

Librarian's Shelf
by Rachelle McPhillips

Resources for Coping with Loss

Some subjects are difficult to discuss. Grief is one of those. Whether you're struggling with loss or if you know someone who is, the Columbus Public Library has several resources to help.

While we might grieve the same loss with others, grief is personal and different people will experience and express it in different ways. Kenneth J. Doka discusses this in his book, "Grief Is a Journey: Finding Your Path through Loss." Doka's readers will find a new way of looking at grief as an "ongoing journey" rather than an illness from which one recovers.

In addition to grief related to death and dying, Doka looks at other types of loss like divorce, infertility, and job loss. "Grief Is a Journey" also offers strategies and support for all types of loss, including death by suicide or alcoholism.

Understanding and coping with death that is stigmatized is the focus of "Bruised & Wounded: Struggling to Understand Suicide" by Ronald Rolheiser. This book offers a compassionate perspective that aims to help the grieving as well as those who seek to understand this sensitive topic. Rolheiser writes that following a death by suicide, "the goodness of that life and heart should not be judged by the circumstances of that death. Death caught that person on a down bounce."

Kate Inglis is a talented writer and speaker who has done extensive grief and healing related work. "Notes for the Everlost: A Field Guide to Grief" is a biographical account of losing a child. A review from Library Journal says, "Inglis freely expresses her innermost thoughts and rages, thus bonding with those who have experienced similar sorrows, making her narrative particularly effective and compelling."

Inglis offers suggestions for bereaved parents who may need help navigating conversations with friends and family who mean well but might be missing the mark. For those well-meaning family and friends wanting to help the bereaved, Kelsey Crowe and Emily McDowell offer "There Is No Good Card for This: What to Say and Do When Life Is Scary, Awful, and Unfair to People You Love." This illustrated guide provides sample dialog and exercises to practice being "the best friend you can to someone in need."

"After Life: Ways We Think about Death" by Merrie-Ellen Wilcox can help young people in grades five and up understand death and dying. This book offers matter-of-fact scientific knowledge about death as well as different beliefs and customs from several cultures. Wilcox, a hospice worker, offers support for young people who are grieving, and helps others understand the people in their lives who are coping with loss.

For younger children grappling with loss, Christine Harder Tangvald offers a Christian perspective for grieving in "Someone I Love Died." Molly Carlile's "Sometimes Life Sucks: When Someone You Love Dies" is a resource for teens and for adults helping teens deal with grief.

Through Nebraska Overdrive Libraries, library patrons can check out electronic resources on this subject, as well. "The End of Normal: A Wife's Anguish, A Widow's New Life" by Stephanie Madoff Mack, "Everything Happens for a Reason and Other Lies I've Loved" by Kate Bowler, and "Stunned by Grief: Remapping Your Life When Loss Changes Everything" by Judy Brizendine are just three examples of books available for reading on your computer, smartphone, or tablet.

For help accessing any of these resources, visit the library or call us at 402-564-7116 opt. 2.