

LIFT *your* SPIRITS

Grieving and believing



Why the afterlife can help ease the pain of loss

It's a part of life we can't escape, but nothing is worse than the pain of losing someone you love.

However, studies have shown that grief can be easier to bear if you believe in an afterlife. Intuitive grief healer Pippa Neve says, 'Whilst believing in the afterlife doesn't stop us from feeling the immediate loss of our loved one, it gives us the greatest comfort that they are still with us in spirit.'

Many people report signs and symbols that help them feel a connection with a loved one and bring solace – a white feather, a familiar scent, or some other strange coincidence that has meaning for them.

Pippa, who has worked with cancer patients and their families, believes this is normal. 'In my experience, receiving

signs such as feathers or hearing special songs at particular times can bring people enormous comfort that their loved ones are still with them and are OK in spirit.'

SIGNS OF LOVE

When her father passed away, Pippa found comfort herself from one of these 'signs'. 'The day he died, both my brother and I were in shock and, as we were heading home, we saw a pure white cat. I don't know why but I told my brother that it was Dad giving us a sign and for us not to worry. Three days later my brother texted me to tell me that there was a white cat sitting at the side of the field as he walked his dog. I replied, "Dad's just letting you know that he's where he needs to be and that he loves you!"'

There's nothing wrong with visiting a medium or psychic either, says Pippa. 'I believe this can give people the peace of mind they need, particularly in the initial stages of grief while they are trying to wrap their head and their heart around their loss.'

'You don't stop loving someone just because they have died. The soul goes on and many of us need help in connecting with our loved ones as they move into spirit. We seek reassurance, we seek guidance and we need help with this, and that's OK – in fact, it's more than OK!'



And if you find yourself talking – even out loud – to the person you've lost, don't feel embarrassed. 'I talk to my guides and angels aloud, so why shouldn't people chat to departed loved ones too?' says Pippa. 'Just because the person is no longer present in the physical realm doesn't mean they aren't with you, listening to every word you say.'

Whatever you do, do not underestimate the wide-ranging impact such a loss can

Make it easier on yourself



Grieving can be lonely. 'As death continues to be pushed into the shadows, finding a shoulder to lean on is becoming more and more challenging,' says Corinne Laan, whose new book *The Art of Grieving: Gentle Self-care Practices to Heal a Broken Heart* is packed with simple tips like the ones below, to help you through it.

DO A SOUL DANCE RITUAL

If you're feeling really down, get up off the sofa or out of your chair and move your

body! Movement can shift your mood and uplift your spirit, even bring a spark of joy into your heart and soul. Put your favourite music on and start moving with the rhythm of the beat. Move your body slowly to start with and then allow yourself to be free. Dance around the room until you feel uplifted and your mood has improved.

WRITE IT DOWN

If it's difficult to talk, or you have nobody who really understands, why not start a grief journal, capturing your thoughts and your



You aren't alone

Other people's experiences can be really helpful when you're grieving

GRIEFCAST
An award-winning show in which presenter Carlad Lloyd persuades comedians, including David Baddiel and Robert Webb, to share their personal experiences of grief, with quite a few laughs along the way.



LISTEN

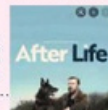


TERRIBLE, THANKS FOR ASKING

Real people share their honest feelings about hard times with presenter Nora McInerney who lost her father and husband within weeks of each other to cancer.

AFTERLIFE

Experts agree this comedy drama by Ricky Gervais offers a real and beautiful portrayal of the grieving process that also happens to be very funny. **Netflix**



THIS IS US

All six series of this addictive family drama starring Mandy Moore are filled with compassion and understanding of loss - watch out for a mesmerising though heart-breaking depiction of the afterlife in the final series. **Amazon Prime**



WATCH

UP

After the death of his wife an old man goes on an adventure in his flying house. This lovely animated award-winning film is particularly good for helping children who are grieving. **Disney+**



READ



LOST WITHOUT YOU - LOVING AND LOSING TANYA

In his best-selling intimate memoir, Winnie Jones opens up about the devastating experience of losing his wife and soulmate of 27 years to cancer. (£8.99, Seven Dials.)



have. 'Grief affects us physically, mentally and spiritually,' says grief specialist and natural healer Corinne Laan. 'Don't feel pressured by others to bounce back. Grieving is a slow process which requires all the time it needs and there are no short-cuts or quick fixes.'

BE HONEST

Corinne says it's important to keep family and friends in the loop too. 'Let them know how you're feeling and communicate

your needs honestly and respectfully,' she says.

And don't feel guilty if you sometimes feel happy. 'Sorrow and joy can co-exist,' says Corinne. 'You can miss your loved one and hold on to the belief that you will meet again, and still live a fulfilling life. One does not necessarily cancel the other.'

'The best thing is to always follow your heart and do what feels right for you. I promise that in time it will feel less overwhelming.'

hopes and dreams on paper? There is no right or wrong way to do this, it is unique and personal. When words are not enough or are difficult to record, draw, scribble or use collage. You can try inserting photos too.

TRY CRYSTAL THERAPY

Quartz can channel any energy and is very good for healing and balancing your emotions. It can help to focus your mind as well as remove any negative energy.

Citrine, a variety of Quartz that can be yellow, golden or lemon in colour, helps to boost self-

esteem and get rid of emotional toxins such as anger.

Jade can help with grounding and enhances confidence, as well as promoting emotional balance. It's also excellent for inner and outer peace and for wisdom.

Rose Quartz has a very calming effect, helping with releasing grief, stress, anger, fear, guilt and emotional wounds. It enhances forgiveness and is a great crystal for love.

And finally, if you're feeling angry or depressed, try Peridot, which is good for clearing stress.

If you aren't coping or need more support, please see your GP.

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Feature: Kate Carr - Credits: The Art of Grieving - Great Self-Care Practices to Heal a Broken Heart, £16.99, Acropolis Publishing, @ganzaccard, Photos: Shutterstock