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## Healing From Grief

**By Amanda Pulford**  
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This article is all about grief, and healing from grief. Read below to find out more about five areas of grief, and how you can heal grief.

And don't forget, our last article was all about stress – specifically workplace stress. Click here to find out more about what it is, how it can occur, and what you can do about it.

If you're interested in our previous articles, please click [here](#)

### Healing From Grief

By Amanda Pulford, Director and Clinical Psychologist (BPsych Hons, MPsych Clin)

If you've got a suggestion for an article, or there's something more you would like to hear about, please send us an email by clicking [here](#)

Grief is a common experience for us all, and it comes in a variety of forms. It can be grief from a loved one dying, the ending of a relationship, the ending of a job or career, moving countries, or the loss of a beloved pet. While healing from grief is natural, we often feel like we're doing it wrong as society has many judgements on what we "should" and "shouldn't" be doing in grief. Ultimately, the goal is to remember those who have died with more love than pain, and to live our lives fully in the face of loss. However, sometimes we're so scared of the pain ending as we think it will signal that we've forgotten about that person or event, or that the memories will fade. And sometimes our minds make the pain of loss worse – adding suffering,

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such as guilt and shame to the loss. Below are five ways that an expert on healing and loss, David Kessler (<http://davidkessler.org/>) explains grief, and how you can help yourself heal from grief.

**Understanding :** David Kessler states that grief is like a river, and naturally we flow down that river towards our healing. However, sometimes a branch might fall into the river, and the leaves from that branch start to block the flow of our healing. Those leaves might represent other's expectations of grief, our own expectations of grief, our mind telling us we're not doing grief well enough, others telling us we 'should' be over it. **Remember : Grief is an individual experience – there is no 'right' or 'wrong'. Be kind to yourself, and understand that we all do grief differently.**

**Healing :** Grief keeps moving – sometimes there's good days, sometimes there's worse days – yet grief continues to move and change all the time. As time goes on, people often report more 'good days'. However, be aware that it's also okay to have 'grief bursts' – sudden intense pain or grief that feels like it comes from out of the blue. **Remember : You can't heal what you can't feel, so whatever you feel is okay. Being kind and compassionate (rather than harsh and judgmental) towards your grief can help in your healing.**

**Our Mind in Grief :** Our mind can add complex layers to grief – it can add guilt, shame, or unhelpful thought patterns about something being our fault. Often these thoughts and feelings are patterns that developed in childhood and have followed us into adulthood. **Remember : We need to look at and heal patterns of our past to help heal our present grief.**

**The Legacy :** We leave a legacy wherever we go, and so it's true in the way we deal with grief. We can leave a legacy of further pain and suffering when we leave a room ("Oh poor Bob, he just doesn't seem to be doing at all well with his mother's death. He just

seems to be suffering so much"), or we can leave a legacy of strength, beauty and understanding when we leave a room ("I know Jane is feeling pain from the loss of her sister; however, she's talking about her pain, understanding what this loss means for her, and starting to make meaning from her loss too"). **Remember : Pain is inevitable when we experience loss; however, suffering is optional. Investigate where your mind might be creating suffering.**

**Continued Connections :** When someone dies, a relationship ends, a career is ended, or your pet dies – the physical connection we have ends; however, what does continue on is our emotional and spiritual connections (whatever they may represent for you). **Remember : It's important to recognise the emotional and spiritual connections that we have, and to find ways to continue these connections.**

If you would like help with your thoughts, feelings or behaviours, please contact us on 0488 954 195, [amanda@awakenpsychology.com.au](mailto:amanda@awakenpsychology.com.au) or [click here](#)

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