

Top Ten Touchstones: Grief, Mourning and Healing

1. **Grief is Normal, Natural, and Necessary** (the three N's of grief).
2. **Grief is both Universal and Unique** (the two U's of grief).
3. For most people, **the mere passage of time does not heal**; it is the investment in your griefwork and the sharing of your stories that determines your grief journey.
4. **Grief is an internal experience.**
5. **Mourning is the externalization of grief**, or put another way, "grief gone public".
6. For most people **mourning is the path to healing**, grieving is not.
7. **Grief is a normal event**, like Grandma dying peacefully at age 96 surrounded by family and love. **Trauma is an event that is abnormal**, sudden, and pushes us into shock and disbelief, like an unexpected death of someone young.
8. Your grief will likely take longer than you want, and longer than those around you often expect. **Our need for support increases as time passes**, especially the first year or two following the death of someone we loved, and still do love.
9. **Loneliness is a challenge for all bereaved people**; talking and learning how others have dealt with their loss can be an education and guide for our own grief journey.
10. **Some losses are forever.** What bereaved people have taught me over the past seventeen years is that **grief softens and changes**, but often never disappears completely.

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