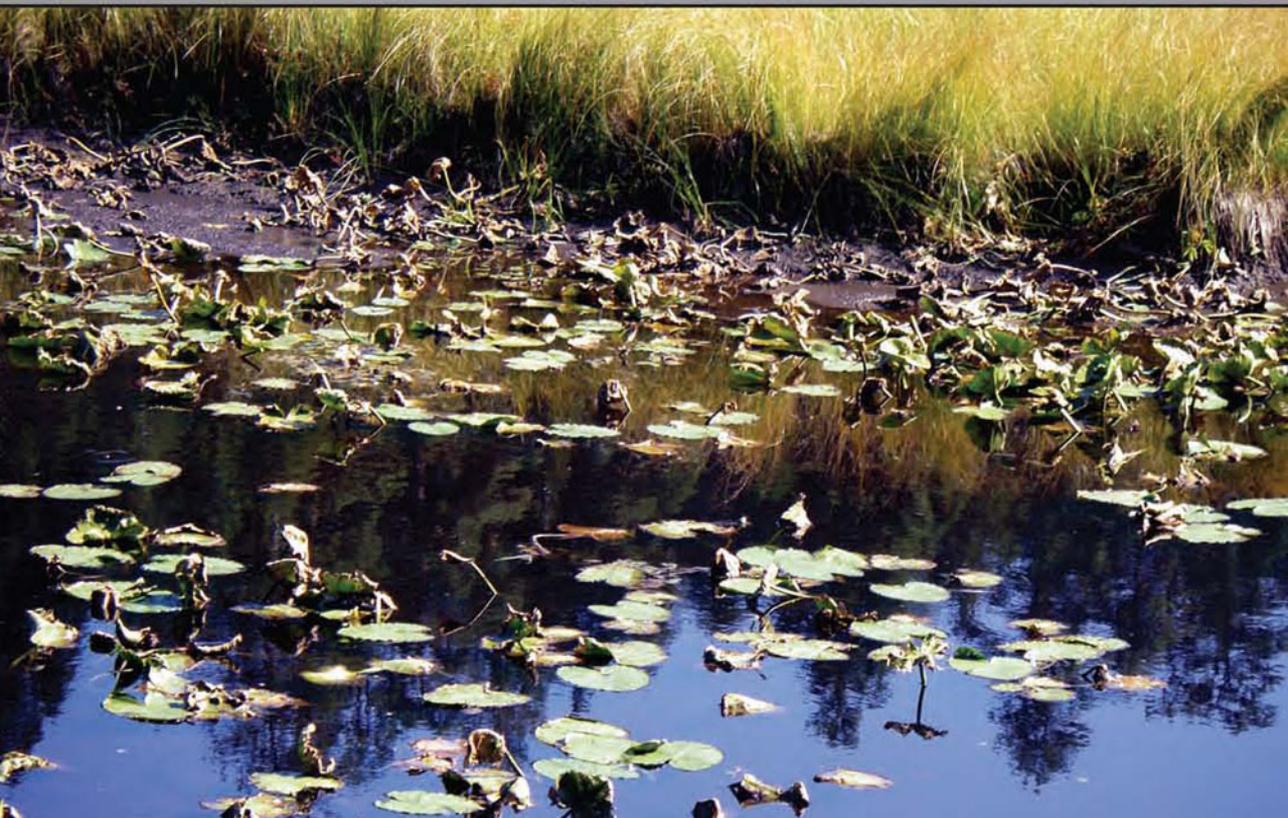


THE NATURE OF GRIEF

Photographs & Words for Reflection & Healing By Rebecca S. Hauder, R.N., M.Ed.



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Note: This book is intended as a guidebook only, not as a medical or psychological manual. The information given here is not intended as a substitute for any treatment that may have been prescribed by your health care provider. If you suspect that you have a medical or psychological problem, we urge you to seek competent medical or psychiatric help.

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“There is no grief that time does not lessen and soften.”

—Cicero



“Love knows not its depth until the hour of separation.”
—Kahlil Gibran

1. Provide Gentle Self-Care

Following the death of a loved one, there is often a flurry of activity, with friends and family coming together, food delivered, and services to arrange. Later, business matters and thank-you notes beg for attention. You may go through the motions detached, numb, and with a sense of disbelief. This allows you to absorb the depth and impact of your loss in small doses.

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All the commotion and upheaval produces exhaustion, made worse if you had been the caregiver during a long illness. Difficulty sleeping and eating are the norm, as is trouble focusing. Grief does involve many dimensions of life!

When grief is fresh, don't try to go it alone. Ask others for assistance with tasks or to simply be present. If you're not hungry at mealtime, eat one item of food every few hours, and drink plenty of fluids. Before bed, take a soothing bath or sip a cup of warm milk. Know that the grief journey won't always be this difficult. You will eventually adjust and heal, but it will be in your own unique way and time.



“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.” —C.S. Lewis

10. Search for Meaning

Life often seems less certain after the death of someone near. A world that seemed relatively secure may now appear shaken and in disarray. As a result, you may wonder what significance and purpose life now holds.

You may be asking questions like these: “Who am I apart from my loved one?” “What do I have to look forward to?” “Where will I find meaning?” “How will I ever be able to love again?” Your life has changed and it’s quite legitimate to have doubts and uncertainties.

Allow the questions—you may even want to jot them down—but don’t pressure yourself to find the answers right now. Direction for the next chapter will emerge slowly and over time. For now, let yourself live with a heart and mind that is open to many possibilities, but also present in the activities of today—whether reading this book, getting dressed, doing the dishes, talking to a friend, or walking the dog.