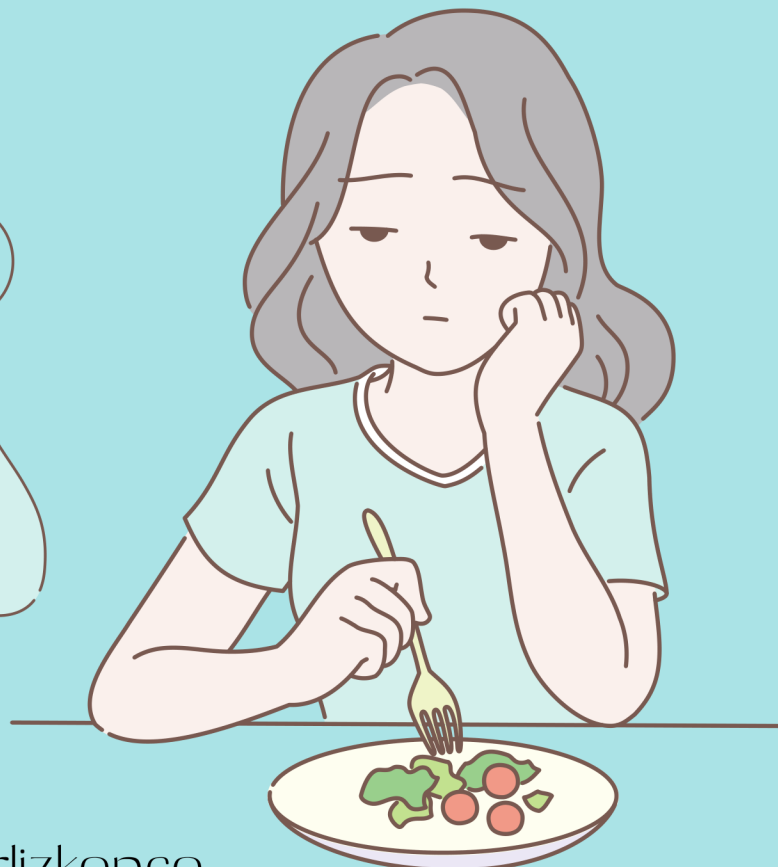


Loss in the time of COVID

DEALING WITH GRIEF WHEN
YOU MAY NOT GET CLOSURE



Losing loved ones during a pandemic

SUCKS. YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO BE AT THEIR BEDSIDE DURING THEIR LAST MOMENTS, OR EVEN BE ABLE TO ATTEND A FUNERAL. THERE IS NO FAMILY GATHERINGS TO CONSOLE ONE ANOTHER.

GRIEVING IS HARD, BUT GRIEVING DURING A PANDEMIC HAS BEEN VERY DIFFERENT, SO I WANTED TO SHARE WHAT I'VE LEARNED FROM GRIEVING DURING COVID.

It's surreal.

WITH NO FUNERALS OR FAMILY GATHERINGS TO TAKE TIME OFF FOR, IT DOESN'T EVEN FEEL REAL.

THERE'S NOTHING "TRADITIONAL" TO ATTEND SO IT'S A BIT DIFFICULT TO FEEL LIKE YOU SHOULD BE SAD.

GOING TO FUNERALS IS SAD. EVERYONE THERE IS SAD. IT HELPS YOU FEEL YOUR FEELS, WHICH INCLUDE SADNESS. WITHOUT THIS PART, I'VE FOUND MYSELF GOING TO WORK THE NEXT DAY LIKE NORMAL BECAUSE "WHAT ELSE WOULD I DO?"

*TIP: TAKE A DAY OFF OF REMOTE WORK ANYWAYS. EVEN IF YOU JUST LOUNGE AROUND THE HOUSE. GIVE YOURSELF SOME TIME TO PROCESS IT

"just wish I could hug you"

THE LACK OF TOUCH BECAUSE OF THE PANDEMIC DOESN'T HELP. HEARING THIS OVER AND OVER WAS REALLY SALT TO THE WOUND. WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE TO HUG MY FAMILY MEMBERS THAT ARE ALSO GRIEVING INSTEAD OF US ALL GRIEVING INDIVIDUALLY.

*TIP: IT'S NOT THE SAME, BUT MAKE THE PHONE CALL OR VIDEO CHAT WITH PEOPLE YOU LOVE ANYWAYS. TEXT EVEN. COMMUNICATE ANYWAYS. JUST KNOW THAT YOU'RE NOT GRIEVING ALONE.

I forget they're gone.

WITHOUT SOME FORMS OF CLOSURE, I'VE FOUND MYSELF FORGETTING MY LOVED ONES ARE GONE. THIS NORMALLY CAN HAPPEN DURING GRIEVING, BUT SINCE WE HAVEN'T SEEN PEOPLE ANYWAYS, IT JUST FEELS LIKE A TYPICAL QUARANTINE.

THINGS WILL REMIND ME OF THEM, AND REALITY COMES CRUSHING DOWN JUST AS HARD AS WHEN I FOUND OUT THEY WERE GONE. THIS USUALLY LEADS TO SPORATIC BREAKDOWNS AND PANIC ATTACKS.

*TIP: WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF REMEMBERING THEY'RE GONE, IT HELPS TO REMEMBER A HAPPY MEMORY OF THEM. IF YOU FIND YOURSELF BEING CRUSHED BY A WAVE OF GRIEF, IT'S OKAY TO JUST RIDE THE WAVE. LET YOURSELF FEEL YOUR FEELS.

I sit with my feelings.

WHEN YOU CAN'T GO ANYWHERE, YOU'RE FORCED TO SIT WITH YOUR FEELINGS. THE SADNESS LINGERS AND IT CAN BE MADDENING.

I'VE FOUND MYSELF WANTING TO TURN TO OLD COPING MECHANISMS LIKE EMOTIONALLY EATING OR DRINKING, LIKE DRINKING A LOT. DEPRESSION REARS IT'S HEAD AND ENCOURAGES YOU TO JUST SLEEP.

*TIP: GET OUTSIDE AND MOVE YOUR BODY. THIS PANDEMIC HAS BEEN MENTALLY HARD, BUT ADDING GRIEF TO IT CAN BE SOUL WRENCHING FOR EVEN THE STRONGEST PERSON. FIND SOME INNER PEACE FROM OUTSIDE.

I'm allowed to have more than one feeling.

YESTERDAY MY HEART FELT PITILESS. SO VAST AND EMPTY YOU COULD HEAR ECHOES. TODAY I HAD TO GO TO WORK AND HOLD IT TOGETHER. I ENDED UP HAVING A GOOD DAY AT WORK. I FELT GUILTY FOR THAT.

I FELT GUILTY FOR NOT CRYING 24/7 BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE THINK GRIEVING IS. IF YOU DON'T PHYSICALLY LOOK LIKE YOU'RE GRIEVING THEN YOU MUST BE OVER IT.

JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT CRYING, DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE NOT GRIEVING. JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE GRIEVING, DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T ALSO FEEL JOY.

*TIP: FEEL ALL YOUR DAMN FEELS. YOU ARE A COMPLEX FLESHBAG OF EMOTIONS. ACCEPT IT.

I am so loved.

ALTHOUGH LOSING A LOVED ONE TO COVID OR DURING A PANDEMIC HAS BEEN DIFFICULT IN SO MANY WAYS, THE OUTPOUR OF LOVE HAS BEEN JUST AS OVERWHELMING.

THE PANDEMIC HAS BROUGHT PEOPLE TOGETHER VIRTUALLY FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD. I'VE MADE FRIENDS IN FRANCE AND GERMANY OVER SOCIAL MEDIA THAT HAVE REACHED OUT. THE BONDS I'VE MADE WITH OTHER PEOPLE WHO ARE GRIEVING DURING THIS PANDEMIC ARE UNLIKE ANY OTHER.

I AM SO LOVED.

*TIP: REACH OUT FOR HELP. VENT TO FRIENDS. VENT TO STRANGERS. WE'RE ALL DYING TO TALK TO ANYONE. THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO LOVE YOU AND WANT TO LISTEN AND BE THERE FOR YOU IN ANY WAY THEY CAN. LET THEM.

Be kind to one another.

WE'RE ALL STRUGGLING IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER DURING THIS PANDEMIC. WE'RE ALL GRIEVING THE LOSS OF LOVED ONES, OR MOMENTS THAT WE WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO, OR LIVES WE COULD'VE BEEN LIVING. BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER.

REACH OUT TO OLD FRIENDS.

TAKE ALL THE DAMN PICTURES.

REMEMBER YOUR PRIORITIES.

Thank You.

TO THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED ME CARRY THIS GRIEF.

IN MEMORY OF MY GODMOTHER ROSA MENDEZ
& MY AUNT CARMELA



IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH GRIEF AND DEPRESSION, KNOW YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION
LIFELINEHOURS: AVAILABLE 24 HOURS.
DIAL 988