



COPING WITH LOSS:
From Heartache to Healing

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Table of Contents

Introduction

↪ 1 ↪

Facing Loss

↪ 3 ↪

Living with Loss

↪ 9 ↪

Transcending Loss

↪ 17 ↪

Introduction

Losing someone dear to us is one of life's passages that few of us are able to avoid. And though the event is common, our response to it can be quite singular—or, at least, *feel* that way.

There are books that will tell you how to travel through your grief; this tiny book will give you a glimpse into the journeys taken by others before you.

Across the ages and the continents, these observations come from people whose grief is fresh—and from those who remark on their sorrow from the vantage point of reflection. Some may challenge your own beliefs, while others will seem to know exactly the thoughts and feelings you harbor.

Though this book is neatly divided into three sections depicting the basic path from “heartache to healing,” it needn’t be read in any particular order. You may prefer to begin at the end, for instance—delving into passages that describe the transcendence of loss and the hope offered by the future. Or you may prefer to skip around, randomly alighting on the passages that speak to the heart of your experience.

Whatever you choose, may your personal trek from heartache to healing be guided by faith and understanding.

Facing Loss



Death is only a portal, an opening to another type of life, a life that we can't explain or understand.

—Dr. Frank Raila, WWII veteran
and neuroradiologist



When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you; and through
the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not
be burned, and the flame shall not consume
you . . . for I am with you.

—Isaiah



An ungrieved loss remains forever alive
in our unconscious, which has no sense
of time.

—Bertha G. Simos, psychotherapist

Living with Loss



If the future seems overwhelming, remember that it comes one moment at a time.

—Beth Mende Conny, inspirational writer



In order to get from what was to what will be, you have to go through what *is*.

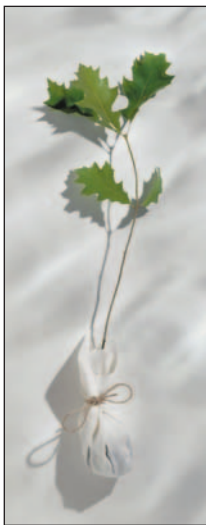
—Author unknown



Sorrow comes in great waves . . . but it rolls over us, and though it may almost smother us it leaves us on the spot and we know that if it is strong we are stronger inasmuch as it passes and we remain. It wears us, uses us, but we wear it and use it in return; and it is blind, whereas we after a manner see.

—Henry James, novelist

Transcending Loss



If you love someone with your whole heart it is unbearable to have them die. And because you can't bear it, you don't let it happen. Without even thinking about it you, the one who didn't die, change, enlarge your nature so that there is room for them too, and they go on living in you and through you.

—William Maxwell, editor

In our sleep, Pain that cannot forget
Falls drop by drop upon the Heart
And in our Despair, against our Will
Comes Wisdom through the . . . Grace
of God.

—Aeschylus, dramatist



[Y]ou will be not cured, but . . . one day—
an idea that will horrify you now—this
intolerable misfortune will become a blessed
memory of a being who will never again
leave you.

—Marcel Proust, in *Letters*