

When you've experienced a great loss, it takes some time to get back on your feet again. You're not the same as before the loss, but you're doing your best. And then, seemingly, from out of nowhere, a grief trigger runs you over, leaving you feeling like you're back at square one.

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

My dad died 10 years ago, now. A decade is too long of a time to not have one of your greatest cheerleaders or get one of his hugs. But 10 years out and my grief has changed. I don't feel quite so hollowed out by it now. I don't mistakenly call or text him. I miss him and will never be okay with the fact that he died at 52, but I've learned to let grief live in my pocket - it doesn't dictate or steer my life, but it is there and reminds me of its presence now and then.

A few weeks ago I watched this absolutely fascinating video about Roman concrete and how it is still standing strong after 2,000 years when our modern concrete needs maintenance after several decades. And I just barely kept myself from sending it to him.

My dad was an engineer and he loved that I studied physics in college. He'd randomly send me articles or emails with updates on cool engineering feats and even though I rolled my eyes every time, I loved it. I haven't gotten one of those envelopes in over a decade now and stumbling upon something he would've

loved sharing took my breath away.

I can't even talk about it now without tears.

If you've experienced loss, you know that even when your heart is mostly mended, random triggers will still blindsides you.

Triggers can be absolutely infuriating. Ridiculously frustrating. Because we've done the work to heal. And because we still miss them. And because our footing finally starts to feel steady again when something pushes us off balance.

When our grief is triggered, it can feel like all that work was for nothing. Like the loss is brand new all over again.

Honestly? It's really offensive.

I know my dad is gone. I'm acutely aware of everything in my life he's missed. Even just the fact that he never met my kids. I'm reminded pretty regularly of all the projects we should have done together and trips we should have taken. I don't need a random grief trigger to remember.

Let me pause for a moment - grief triggers aren't something you can avoid or prevent. You can't live life after loss hiding from any reminders that your person is gone. Never talking about a person who has died won't protect loved ones from grief.

Grief will get triggered.

But that doesn't mean I have to like it.

So...how do you deal with a grief trigger when it hits you from out of nowhere?

When I realized I couldn't send my dad the Roman concrete video, I sent it to my sister instead, telling her how I wish I could send it to dad and how much fun it would've been to nerd out with him over it. No, it wasn't the same as sharing it with him, but it helped to share it with someone who would appreciate both my grief and how much he would have loved it, too.

Triggers hurt - the pain and sadness comes flooding back. But those emotions aren't bad just because they don't feel good. Instead of attempting to avoid them, there are ways to soften the blow. You can journal or talk it through with someone. You can sit with the memories the trigger brings. You can pause and spend some time doing things that bring comfort - take a walk, read a book, take a nap, etc. It was really helpful for me to talk with a therapist through my triggers and how to deal with them.

Roman concrete aside, I actually don't experience triggers as often as I used to. And as much as I hate them, I don't fight them any more. I wish I had a 5 step process for avoiding triggers or for making them disappear, but I've learned that navigating grief and loss is just as much a part of being human as joy and delight are. Grief will hit you from out of nowhere, but it doesn't mean you're failing at grieving or that you should've known how to prevent it.

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

- [The Cure for Sorrow](#) by Jan Richardson

- [Your Grief, Your Way: A Year of Practical Guidance and Comfort After Loss](#)
by Shelby Forsythia

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/84

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If you found this episode encouraging or helpful, share it with a friend and remember: sometimes grief really does hit you from out of nowhere - be gentle with yourself. You're doing great.