

# Books About Grief

*Companion Through the Darkness: Inner Dialogues on Grief* by Stephanie Ericsson

Combining excerpts from her own journal and brief essays, this book intimately legitimized the complex and often taboo emotions we all feel when loss transforms our lives. Each short, but profound, chapter offers readers lasting support and normality of the grief process while learning to live with their losses.

*Companioning the Bereaved: A Soulful Guide for Caregivers* by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

This book advocates a model of "companioning" the bereaved, acknowledging that grief forever changes or transforms the mourner's world view. Companioning is not about assessing, analyzing, fixing or resolving another's grief. Instead, it is about being totally present to the mourner, even being a temporary guardian of his soul.

*Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner, Fourth Edition* by J. William Worden, PhD

In this highly anticipated fourth edition to *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy*, the gold standard of grief therapy handbooks, Dr. Worden presents his most recent thinking on bereavement drawn from extensive research, clinical work, and the best of the new literature.

*Grieving the Death of a Pet* by Betty Carmack

Carmack draws from her experience of counseling more than two thousand people who have lost a beloved pet to create this book as a kind of pet-loss support group to counter "a world that reminds us repeatedly that grief for an animal doesn't count as much as grief for a person." Poignant and sometimes heartrending, filled with stories of love and loss as well as thoughts on faith.

*Healing After Loss, Daily Meditations For Working Through Grief* by M.W. Hickman

For those who have suffered the loss of a loved one, here are strength and thoughtful words to inspire and comfort. Full of thoughtful reflections, wise words and healing affirmations.

*How to Go on Living When Someone You Love Dies* by Therese A. Rando, PhD

Mourning the death of a loved one is a process all of us will go through at one time or another. But wherever the death is sudden or anticipated, few of us are prepared for it or for the grief it brings. This book leads you gently through the painful but necessary process of grieving and helps you find the best way for yourself. Author of *Loss And Anticipatory Grief*.

*Journeying East: Conversations on Aging and Dying* by Victoria Jean Dimidjian

Buddhist spiritual leaders discuss aging and dying, including original interviews with Ram Dass, Frank Ostaseski, Norman Fisher, Thich Nhat Hanh, Joan Halifax, Rodney Smith, and others – each of whom has understood and met the challenges of later life. Their intellectual and spiritual wisdom, leavened with humor, will comfort anyone dealing with the realities of

aging and death. Contains 9 meditations on aging and death, and a reading list.

*Learning to Say Goodbye: When a Parent Dies* by Eda Le Shan

Good for an older child or adult. Beautifully written from a subjective viewpoint. This book shows how death is perceived when one is “protected” by others. It explores many myths about death and dying.

*Light in Blue Shadows* by Edie Hartshorne

Through the tragic and unexpected loss of her eldest son, Edie Hartshorne is guided by music, spiritual exploration, and a sensitivity for nature to discover the hidden radiance of her own inner strength. Her transformational journey through grief unfolds like a work of art, inspiring us to remain open to kindness and compassion even in the midst of suffering.

*Part of Me Died Too: Stories of Creative Survival Among Bereaved Children and Teenagers* by Virginia Lynn Fry

Presents ten graceful studies of children and teenagers in mourning, along with “creative survival strategies” which outline journal exercises and other projects to help channel grief; also includes an epilogue of visits by each of the mourners some years after their losses, thus implicitly demonstrating to the reader that sorrow can indeed be integrated.

*Unattended Sorrow* by Stephen Levine

Unattended sorrow is unresolved grief that has never been given a chance to heal. With poetic and loving language, Levine illustrates that when we confront the sorrows we’ve endured with mercy and self-acceptance, we can travel a smoother path to healing the heart. Includes principles of Buddhism as well as meditation and relaxation techniques.

*The Courage to Grieve* by Judy Tatelbaum

This book about surviving grief offers the reader comfort and inspiration. Each of us will face some loss, sorrow and disappointment in our lives, and *The Courage to Grieve* provides the specific help we need to enable us to face our grief fully and to recover and grow from the experience. Although the book emphasizes the response to the death of a loved one, it can also be helpful with every kind of loss.

*The Mourning Handbook* by Helen Fitzgerald

This book is written as a companion to those mourners in need of practical and emotional assistance during the trying times before and after the death of a loved one. Written and organized in an accessible style punctuated by real stories of people who have experienced every kind of loss. The author gives special attention to the complex emotions that can accompany especially traumatic situations.

*The Soul in Grief: Life, Death & Transformation* by Robert Romanyshyn

In this quiet book of reflection, the author beckons the reader to do the psychological work grief demands: letting go of previous attitudes and assumptions, giving up control of experience and emotions, and giving in to the soul's impetus toward healing itself.

*The Year of Magical Thinking* by Joan Didion

This powerful book is the author's attempt to make sense of the "weeks and then months that cut loose any fixed idea I ever had about death, about illness...about marriage and children and memory...about the shallowness of sanity, about life itself." The author spares nothing in describing her confusion, grief, and derangement, with clarity and honesty.

*When Bad Things Happen to Good People* by Harold S. Kushner

This little book was written as a way to bring solace and hope to Rabbi Kushner after the death of his teenage son. Over the last twenty years it has comforted millions of readers who also have been hurt by life and seek to find the resources to cope when tragedy strikes. This book is for those who want to believe in God's goodness and fairness, but find it hard because of the things that have happened.

*When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times* by Pema Chodron

Advice about how Buddhism helps readers to cope with the grim realities of modern life, including fear, despair, rage and the feeling that we are not in control of our lives. Chodron orients readers and gives them language with which to shape their thinking about the ordinary and extraordinary traumas of modern life.

*Words to Comfort, Words to Heal* Compiled by Juliet Maybey

Drawn from the works of poets, writers, philosophers and sacred literature, this inspirational anthology celebrates lives that have passed and offers consolation to those left behind.

Also see [www.compassionbooks.com](http://www.compassionbooks.com) for books, CDs, and videos dealing with losses of all kinds, for people of all ages.

Compiled by J. Block, rev. December 2011