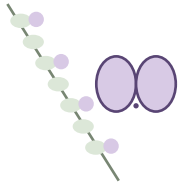


DIFFERENT KINDS OF GRIEF

AMBIVALENT GRIEF

When Love and Loss Carry Conflicting Feelings



WHEN GRIEF HOLDS MORE THAN ONE TRUTH

Ambivalent grief can arise when the relationship with the person who died included both love and pain, closeness and distance, comfort and conflict, or years of unresolved feelings. After the death, you may grieve the person, the relationship you had, and the relationship you wished could have been.

LOVE AND HURT CAN COEXIST You may miss someone deeply while also remembering ways the relationship was difficult, disappointing, distant, or painful.	RELIEF MAY BE PART OF GRIEF If the relationship involved caregiving, conflict, addiction, illness, or ongoing stress, relief may appear alongside sadness. Relief does not erase love.	UNFINISHED BUSINESS A death can end the possibility of an apology, reconciliation, explanation, or conversation you hoped might happen someday.	GUILT CAN FOLLOW MIXED FEELINGS You may judge yourself for anger, relief, resentment, or even for not feeling the grief you expected. Feelings are not a measure of your love.
GRIEVING WHAT YOU WANTED Sometimes the deepest grief is for the relationship that never fully became what you needed or hoped it would be.	MEMORIES MAY CONFLICT Warm memories and painful memories can surface together. You do not have to choose one version of the relationship as the only truth.	OTHERS MAY NOT UNDERSTAND People who knew only one side of the relationship may expect you to grieve differently. Your experience belongs to you.	MAKING ROOM FOR THE WHOLE STORY Healing can include acknowledging both what was meaningful and what was difficult without minimizing either one.

Remember This

I can love them and still acknowledge the hurt.	Relief does not make me uncaring.	I can grieve what never happened.	Conflicting feelings can both be true.
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GENTLE WAYS TO CARE FOR YOURSELF

Write two honest sentences: "What I miss is..." and "What was difficult was..." You do not need to make one cancel out the other. If unresolved feelings feel overwhelming, a grief-informed counselor or trusted support person may help you explore them safely.

Ambivalent grief does not mean your relationship was meaningless. It means the relationship was human, layered, and important enough to leave more than one feeling behind.

"You do not have to simplify a complicated relationship in order to grieve it."

— *Mourning Discoveries*

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