

LET & ABLE Newsletter

Issue 96 ... January 2023

As free-will moral beings, there comes a time when we should stand for something. Our nation is founded and built on historical events and causes that have changed the western world's fabric.

Just as Ronald Reagan, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and John F. Kennedy stood at critical times, right now you and I must stand too. By embracing every moment and responding to internal cues to make a difference, every single one of us plays a part in the unfolding of future history in our communities and country.

Now is the right time for those of us who have been comfortable, silent, unsure, and too busy, to take a stand on small and large meaningful issues that have the potential to be far reaching. Currently, a true and vibrant call to make a difference in our cities, school systems, workplaces, families, and churches, is going forth to ordinary people (like you and I) who care and make themselves available.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with standing for what is right, even if you must stand alone. Those that stand tall cast a defining shadow that cannot be ignored. I am personally challenging you to identify a cause that you take a stand for.

Will you stand up and make a difference? I will. Will you be the one that helps move the pendulum of change forward? I will. Will you be the change agent that has been sought for years? I will.

Recco

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Gone But Not Gone, Coping with Loss/Grief

by Recco Santee Richardson, Ph.D., LPC

Definitions

Because it helps ensure clarity and understanding, it is good practice to begin discussions with definitions. The below basic words/definitions are important when discussing grief, loss, bereavement, trauma, and change from a practical, theoretical, and spiritual perspective.

- 1). Gone:** To no longer exist. To be carried away or absorbed.
- 2). Bereavement:** The intense emotional response to losing something or someone. It is a natural response to being deprived of opportunities to no longer enjoy something or someone.
- 3). Loss:** To no longer have. The realization of not being able to maintain and keep something that was pleasant and beneficial.
- 4). Grief:** A deep sorrow caused by troubles and annoyances that takes someone or something from us.
- 5). Mourning:** Is to lament and rehearse things repeatedly. It is an intense feeling of regret and remorse due to a death or a significant loss.

How To Live with The Gone

For many of us, when death, loss, change, trauma, and other life changers happens, our first thoughts are to get through the funeral or past the initial shock. An abundance of experiences in life can take something away from us (*see chart #1*).

Human nature tells us to block out our emotions and power through things that promote ideas of being fragile, weak, vulnerable, incomplete, at-risk, and falling apart. I would not call the stated denial or numbness, rather it is

This Article Discusses

Loss/Grief

Coping Skills

The Real Enemy

Life Management

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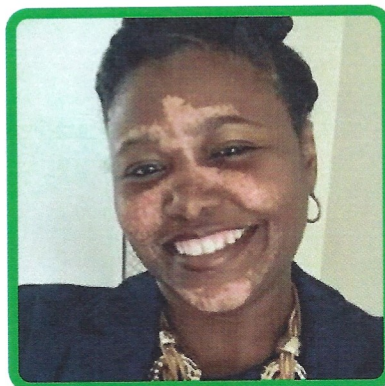
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a coping skill that helps us get through the soon major decisions and recent events surrounding who and what is now gone.

Chart #1 Experiences That Take from Us

Death/Dying	Marital Divorce	Loss of Job
Relocate/Move	Birth of Child	Poor Decisions
Rape/Assault	Major Failures	Bankruptcy
Deep Betrayal	Illness/Pain	Abandoned

I call the fore-mentioned the need and stage of “living with what was taken from us as gone, but not gone.” Reality eventually sits in when our minds, physical body, and finances are impacted in a negative way by the person and things that we loved being gone. We must now figure out a way to move on, make it, live, sort out life, and remain afloat emotionally.

“We cannot allow enemies to run rampant in our thoughts” Dr. Recco

Our New Struggle & Enemies

It does not take long to realize that the life we once lived has changed. While there are many things that we will be faced with that are out of our control, there are things that we can control. What we can control is our responses and expectations. Specifically, we can control how we deal with the resulting sense of judgment, condemnation, shame/guilt that often accompanies death, rape, assault, and various loses.

We cannot. I repeat, we cannot allow the stated struggles and enemies to run rampant in our thoughts and relegate us to feeling less than, at fault, inferior, inadequate, and a burden. Below are ways to address and cope with the forementioned.

1). Judgement: Regardless of how things went down regarding you know what, we cannot feel judged. At the time that things happened, what we said and did is just that and nothing more. The allowing of others (and ourselves) to judge us, cast doubt on our personage, question our intentions, crucify our integrity, twist the

truth, and demand some type of retribution or penance is not right and not fair. It is an unacceptable burden to bear. To be more pointed, we're to let no man or situation judge us. Period! It is not their job, and they have no authority to do so. Tell them to keep their unhealthy opinions to themselves. Tell them to try to live up to the standard that they are trying to set for us.

2). Condemnation: The word condemnation means to not be fit for usage of any purpose. It is a low state of being that is an alert to others to avoid all contact with the condemned. As we cope with and move on from the trauma associated with what is now gone and no longer part of our lives, we must not feel condemned, useless, unfit, worthless, and eye sore.

Our mantra and personal affirmations should be full of life and announce to the world that we matter and are capable, valued, more than enough, fortified, essential, appreciated, necessary, worthy, and still important to the world and others.

To be free and liberated from condemnation, we must walk in newness, abide in the truth, hold fast to our personal convictions, not settle for less, live a life above reproach, renew our minds, focus on the positives, complete task, and have a good profession.

3). Shame/Guilt: The relentless works of shame/guilt can be deep and far reaching. It leaves us feeling and believing that everyone knows about our unfortunate experience that we are responsible for. An experience that now leaves us damaged, handicapped, questionable, and not at full capacity.

We do not have to be defined and labeled by what happened and traumatized us. Rather, we can take our shame/guilt and let it promote our progress. This can be done by being open and honest about things, displaying our sense of humanity, being humble and filled with humility, accepting the grace and re-do that is available, and feeling good about what we can do and what we cannot do.

**"Our mantra and affirmations should be full of life"
Dr. Recco**



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Managing The Gone

It is well documented in current literature the several ways of managing the gone and other ideas associated with the loss of a loved one, divorce, rape, and serious failures. Below are concepts that can help manage the gone and keep us moving in a positive way.

1). Mourn: We dearly miss what was taken from us. The act of accepting that it and they are gone can move us to mourn. The avoidance of mourning and misunderstanding is not healthy. Why? Because there is value in mourning. From the act and place of mourning, we can receive comfort.

The longer it takes us to properly mourn, the longer it will take for us to experience comfort. When mourning runs its course, we can recall and experience the joys of what used to be and what was lost (but is not gone). Mourning helps settle things within us and can build a foundation of sincere appreciation and gladness for what we once embraced with happiness.

Lastly, the process of mourning can help our heart and soul heal, find places of peace and wisdom, sooth our sorrows and trepidations, dry our tears, bind up the pain and promote a new us.

2). Pace: We must remember to move at our own pace and not rush to address and deal with the gone. There is no period or time limit as to how long or short moving on should take. It would do us all well to stop placing a time stamp on when we should finally get it together and get over what happened.

Also, it should not matter to others how long it takes us. If they do not agree with our pace, they can remove themselves from the conversations and our lives.

3). Trust Yourself: We cannot cast away our confidence and trust in ourselves. While others may let us down and hurl painful assaults our way, we must stay true to ourselves. Our goal should be to always trust ourselves

**"Mourning helps
settle things within
us" Dr. Recco**

and to remove barriers that promote distrust. At the end of the day, all we have is ourselves and what we believe to be true about us.

4). Stay Busy: When dealing with the gone, sulking, and taking on the role of the victim is unavoidable. It is part of the process of becoming healthy and whole again. To avoid waddling in everything that is wrong and horrible, it is important to get and stay busy.

Being busy does not have to be expensive or take up an entire day. Rather, it is the act of doing things that we enjoy and that add value to our day.

Remain Hopeful: Devastated is an understatement of how we feel when life goes wrong and we must put the pieces back together again. In the face of adversity and chilling outcomes it is easy to lose hope. When things settle down, our hope must remain anchored in something.

The act of hoping is an effective way to stay above ground in who we are and what we believe. When our hope is deferred or shattered, confusion and downtrodden arrives soon. The stated cannot be allowed.

To remain hopeful, we must focus on higher thoughts and callings, the rewards, prizes at the end of the race, how far we have come thus far, and time-tested truths regarding overcoming, winning, being at peace, successful living, and joy.

**"Being hopeful is an
effective way to
stay above ground"
Dr. Recco**

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