

# **Seven Pages of Grief**

## **Volume Two**

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ForewardThe format of this book is expressly designed to print yourself, preferably double sided letter size, then 3 hole punch and put in a binder.

This gives you freedom to highlight, to share, rip out and discard anything that offends you, and to add pages of your notes.

It also frees me freedom from needing any money or a publisher to produce and distribute it. Every word here is mine, every mistake or oversight is mine.

This is Volume Two of an undefined and eventually finite number of volumes. It's not necessary to read them sequentially, each essay can stand alone.

Because these words and advice come from my soul, I hope that something written here resonates with you.



## **Volume Two Seven Pages of Grief Essay 1**

### **Assignment: Tell your love ones how to grieve you.**

A significant challenge of grieving is that we don't have a lot of good models for grief, and we fail to talk with our loved ones about what to do after we inevitably die. When you're without specific instructions about how to grieve someone, I suggest that you do your best to grieve them as you would want people to grieve you.

One of the greatest gifts you can leave your loved ones is the preparation of a model of how to grieve you.

In this exercise, it's just a simple statement about how you wish them to grieve the loss of you. I believe that this subject is ideally an ongoing discussion that rarely happens in daily life. If you write it, it can be shared at any time with them while you're alive, or it can be your obituary, included in a funeral program or handed out at a visitation, or attached to your will. There will be less confusion and wasted energy, so this type of instruction is a loving act.

A natural response to writing and posting something like this could be to take it as a cry for help, a precursor to self harm or suicide. My brother's suicide has been well incorporated in my soul and I believe myself to be immune to thoughts or acts of suicide. The most dangerous thing I will do today is to cross a street. I am nowhere near dying, very happy and healthy. I am conscious and rational, although there could be some debate on either of those points. I simply believe that we should live each day as if it might be our last, and so I'll write instructions for grieving me now:

#### **Grieving instructions for Peter H. Ratcliffe**

I believe that my life has been a gift, but I have always been attentive to an awareness that the gift of this life has always been finite, a limited time offer that must always eventually come to a physical end.

When the last grains of my grit have trickled through the hourglass of my life, I want all who have loved me to understand that, with your help, I have lived a truly gifted and wonderful lifetime where love and happiness were always central parts of my life.

Please know that as I left you, I was a very loved and fulfilled man with very few regrets. We have built some great love together, so let's celebrate that.

My legacy, my ongoing journey of loving you and being loved by you is now meant, as I have written so many times, to become the responsibility of you, the next generations.

I want you to extinguish anger from your grief, because anger is a cancer of your soul that consumes love. I do not want any sadness for what you cannot change, only appreciation for the great love that we have shared.

It's important to tell you that I would not wish my death to become sadness, anger or an excuse or a crutch for you to ever do less than your best efforts at life and happiness. I always expected great things from you, and you always delivered far more than I dared expect, because you have expected even greater things from yourselves than I did. Whatever you are, whatever you have become is not because of me, I simply sat back and watched marveling at how well you have each learned to love life.

I will have done the hard part of this process by being the one dying, and I ask you to cry only for a very short time and only if truly necessary and then please get on with the easier part, the fortunate and honourable tasks of remembering and celebrating the love that we have shared.

Do not focus on the single universal event that we call death. There are literally millions of things from my life for you to celebrate, moments, memories and emotions that we have shared, and all that laughter that we have shared is now embedded in your collective souls. Please laugh early and often, and feel no guilt because I am no longer available to laugh among you.

There are possibly even a few good lessons in those memories, both of how to do things and how not to do things. Share them with each other and with the next generations.

Most importantly, I wish that you gather and talk face to face more among yourselves, keep each other out of danger, build common love to fill any voids that my passing might create.

In honour of my memory, please find ways to better and more deeply love each other and teach the world around you to love more and to love better.

Be well and peaceful whenever you remember me, let the memory of me be a calm place in any storm you encounter.

### **Your turn**

You're grieving someone and you have never talked about them dying, you're not sure what path to follow what to do and feel, how to grieve them and find comfort for you.

Write your own statement of how you will want people who have loved you to grieve. Then follow that path any time you grieve anyone who didn't tell you how to grieve their loss. After all is said and done, love is exactly about respecting and treating people exactly as you would respect and treat yourself.

### **For those anticipating grief**

In the path of illness, when a terminal diagnosis or hospice care becomes a reality, you still have time to ask the dying how you should grieve them. There is no greater closeness in loving someone than the honest confronting of the inevitability of an impending death. It clears the decks and opens the doors to very deep connections and greater peace for the dying love one.

Be well and peaceful, seek comfort in great memories reflecting the lives you have loved and lost.



## Volume Two Seven Pages of Grief Essay 2

### Write a Eulogy to Guide You

Much of the anger, confusion and energy we expend in grief will be caused by the notion that we can get back to our old life exactly as it was, the way we liked it before we lost a loved one. We're generally inexperienced at an unprepared for grief, and we begin with anger, so we don't have the basics for making good decisions.

Change and more specifically how grief will change you is a complex notion to unpack and wrap around ourselves.

First ask yourself: "If this loss doesn't change me, was the person that I loved and lost ever really significant in my life?" Many will take immediate offense to this challenging question because we will acknowledge that we should always acknowledge the significance of a life we have loved. Yet, many can't get specific about itemizing what that loving that person brought to your daily life.

I have written and delivered enough eulogies, including one for my son, to understand the underlying healing purpose of eulogy and how to write one. Today, I want you to drag out the journal that I asked you, in Volume 1, to keep, or to open a new document on the computer, or just grab some clean sheets of paper. You're going to write a eulogy for the person you have lost, from your perspective for you. By writing this eulogy, you will better define the challenges you will have in accepting their loss.

A terrible eulogy is often an emotionless list of educational and professional accomplishments. Today, I want you to focus on the emotional accomplishments that this life brought to your life.

My template for a good eulogy is simple:

- A good laugh
- A good cry
- Something only you know, a personal experience fit to share
- Respect for how they loved life
- A thought or parable that will linger
- A call to action in memory

If you were to actually deliver this eulogy, you'd have to keep it short. We can, and should make this one as long as we wish. It will become something we refer back to, especially the call to action. So in each of these points, write as many as you can.

Start with laughter:

- What about this person made you laugh?
- Describe the time you laughed the hardest together?
- Describe the time you made them laugh the hardest.
- Describe the time they made you laugh the hardest.

Now things that made you cry?

- Did you ever see them cry, and what caused that?
- Did you ever cry for them and what caused that?
- Did you ever watch them grieve? How did they manage grief?
- Did they ever help you grieve? How did they comfort you?

You might stop there, but please continue to all the other points of the original template.

Once you have outlined the important points, begin writing. Expand one point from each subject into a paragraph or a page, then loop back and begin again. Laugh, Cry, Experience, Respect, Thought, Call to action, Laugh, Cry, Experience, Respect, Thought, Call to action, etc. Write something on each one until the important ones are all represented. The ones you write the most on will invariably be the ones you need to give the most attention to in your grief.

Fill as many pages as you need, and go back and read it, add to it from time to time as you grieve.

This exercise is a structured process that guides you to explore and simply explain the love that you have shared. These points are the things that you need to keep alive in your soul as you continue to love them and to teach others about their life. We rarely categorize and itemize what make our love when they are living. When you finish this process, you have a template for your grief, a concise collection of things of deep meaning to you.

If you're, as I intended, printing these volumes and inserting them into a three-ring binder, please insert your eulogy into the binder behind this essay, and add a tab or divider so you can find it quickly any time. You can add a eulogy for any subsequent loss you will grieve in your life, or build a separate binder creating a collection of your thoughts on those you have loved and lost

This eulogy exercise works well with any past loss that you have experienced, and may help you resolve lingering pain or anger. It's also good for failed relationships and might help you heal the loss of your first girlfriend that you've never gotten over.

I will later include an essay about what I call a living eulogy, because the thought and process of writing a eulogy is a perfect structure for learning to better express the love that you share with someone living, or even something inanimate like a job or a career.



To know how to grieve, we must become better able to describe how we have loved, and to better understand why we love, what is our own language and purpose for the love we build, share, and lose.



## Volume Two Seven Pages of Grief Essay 3

### Grief Arrives, Happiness Leaves, You're Angry

You're not happy grieving, which is the completely normal, natural and expected and evolved response. You're angry.

Grief is tougher than you had ever imagined it might be. You're angry.

I have been there, I understand how you feel. You're angry.

Grief comes at you like a terrorist, grabbing and holding you hostage, and torturing you. You feel trapped and just want grief to end; you want to leave the pain and escape back to the life you knew before grief. You're angry.

Grief seems, at first, very inconvenient, inconsiderate and extremely unkind and you're angry.

Honestly, behind everything: **Grief is really making you angry.**

Grief has an evolved purpose in its way of first making you angry, of making you feel trapped, of making you cry when you don't want to. Those emotions are an evolved response. Pain is a call to action that humans can't easily ignore, so we humans have evolved to feel an intense emotional and physical pain when we lose a loved one. It's just how evolution has wired humans when we became capable of love.

Anger is the starting point of most grief and anger is common to all human loss. However, I often describe anger as a cancer of the human soul that consumes love. Since our soul is where we store the energy of love, anger that lasts in grief will hurt us. If we allow anger to stay, we will exhaust ourselves and empty our soul of love, so we must quickly begin to resolve anger.

Most anger in grief is caused by things that you can't possibly change, things that you will eventually need to accept if you want to extinguish the anger. Since anger about what you can't change is fundamentally illogical and self-harming, there is a component of guilt and a feeling of helplessness that comes along with allowing yourself to be angry because someone died.

Anger also isolates you. We grieve as a collection of soul wounded people who each loved the same person. In grief, we often say things that offend others who are grieving, or lash out at anyone close by who said "the wrong thing". We often look for fuel for the fires of anger that's consuming the love in our soul, self seeking punishment and more pain.

How can something as painful as grief have any positive purpose? Is there any positive opportunity in grief?

I hope to help you change your perspective and teach you what I have learned through grieving multiple losses: Grief is a teacher, an ancient and highly evolved process with great purpose, a

process where we each can learn more about life and love. I hope to help you find comfort in your grief by helping you find the purpose of redefinition and confirmation of your personal value and meaning of the love you share in your life.

Only as you extinguish the fires of anger and move away from the angry scorched epicenter of loss, can you begin to see and understand the real purpose of grief. Without anger, or with less anger, you will be better able to allow grief to be an opportunity to better redefine yourself in more positive directions. With lessening anger you will slowly stop resenting grief, perhaps even begin to embrace it as a teacher and guide. Once we remove the anger of resentment, we open many more productive pathways to incorporate this loss more comfortably into your life in very positive ways.

**This grief that you're trying to escape from is one of the great love stories of your life, it's not something you should run away from quickly, and in the memories there are lessons you should carry in your soul, into the rest of your life comfortably exploring why that love and all love has meaning for your life.**

A well grieved loss can become a super power, mentoring and shaping your understanding of love for deeper more meaningful relationships of love in your daily life.

There will be other losses in your future, because if you love, you are destined to grieve. Learning to grieve constructively will help make you better prepared for the next loss. You can acquire a personal spiritual toolbox full of the fundamental attitudes that, in a good life where we love freely and deeply, we will have the honor, the responsibility to grieve the loss of those we have loved and eventually lost from our physical world.

A fundamental goal of grieving well is to heal this anger and the resulting pain with no lasting damage to ourselves and those around us. I can say with certainty that the person you have loved and lost would not want you broken and suffering in the pain and confusion that brings you here today. They would not want you to hurt because they died, so there should be no confusion or guilt about making grief comfortable, because you finding comfort is a goal that respects the life of the soul that you have loved and what they would wish for you.

Grief is not your enemy, grief is love now expressed by one, honoring the love that you have shared. Grief must be shaped and concentrated to comfort, so that we may carry, without weight, the wonderful memories and powerful lessons of love we have shared through the rest of our lives.

You can do this. It will take thought, it will take courage, it will challenge you, force you to confront your loss, it will make you understand and become stronger than your pain, and as it progresses it will help you grow around loss and become better at loving life.

Give me your attention and let's see if my experience and what I have learned about grief can help you. You have so much to gain, but nothing to lose.

Be well and extinguish anger from your grief, because angry people can't build the love they need to heal their soul.

## Volume Two Seven Pages of Grief Essay 4

### Keepsakes

I had an Engineering Science professor who cautioned us that he would need to teach us things that we could not possibly yet understand, and that our key to success was to simply accept his knowledge and just learn to use it for now. Perhaps, some years later when we had more experience and knowledge we might be able to actually understand and explain how it works.

Much that I will say to you about grief will require some trust for you to accept. In later volumes, should you continue to follow, I will explore my deeper more complex thoughts on the structure and function of our soul and of the energy of love. I have been seriously exploring grief and love, by my personal experiences, for decades now. But, today you are here confused by grief and you need ideas you can use today, not detailed technical explanations.

Understand that grief is a deeply personal experience based on many complex factors unique to your life, so I cannot pretend to understand your grief in any detail. I can however understand the functional model of the human soul and how the universal energy of love fuels our souls.

I use the word resonance a lot; it's a term in physics and engineering as much as in emotions. Much of what I say here may not resonate with you, and if it doesn't resonate it will have no value to you at this point in your grief and therefore non-resonant concepts should simply be ignored. Do not waste your time on what doesn't resonate. Take only what does resonate and use that in your explorations of love through grief.

Your soul is fundamentally a very complex resonance driven computer that your life experience has programmed to respond to your feelings of relative love of and happiness using past, present feelings to predict future experiences. Your soul triggers no conscious action; a soul is a subconscious consultant or advisor for all of your emotions. The purpose of your soul is ultimately very selfish; your soul just tries to keep you as happy as you can be within the life you have. Because grief begins with unhappiness, it triggers your soul to seek solutions to the pain, or to perhaps run from the pain.

Two people grieving the same person will have two very different paths thru grief. There is no fixed timeline, no fixed destination, and no defined path to grief. My belief is that grief is not our adversary, grief is our teacher. Grief is a higher evolution of love. Grief probably needs to be incorporated into your life comfortably, not erased and eliminated.

A picture is sometimes worth a thousand words, so I will try to write words that bring images to mind. Today's image is the aftermath of a violent tornado. We've all seen the images on TV. The dazed survivors picking thru the rubble of what the day before had been their home before the tornado hit. This is exactly what grief looks like, the dazed and confused people being asked "how

do you feel?” by reporters. The survivors are numb, they are angry that this happened, they are depressed, they can’t see a future, they are exhausted and drained, and they really don’t love life right now.

Mostly, they have lost and will grieve physical things and have endured a traumatic and tragic event, but most have not lost people they have loved. But they all look stunned, numb and on the verge of tears or breakdown. Within each of those survivors is a soul trying to guide them back towards happiness.

Things can be replaced, events can be forgotten, but the people we have loved just can’t be replaced or forgotten.

But spend a minute looking at what those survivors are searching for in the rubble of their loss. They are looking for memories: Pictures, mementos, souvenirs from past happy events. They pick thru piles of rubble that was once their home and load their car with keepsakes.

In your journey of grief, you should seek emotional keepsakes and then hold and protect them in ways that will ensure that you will never forget your lost loved one.

The part of your soul where you built love with someone, and together maintained that love you have shared has been hit by this tornado called death. It seems like a pile of rubble, empty of light and of love, cold and dark. The love you shared no longer looks or feels like a place full of love. It looks and feels devastating. You are human, so numb, disappointed, depressed, and angry are all very natural reactions.

This death caused an apparent disaster in your soul that is hard to look at, but today’s real question is “what keepsakes will you dig for and carry away from the rubble of this death of your loved one?”

## Volume Two Seven Pages of Grief Essay 5

### Simple Facts I know about grief

We all have a perceived timeline of what our life is meant to be in the context of the universe. We speak of average life expectancy at birth and at any point in a lifetime, but there are never guarantees that our life or the life of any of our loved ones will be average, worse than average, or better than average.

Subconsciously we will measure each death against the concept of an average life, and often use the word “fair” in that discussion. A shorter life seems unfair, a longer life is preferred.

Suicide is most confusing and complicated by the victim having made the very personal choice to end their life. In a later volume I will discuss the details and what I can understand about the suicide of my brother twenty-three years ago when he was 43. That event was not my first contact with suicide, but this one was my family, and my first untimely and very personal major loss and ensuing grief.

Suicide is always further complicated by the widespread collateral damage to the survivors, family and friends seeking answers that no one has, and by religious and societal stigma, the moral and religious context of suicide further complicates the grief that surrounds it, and try as we might there is a large element of shame that further isolates the survivors. There is more complicated anger in grieving suicide than most deaths and that can bring the survivors guilt and self-recrimination. Family dynamics are complicated by suicide, often leading to arguments and isolation of the survivors, increasing their danger.

We can't schedule or manage when grief comes to us.

The second major death I grieved was Eugene, a key employee of my small company, a man who was my best friend, a trusted and loyal part of my life and an integral part of my company and income for two decades. This death was also untimely, in that he was in his early 40's and died at home alone one night of an undiagnosed heart problem. For me it was complicated more by happening a few months after my brother's suicide, when my grief was unhealed, not yet organized, when more grief piled on with Eugene's untimely death. This death created serious business consequences, and a group of employees grieving the same loss and wondering about their future added emotional and financial pressure on me personally.

Sometimes life piles on and keeps pounding you. In 2005, five years after my brother's suicide, four years after Eugene's sudden unexpected untimely death came a third major untimely loss of our son. Our near perfect 20 year old son James died in a firefighter training accident in our small home town. The accident was avoidable, a result of poor choices at many levels of a municipal government and fire department leadership, so blame and anger across a small community further complicated grief.

Those three major untimely and unexpected losses were immensely challenging, but the experience and understanding gained from each prior loss helped me with the successive challenges. That said, loss of a child is probably considered the most challenging form of grief. Grieving the loss of a child as a married couple is probably the most challenging thing we have done together, a grieving process with a statistically very high divorce rate.

Find good tools. If the tools you have don't help, find different tools. The tools gained through excellent therapy after my brother's suicide provided little satisfaction or acceptance in the death of our son. The commonly used staging of grief, the concept that grief has a beginning, some number of stages, and then a conclusion called acceptance, proved unproductive for me in dealing with the loss of our son.

It was the loss of our son that forced me to seek different perspectives, tools, and methods to resolve my grief to comfort. Looking back, I spent five years struggling for acceptance within common teachings on grief and then another five gradually finding my different paths to comfort, and then a bunch of years trying to organize my thoughts into something presentable and coherent that I can share with others.

Accept that grief is natural, important and evolved. I became fascinated with the seemingly automatic process of grief and came to see it as an evolution unique to animals that have evolved to having family and community social structures. Of those animals that grieve, humans have the most complex social structures, the most varied community dependencies that we call civilization. It's logical that human evolution into civilization has evolved a purposeful process of grief to have an important functional part of our life.

Write it down, keep a journal. In writings and in speaking to people about their losses, many have encouraged me to write a book on grief. Writing about personal losses is challenging, and I have started that book many times without finishing it.

This process of blogging and writing a non-commercial self-published eBook to give away to those who may need some help or insight into grief is designed to keep me honestly engaged in better understanding grief. These writings are my different understandings of the human soul and the most uniquely human emotion that we call love and what happens to us when we lose a loved one. I'm slowly (hopefully very slowly) running out of years to share these thoughts and ideas as a legacy, but I have the luxury of time now.

Walk and talk with others who grieve. It has been my great honour to walk beside people who grieve, helping them find comfort, not pulling or pushing, just keeping them company and giving them someone to talk to. For many, grief will be the most profound loneliness that they will ever experience, and that loneliness can have devastating consequences. Share your loneliness with someone who has grieved or someone who is grieving, you will feel less alone and better understood.

Talk about your feelings, they are some of the most human feelings you will ever have. I have been told that I am comfortable to talk to about loss, that I bring peace and understanding quickly



to some. My writing will try to be conversational, if you pause reading to speak your thoughts to others or even write to me, you will flatter me and reinforce this purpose that loss has chosen for me.

I have been called "wise" by some. I can't or won't judge myself, but do know that I believe that what we humans call wisdom, in its purest form, is always acquired by healing great pain of loss into truth.

Some have even said that I have "grace". Again I can't judge myself, but know that I believe that what we humans call grace is universally the result of becoming wise without becoming angry for the pain that acquiring wisdom brought to us.

More than one might tell you that I helped save their life by talking to them openly about loss, especially suicide. If so, know that I have only helped them to find enough reasons for them to save their own lives. They each did the hard work; I was merely a bystander or spotter ready to try to catch them before they fell, but trusting that under all personal strife is a very human will to not only survive, but to love living.

Don't fear tears, embrace the love that tears represent. It's a sign of great strength to be able to express emotions that bring tears, so practice it more and become comfortable expressing you have lost.

Be well, seek peace, and build love. These closing words evolved in a very long continuing conversation by email in support of someone grieving multiple losses as a way to always close my emails with a reminder of simple purpose.

**Be well, seek peace, and build love.**



## Volume Two Seven Pages of Grief Essay 6

### Talking about grief

Talking about grief comfortably takes time to learn. As I write this in 2023, I am a retired Canadian husband (once and still), father of two (one deceased) and grandfather of two beautiful and brilliant grandkids. This eBook that I am writing, and my website and blog are dedicated to our late son with thanks for what his life and loss continues to teach me about love.

I am a simple man talking openly and calmly about my grief, atypical behavior for males of my age and generation. Coming to this point in my life was not an easy journey, it has taken many years. I am vulnerable here opening my scarred soul to view. My intent is to cause good things to happen in how people might come to see the purpose and meaning of grief. I think you should become comfortable talking about grief in your life, because grief is an expression of love, and love is life.

I have no negative purpose, commercial goals or hidden agenda. I am spiritual, but an agnostic so there is no religious agenda here. I keep it simple, self- managed and self funded and will not profit in any way from the distribution of these downloadable volumes.

**Disclaimer:** My thoughts and interpretations may not be applicable to your grief; my writing contains honest thoughts that may trigger you as easily as they might guide you. If my thoughts are of no value, or of negative value to you, please stop reading and seek answers and guidance elsewhere.

Grief is the most personal of journeys, and there is no one path, no one solution for the challenges that grief brings to your life. That said, whatever triggers you to anger or tears is probably something that you need to work more on to reach a more peaceful life.

Stay, leave, come back often, never come back, it's your choice. This is free advice with no income potential or monetary purpose for me. It is a discussion that I feel that I have been called to offer people who might need a shoulder to lean on, or a thought based in experience to guide them. A common emotion in grief is loneliness, because grief makes you different and it takes time for people around you to understand how you have changed. That's rooted in our discomfort and lack of discussion about grief.

For me to become credible to you, it's important for you to know a bit about me, my qualification (or lack thereof), and especially some of my journeys through grief.

I am not formally trained; my training is experiential and quite deep. My experience with grief has been primarily with untimely and unexpected death. My credentials are not degrees on my walls, but a collection of well healed deep scars on my soul from healing losses. Most of us try to hide the scars on our souls because we fear they will be seen as weaknesses that others might exploit.

My soul has been hurt to the point that almost nothing could ever hurt me more, and now that I have healed comfortably from those injuries, I know I am stronger than ever before. I will carefully share my scarred soul with you; so that you might find more hope in healing your soul well and coming back to a stronger version of you truly loving life after whatever loss brings you here.

For me, there is little more beautiful than the resilience of a human soul that has healed from loss again and again and with time once again loving life. Through healing, we are freed from being defined by our losses; we become ourselves again but a completely redefined self with different purpose and understanding of life. If you come to believe that this healing process of our soul is inside of us waiting to be unlocked and empowered, then you can allow yourself much more hope of healing.

No longer defined by loss, we are instead defined by learning and reaching the high plateaus of understanding that we have climbed onto as we have healed those losses. Our view has changed, because we through loss we have chosen to be called to seeing life and love differently.

Loss can enrich our lives with dramatic new understandings of love, and remind us that there is urgency to build and share love, because all life is finite. We who heal well are the lucky ones, we live comfortably able to carry, to teach and to share the memories of every great love that has come to our life.

## Volume Two Seven Pages of Grief Essay 7

### Make Time for Grief

My late father had a great expression: “You don’t find time for the things that matter, you make time for them”.

If you can acknowledge grief as a beneficial and evolved process, you should have little problem scheduling it regularly into some quiet corners of your busy life. If you don’t make time to grieve, the fundamental responsibility of grieving a lost loved one will fall in arrears. Grief is an aggressive collection agent of this responsibility of love, and grief will hunt you down at work, at play and interrupt your life randomly at the most inconvenient times.

I am an early riser, so my quiet times of reflection in loss became the dawn of each new day. Many years later, when there is nothing in grief calling me, I now use that time to write on grief hoping to help others grieve comfortably. When the loss of a loved one happens, my writing will slow, and I will actively use this time to process, structure and incorporate my newest grief.

While it sounds business like and dispassionate, it’s actually an act of love to make time in your life to grieve. When I’m not processing new grief, and not writing, I am using the daily time visiting my reflections of past loved ones that have been well and comfortably grieved.

In early grief, the mechanical and social process surrounding death is quite rigid. You should divide your allocation of times, probably separating them into time for soulful reflection and time for physical and functional realities.

When overwhelmed with the mechanical parts of death, prioritize and schedule them. Grief is exhausting, and a very common reaction is to jump right on very task and seek immediate completion. Many bureaucratic parts of death need certain documentation, like an official death certificate, that can take days or weeks to arrive. If you are an executor, your primary task is to gather and protect the assets, and you’ll need documentation to accomplish anything. Attack required documentation first and foremost.

Schedule your personal reflection time outside of normal business hours and your mechanical process time within normal business hours. This creates a natural division.

The emotional exhaustion of grief piles on to the normal exhaustion of daily life, and any social or mechanical obligations surrounding the death will pile onto that. You need to manage the stress of grief on your life, meter the tasks to a manageable level or delegate where you can. Please never compromise on making some time that is isolated for the purely emotional parts of your grief.

If you’re grieving as a couple, you need to make time to grieve as a couple, as well as time to grieve individually. While you’re both grieving the same loss, you will each follow a different

path through grief. Don't lose sight of each other, but accept that your paths and conclusions may be very different and know that we each have a right to our own thoughts and conclusions in grief.

You're floating on a river of emotions when you grieve, and unless you work actively to choose your direction, you have no control of your destination. Around the next corner could be a peaceful lake, rough rapids or a waterfall that will smash you to pieces. It's wise to pay attention, to listen to your own soul, and to choose the directions you will go in grief.

Grief won't kill you, but unmanaged grief will make your life more difficult than it need be. As unemotional and unromantic as it sounds, the best managed grief will be the most efficient and comfortable path to a destination that you can help choose. I highly recommend Comfortable Acceptance as the place you want to go on this river.

**Be well and peaceful on your journeys in grief, because grief is not simple, but grief is simply love now expressed by one.**

## Volume Two Seven Pages of Grief Closing Words

Grief is not an affliction; grief does not need to be healed as much as absorbed.

Grief is a responsibility, an honour of reflection that only those who have loved may experience.

Wear your grief comfortably, with pride for having loved someone deeply enough that the loss hurts this way.

More to come, I'm not dead yet, so Volume Three is inevitable.

Writing on love and grief is now part of my purpose. Between volumes, my latest writings on grief are on: [www.DistillingGrief.com](http://www.DistillingGrief.com)

I have lost, I have perhaps lost the greatest loss. I have healed around loss. I am stronger, deeper and more loving for the journey.

Today, I love my life more than ever. Not in spite of loss, but also because of the awareness that loss has brought me. I have an urgency and passion for loving and living life for as long as I can. Loss has called me to share, from time to time what others might find helpful on their journeys of finding love through grief.

Until our words and thoughts meet again:

You may email me comments, questions or suggestions in confidence at:

[Peter@DistillingGrief.com](mailto:Peter@DistillingGrief.com)

I will respond as I can as I have time and resonance with your message,

We and our world can never have too much love, and so grief is an inevitable part of any good life.

**Be well and peaceful, though you will grieve, build new love daily in the lives around you, because love is life, the rest is just an existence.**