

## Five Myths about Grief

### **1. Time heals all wounds**

False: Time by itself is only the passing of days. Time -- *plus* permission to grieve, *plus* the willingness to face and process feelings, to reminisce, to express your pain – these together over time will heal your wounds.

### **2. If you just move on with life, your grief will eventually go away.**

False: Repressing your feelings is like not doing your homework. You think you're getting away with something but in fact, you're only hurting yourself. You'll pay when it comes time for the test. Likewise, not facing your grief is cheating yourself. You'll pay for it with a range of potential problems: health issues, depression, anxiety, bitterness, etc. True healing comes when feelings are accepted, expressed, and processed.

### **3. If you grieve properly, you will achieve closure.**

False: Even if you allow yourself to experience your feelings head on, there is no such thing as 'closure'. The human heart never closes because love itself can never die. Just because a person has died does not mean that the relationship is over. Therefore, you will continue to feel pangs of loss over the years; it comes hand in hand with the love you feel in your heart. Closure is not the goal of healing.

### **4. You will never feel joy again after a major loss.**

False: Love and joy are abundant and will fill your life again one day if you let them. Though you may feel despair during the darkest days of grief, you won't feel that way forever. The very same love that makes your loss feel so hard now will one day be the source of an inner wellspring of joy in your life.

### **5. At some point, you just need to 'get over it'.**

False: You will not get over grief the way you get over the flu. You will learn to live with loss and integrate it into your life. At some point you will have to decide whether or not to let grief expand you to a life of compassion or shrivel you to a life of bitterness. But initially, all you need to do is allow grief into your life.

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