



The 7 Languages of Sorrow

How can Grief be expressed?

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THE 7 LANGUAGES OF SORROW

Expressions of Grief



THE SEVEN LANGUAGES OF SORROW

Typically, in North America we expect grief to be delivered in two primary forms, verbal and emotional which limits people who have other grief languages. Because of our culture's view of how grief is expressed and its denial of grief in general, we tend to miss the other forms of expression and as a result leave some folks feeling unseen and unheard in their grief.



"Love and Grief work as a unique team that truly supports our growth and evolution as spiritual beings living this beautifully raw human life."
-Stephen Garrett.

LOVE & GRIEF

I have realized that Love and Grief work as a unique team that truly supports our growth and evolution as spiritual beings living this beautifully raw human life.

However;

Too much love and we can turn into an artificial sweetener.

Too much grief and we can turn into a sour and bitter person.

The practice I have found is to let myself be affected by both the love and the grief and that both teach me important lessons about living in the here and now. The languages of love and the languages of grief are decidedly unique in and of themselves and in how they get expressed by each different and individual person.



When we open to love and grief we open to them, it can show us the importance of compassion, kindness, gratitude, authenticity, and acceptance. The pair of Love and Grief can help us grow from being centered on self to being focussed on serving others.

THE SEVEN LANGUAGES OF SORROW

How Grief can be expressed:

1. Verbal Expression
2. Written Expression
3. Emotional Expression
4. Physical Expression
5. Spiritual Expression
6. Artistic Expression
7. Avoidant Expression



No one way is superior to another, and very often individuals rely on two or three of the languages to communicate fully to others the grief they are experiencing. There will be a primary or preferred first choice often backed up by one or two other languages.



VERBAL EXPRESSION

THE TALKER

- Interpersonal Communication
- Talk Therapy
- Support Groups

WRITTEN EXPRESSION

THE WRITTER

- Letters
- Poetry
- Lyrics
- Prose
- Texts
- Emails



Grief

I had my own notions of grief.
I thought it was a sad time
that followed the death
of someone you love
and you had to push through it
to get to the other side.

But I'm learning
there is no other side,
there is no pushing through,
but rather, there is
absorption,
acceptance.

Grief is not something you
complete,

but rather you endure.
Grief is not a task to finish
and move on,
but an element of yourself,
an alteration of your being,
a new way of seeing,
a new definition of self.

Gwen Flowers



EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

THE SENSITIVE ONE

- Drumming or music
- Making noises
- Expression of feelings
- Non verbal communication
- Body language and facial expressions

PHYSICAL EXPRESSION

THE MOVER & THE SHAKER

- DANCE OR BODY MOVEMENT
- HIKING
- WALKING
- SWIMMING
- THROWING



SPIRITUAL EXPRESSION THE SEEKER

- Ritual
- Prayer
- Meditation
- Ceremony



Artistic Expression

The Artist

- Painting
- Weaving
- Carving
- Sculpting
- Gardening
- Baking and Cooking



AVOIDANT EXPRESSION

THE FILER

- No direct communication
- Tucked away
- Handled



SUPPORTING YOUR CLIENT IN GRIEF

"Too much love and we can turn into an artificial sweetener.
Too much grief and we can turn into a sour and bitter person."
-Stephen Garrett

Grief and love both teach important lessons about living in the here and now. It can create opportunities to explore with your client how to move through love and grief.

The Seven Languages of Sorrow are unique in how they are expressed by each different and individual person. You can help the client look at their hobbies and interests or ways they communicate and express themselves to support them in grief

Remember each person is absolutely unique and will have their own special methods to use their preferred languages of sorrow. It is best to remain open, compassionate and curious as we support others in their natural and individual ways of using their unique combination of the Seven Languages of Sorrow.



QUESTIONS TO SUPPORT EXPLORATION OF GRIEF



- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- Do you have any hobbies?
- Are you a creative person?
- What does your spiritual practice look like?
- Do you enjoy the outdoors/being in nature?
- What does your self care look like?
- What do you and your friends like to do for fun?
- What do your Friday nights look like?
- How often do you like to read/write?



Our Languages of Sorrow

Knowing our own personal languages of sorrow can be helpful when working with clients. It provides an opportunity to reflect on our own process of moving through grief and what has been helpful for ourselves in the past. This helps to have deeper understanding of the grief our clients may be experiencing and helping them find ways to explore their own expression of grief.

CASE STUDY GRIEF & LOSS

Client's Story

A young man, in his early twenties. He is a drummer in a band . He recently went to the doctors and was told he is sick with a terminal illness and is expected to have 2 months left to live. The young man has just recently proposed to his fiancée and has been excelling in his career as a musician.

How would you help this client find ways to express their grief?

How could you help the client use their language of sorrow to move through their grief?



The 7 Languages of Sorrow Handout

Resource to use with a client who is expressing grief.

- Questions to ask your client
- The 7 languages of Sorrow
- Examples of expression



The Talker

Talk therapy, walk and talk session in nature, community support group

The Filer

Working on one thing at a time. Keep it simple and organized until they feel ready to explore the other possible languages they have

The Writer

Journaling, poetry, writing a letter to someone, starting a blog, social media posts.

The 7 Languages of Sorrow

The Artist

Painting, drawing, sculpting, baking, weaving, knitting, carving.

The Sensitive

Playing Music, singing, creative expression, spoken word poetry.

The Seeker

Ritual, ceremony, prayer, meditation.

The Mover

Dancing, exercise, hiking, breathwork, yoga.

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