

Restoring Hope

S U I C I D E L O S S G R I E F S U P P O R T G R O U P
N E W S L E T T E R

SHARE YOUR HEALING JOURNEY

Please share your story with us for future editions. What are your favorite memories, tips, books, resources, or inspirational quotes?

Submit your contributions to ellen@iforhope.com.

Be aware that we will edit for space, clarity, and appropriateness.

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THE PASSAGE OF TIME

The passage of time is a frequent topic in our support group meetings. We often hear that survivors are relieved to be out of the hellish first six months, or are hoping their second year will be easier than their first, or are wondering what their grief will be like ten years from now.

We often hear that time heals all wounds – does it though? Is it

just the clock ticking by or the calendar pages flipping over that bring some relief?



I'm inclined to think it's repetition, rather than time, that has a way of helping. If getting up in the morning following

our loss is the hardest thing we've ever done, still we have to do it, and after awhile we get better at it. We find which thoughts are helpful, which activities to avoid, and which expectations to let go of. And then we do the same for the next hard thing, over and over, until it's easier to do.

What do you think? Submit your ideas to ellen@iforhope.com.

DOES TIME HEAL ALL WOUNDS?

Why do people say that time heals all wounds?

Maybe we're being hopeful. We can all use some hope, right? And we *do* often feel a bit better as time marches

on, so maybe there's some truth to it.

But sometimes it feels like a weapon – "it's been this long so get over it now." And to that you can say no, time by

itself does not heal all wounds.

We might need therapy or medicine. We definitely need patience. We always need support. And love sure helps.

TIPS FOR HONORING THE PASSAGE OF TIME



The passage of time is fraught with difficulty. Holidays, anniversaries, and special events remind us of all we are missing. It can help to remind yourself:

- You didn't know how you would get through the funeral, but you did. You didn't know how you would get through the first, or second, or thirtieth milestone, but you did. You'll get through the next one too.
- You did a lot of hard work to get where you are. You might not be where you want to be just yet, but everything that gets a little bit easier gets that way because you have put the work in.
- You know so much more than you did before. You are learning what works for you and what doesn't; who you are and who you aren't. Give yourself credit.

THE TASKS OF MOURNING

"The tasks require work, sometimes grueling work, that affects us emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and physically."

J. William Worden, in his 1991 book *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy*, outlined what he called The Tasks of Mourning. The four tasks are:

- To accept the reality of the loss
- To work through the pain of grief
- To adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing
- To find an enduring connection with the deceased while embarking on a new life

The tasks require work, sometimes grueling work, that affects us emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and physically. It is exhausting.

As the work is done, some relief may be felt. Sharp pains may

soften, painful memories may arise less frequently, fond memories may come up more often.

It isn't just the passage of time that achieves the relief. It's the hard work on those four tasks. It's the tears and the sweat, the questions and talking and floundering that get us there.

HEALING JOURNEYS GRIEVING WITHOUT SUPPORT BY ELLEN PARÉ

My great-grandmother died by suicide in 1959, two days before the death of her husband to cancer.

My mother was raised in her grandparents' house. They were really close. She was 23 when they died, and she's 83 now.

I've claimed that my mom has done more healing in the last ten years than she had in the previous 50, because she has finally talked about it.

I was asked recently to explain that – what kind of healing could take place after 50 years? So I asked my mom for her input.

First, she said, was realizing that she's normal. From having been tormented by grief in the beginning, to her occasional memories and accompanying sadness now, it's a relief to know that it's all been normal and okay.

Second is simply that, when you can't talk about it, no one comforts you, no one challenges you, no one helps you figure anything out. She felt so alone with her grief. She needed someone to understand. She has that now.

And finally, she has had an opportunity to process her thoughts around her

grandma's struggles with her mental health. This has helped her find the compassion and forgiveness she believes she had been needing for a very long time. There's no need to go it alone these days. We're here for you.



“What kind of healing could take place after 50 years?”

HELPFUL RESOURCES

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a network of 24-hour crisis centers. Your call is directed to a local crisis center that corresponds with your area code; if that line is busy, your call is routed to any center that has an open line.

Please don't think you have to be in a desperate situation to call a crisis line. Crisis lines are there to provide human connection when life gets difficult. Sometimes having a deep conversation with

someone is enough to help us to step back into our lives.

You do not have to be suicidal to call. Keep the number handy to help you through a difficult day of grief.



Time does not bring relief; you all have lied
Who told me time would ease me of my pain!
I miss him in the weeping of the rain;
I want him at the shrinking of the tide;
The old snows melt from every mountain-side,
And last year's leaves are smoke in every lane;
But last year's bitter loving must remain
Heaped on my heart, and my old thoughts abide.
There are a hundred places where I fear
To go,—so with his memory they brim.
And entering with relief some quiet place
Where never fell his foot or shone his face
I say, "There is no memory of him here!"
And so stand stricken, so remembering him.

Edna St. Vincent Millay

**UPCOMING
MEETINGS**

2nd Wednesday and
4th Tuesday of every month
7-9 pm

Wednesday, January 8

Tuesday, January 28

Wednesday, February 12

Tuesday, February 25

FK Engineering Associates

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Since 1990 we have helped people struggling with trauma, grief, depression, anxiety and those at risk for suicide. Our staff understands the importance of creating connection with each person while scanning for and addressing suicidal pain. In eliciting the story we illuminate patterns and origins of behaviors in order to both avert a crisis and inspire growth. We know that ultimately the person we are working with has answers to their life situation. By tuning in to their inner wisdom and encouraging expression of the authentic self, those solutions may be revealed. Discovering a sense of purpose through the revelation will result in feeling more self-accepting and confident.