

When you've experienced a great loss, you know that life will never be the same. You don't want to be paralyzed by grief - you want to heal and experience joy and love - but how do you do that while still honoring the great pain and the absence of someone you love?

THIS IS SUCKER PUNCHED

Friends come to me pretty frequently saying they'd like to like tea, but they don't know where to start. I always recommend that people try a few different things - a strong black tea, some herbal teas, and green, white, oolong, and rooibos teas. But it's overwhelming to stand in the tea aisle and figure out which boxes are worth trying and which just make hot brown water. Atlas Tea Club has the perfect solution: a monthly tea subscription featuring all different kinds of tea from all over the world! Each delivery comes with two award-winning, ethically sourced teas and instructions on exactly how to make them. You'll also receive a connection to the history, culture, and community that makes your delicious daily cup possible. For more information and to subscribe, check out BeckyLMcCoy.com/Atlas

I get so mad when people use the phrase "moving on" when it comes to healing from grief. You don't move on from your person (as if you could). They played a role in your life and you'll carry them with you forever.

Besides...a loss of any kind, whether a person, a job, a home, a friendship, or a dream...changes you. You can't be the person you were before the loss. To "move on" would be like pretending like they never existed and that's cruel (as well as super unhealthy).

I don't think people say, "it's time to move on," with the implication that you should forget your person or pretend the loss never happened. "Moving on" from grief is one of those red flag phrases that tells me the person I'm talking to is eager to avoid the realities of grief. They're uncomfortable with the thought of grief and upset that you have been hurt so deeply.

I think what they mean to say is, “I want to see you well. I miss who you were. I wish you didn’t have to carry this burden.” Unfortunately, they express it in a way that prioritizes their comfort over your healing.

The burden of grief is real and heavy. And we can’t move on from it or leave it behind. It’s something we carry with us. That doesn’t mean we don’t heal. It doesn’t mean we won’t try new things or return to old things or be present, undistracted by the weight of grief. But we are fundamentally different than we were before loss.

I want to pause for a minute to clarify something. Grief and loss are words we use when we talk about the literal death of someone we love, but they aren’t limited to that specific kind of loss. People who are estranged from loved ones have experienced a great loss. Those who have been foreclosed on or lost a home to a fire are grieving. If you’ve ever been let go from a job you needed or asked for distance from a friend you love, you know that the pain of loss and grief are very real. A break-up, a cross-country move, and a graduation are all things that can be good and healthy and what you know is right, but can still carry the grief of what was and what will not be. When I talk about grief, I mean all of these things. Your grief isn’t any less significant because it wasn’t a person. It’s not any less painful if it wasn’t a literal death of a loved one. If it hurts, it hurts.

We carry our losses and our grief with us. And, yes, sometimes they get really really heavy. But we get stronger. Not that we get stronger so we can carry more pain or cope with more loss. We get stronger in empathy, in tenderness, and in kindness, to each other and ourselves.

I don’t think I want to go back to being the version of me I was before my husband died. Or even before my dad died. Does it hurt when I’m reminded that they can’t know the current version of me, the one I’m so proud of? Absolutely. I truly hate that that’s true. But I have become a version of me that then-me could never have dreamed up.

Grief has given me the opportunity to get more grounded in who I am and what I want in life. Grief has taught me to be present and to rest and to do things that bring me joy and laughter. Yes, grief has brought some of the greatest pain of my life. And I wouldn’t wish it on my worst enemy. But I’m grateful for the

fertile ground it created in my life because some really beautiful things have grown out of it.

So...the next time someone says it's "time to move on" — and there will be a next time because it's just one of those things people can't seem to unlearn — you can remind yourself (and tell them) that you won't move on, you can't leave the loss behind you, but you're learning to carry it with you as you navigate this new way of living. Tell them (and remind yourself) that you're just as eager to not be in the depths of the pain, but that you aren't going to force or rush the healing, either, because grief doesn't obey logic or timelines.

Here are two books about grief I think you might appreciate:

- [Harry's Trees](#) by Jon Cohen
- [Grief is Love](#) by Marisa Renee Lee

There are so many more books I'd like to recommend, so I've listed and linked them all at BeckyLMcCoy.com/GriefLibrary

Nothing is as comforting as a cup of tea and Atlas Tea Club has everything you need to make it happen. Subscribe to their Tea of the Month club now and receive two teas each month or send them as a gift to a loved one. Travel the world through tea when you sign up at BeckyLMcCoy.com/Atlas

You'll find all the links mentioned in this episode along with a full transcript of this episode at BeckyLMcCoy.com/podcast/83

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If you found this episode encouraging or helpful, share it with a friend and

remember: healing and living after grief doesn't mean you're leaving your person behind — you carry them with you as you go. You're doing great.