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Life Goes on After Loss: Tiny Steps To Work Through Grief

By [Nadia Adalath](#)



“I realized, it is not the time that heals, but what we do within that time that creates positive change.”

~Diane Dettman

Two weeks ago I found out that a friend passed away. He died eight days after my birthday at the age of

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twenty-six, and that fact has been hard to swallow, as I didn't know that my time of celebration would also be a time of grief.

The details surrounding my friend's death are unknown; all I know is that it happened suddenly, and it was a huge shock to me and other friends that knew him. He was my first high school crush. As a fourteen-year-old girl at the time, it was a big deal to me. I really cared about him.

My friend had sent me a Facebook message in March of 2014 stating that we should get together, as he wanted to see how I was doing. I was touched at how caring he was and wanted to know what was going on in his life, so I said yes.

We talked for hours that day, and I brought him up to speed on what had been going on in my life. When the get together ended the last thing he said to me was, "I wish you the best, and if you need anything let me know."

He walked out the door, and that was the last time I saw him.

When I first got the news of my friend's passing I didn't know what to think, what to feel, what to say. I just sat there staring at my computer screen, hoping it was a bad joke. It didn't feel real at first, and when it did sink in the floodgates that held my tears back for a while opened. It was like a punch in the gut.

Days after I heard the news I just didn't know what to do with myself. I let myself go for a while. I lied down on my bed in the fetal position staring at

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nothing. At some points I was dry-eyed, and then I would start to cry, wailing almost.

I heard a sound pass through my lips that I never heard before. It was the sound of heartbreak. I wondered: “How does life continue after this?”

I got frustrated that I didn't know how to answer that question, and a week later it hit me.

Life does continue, and it gets better with time.

My grief comes in waves, and this experience has been teaching me how to surf those waves as gently and as lovingly possible. If you're also grieving a loss, this might help.

Acknowledge your feelings.

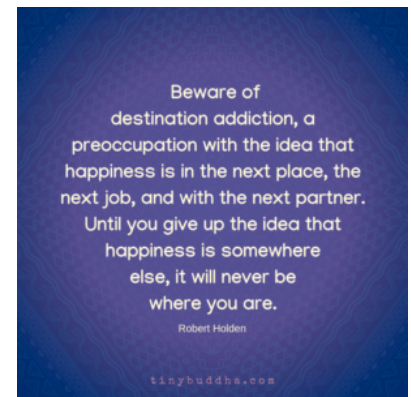
It was scary and painful to acknowledge every emotion that came with my grief. I **felt angry**, sad, and went through a depression. I wanted to crawl into a hole somewhere because I was so overwhelmed by my pain.

I felt like I was losing who I was a little. I had to find a healthy way to address my feelings and slowly start picking up the pieces of my life and putting them back together into a stronger version of me. Once I became honest with myself and acknowledged my emotions, a weight released off my heart.

Being honest with myself and others also helped me rebuild connections with friends who are sharing this grief with me.

While I still deal with the same feelings, it is slowly getting better.

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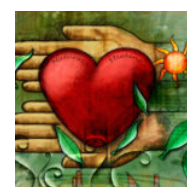
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If you are going through a difficult time, know that it's okay to acknowledge your feelings. If you don't feel comfortable talking it out, grab a journal and quietly be honest with yourself.

Know that it's okay not to feel 100 percent right away.

As days pass I still don't feel 100 percent, but that's okay. Slowly, I have started to do the things I enjoy. Starting small is key to [rebuilding your life](#) and getting back on track. The other day I went for a walk to clear my head, and even though it was only for a few minutes, it helped.

Take care of your physical body. It's just as important as taking care of your emotional well-being.

I lost my appetite for a while. I didn't want to eat or do anything productive. Then I realized I was hurting myself, so I slowly began to eat a little more and began taking care of my body again.

I had a teacher who once said, "You look good, you feel good." She was right. Once I began to [take care of myself](#) again, I started to feel a change in my mood. I needed to take care of myself so that I could be there for those that need me.

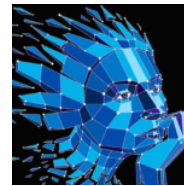
Be patient with yourself and others.

Oftentimes we have loved ones who don't understand our grief, especially if they are not going through it with us. Other times we have people who share our grief but go through it differently. In both of these instances it's



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best to remain patient. Be patient with yourself as you grieve and be patient with those around you.

It also helps to tell your support system what you need. Being clear about what you need helps you get the best support possible. For example, I told my friends that I needed company so I wouldn't feel alone with my sadness, a shoulder to cry on, and a warm hug.

Realize it's okay to be human.

The grieving process is a time of growth, and it's okay to feel like you're moving backward every now and again. It just means you're human, and that you are working through your emotions.

—

I've realized that life does continue, and loss gives us lessons if we're open to them. Something good can come from the pain. The lessons may not come to us right away, but when they do our whole perspective changes.

Going through this grief has taught me to be a kinder and better friend and to enjoy each and every day to the fullest. My goal is to leave a lasting impression in everything that I do.

This article is my love letter to those that have lost someone dear to them. If that's you, know that you are not alone.

Woman by the sea silhouette via Shutterstock

