiro.com