

## From 30,000 Feet

Part 1: Why are we here today?

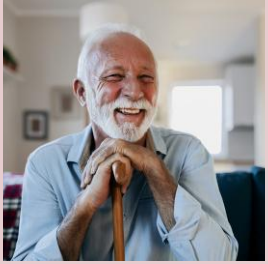
Part 2: Problems, pitfalls, speedbumps, and chasms

Part 3: Tools in our belt

## An Integrative Approach to Grief

Finding the Right Tools to Cope

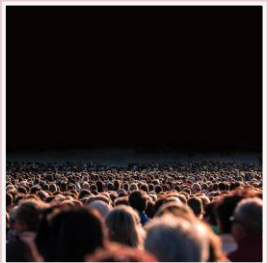
# Why are we here today?



We all have a story of why we are here



We are part of the human race and that means we inevitably will encounter death



Death is universal, so grief is universal

# Death Affects Everyone

---

Change is inevitable

---

Change implies loss

---

Loss invites grief

---

Every grief deserves to be honored

# Why are we here today?



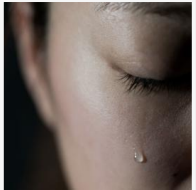
We all have a story of why we are here



We are part of the human race and that means we inevitably will encounter death



Death is universal, so grief is universal



Death is a scary and sacred space

# Defining Terms



---

“Bereaved” = *to be torn apart; to be robbed*

---

“Grief” = internal; it is the “container that holds our thoughts, feelings, and images of the experience” (Alan Wolfelt, 2003)

---

“Mourning” = external; the expression of our grief

---

“Coping” = movement; it refers to the active and passive attempts to go on living

---

“Adapting” = perspective; “it involves finding ways to put the loss in perspective and to move on with life” (McGoldrick et al, 1991)

# Honoring Death & Grief



PLACE



LANGUAGE



PATIENCE



CURIOSITY

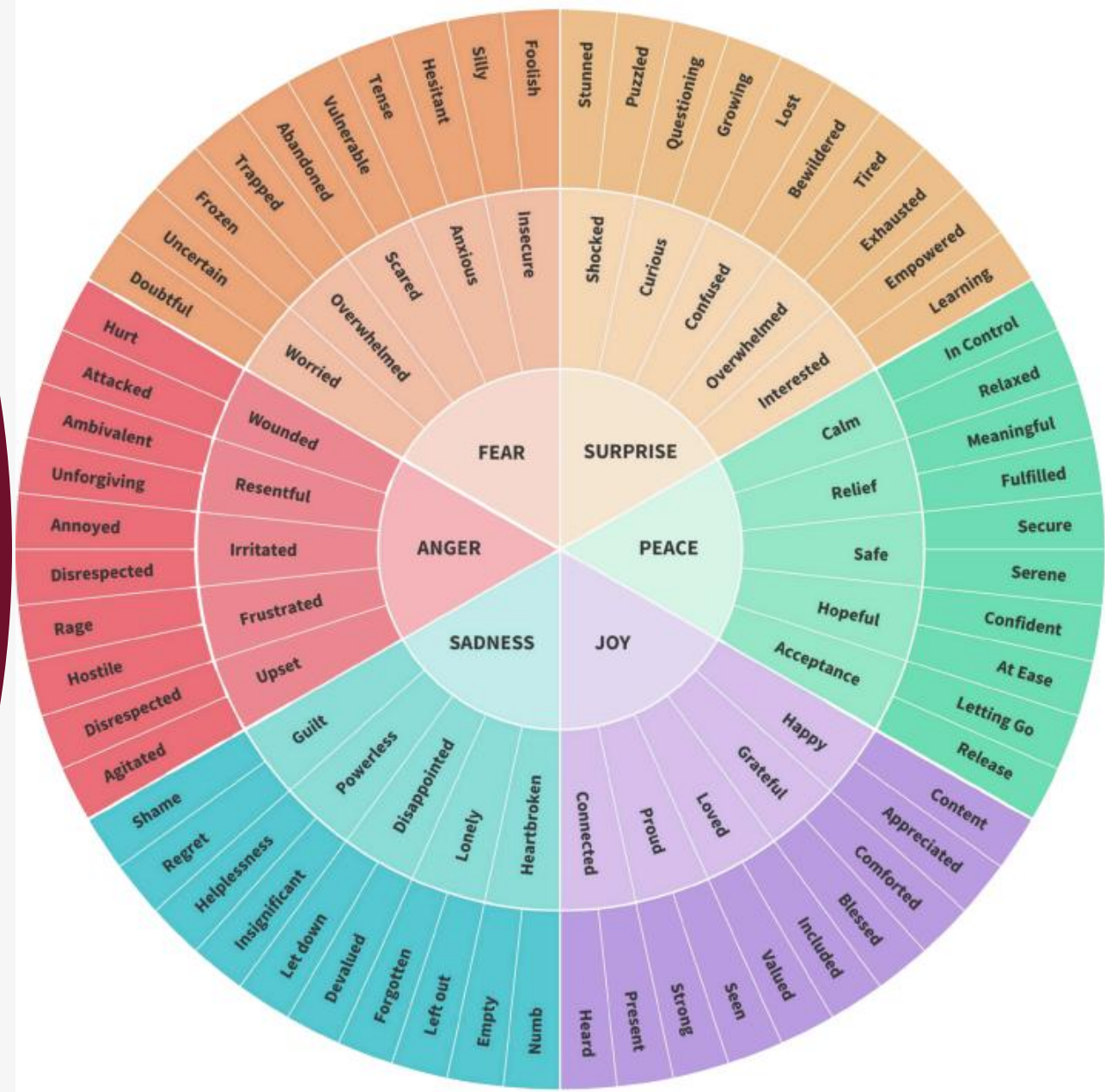


PRESENCE

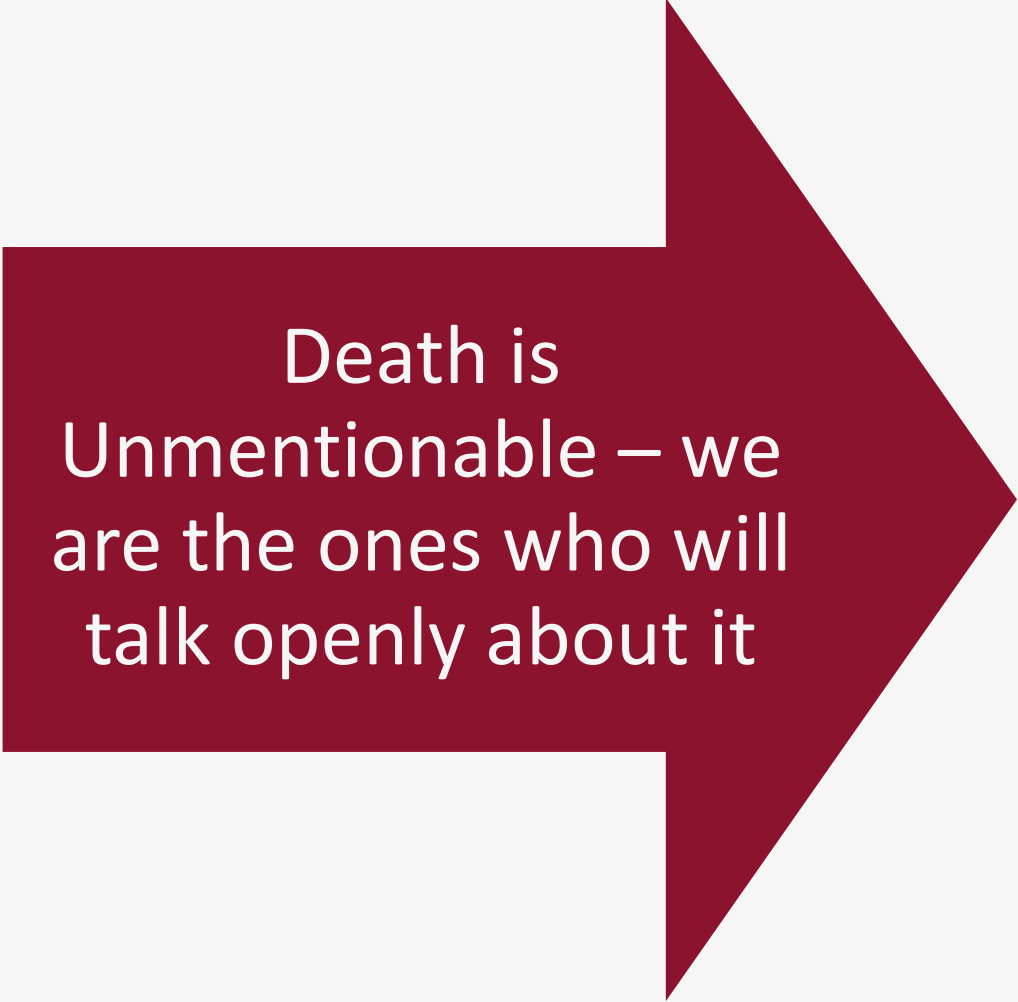
Alan D. Wolfelt, *Understanding Your Grief*, pp. 11-14

# Feeling Wheel for Meaningful Goodbyes

Interim HealthCare,  
*Finding Peace*, p. 18



# Three Harmful Reactions to Death & Counter-Reactions



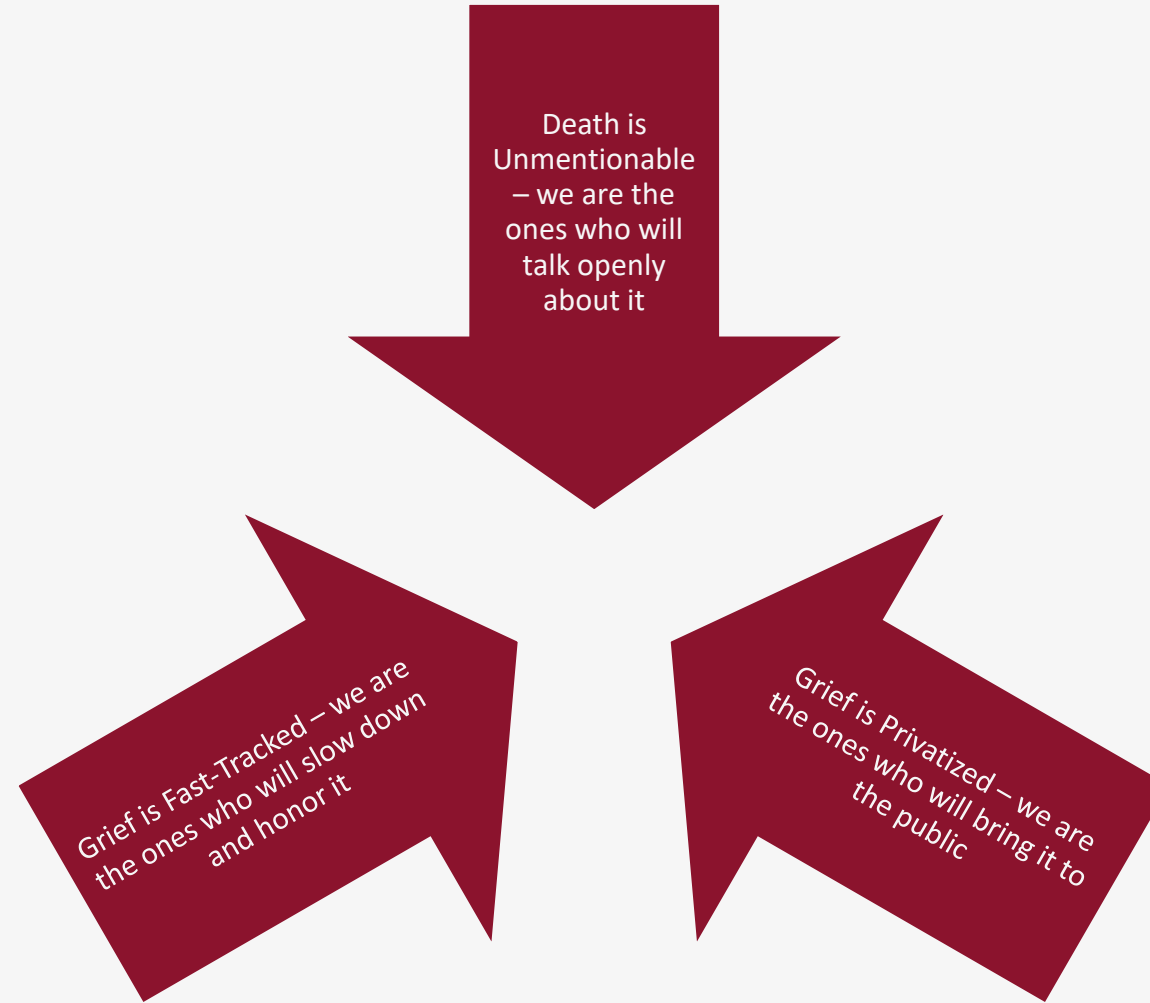
Death is  
Unmentionable – we  
are the ones who will  
talk openly about it



Grief is Privatized –  
we are the ones who  
will bring it to the  
public

“An odd by-product of my loss is that I’m aware of being an embarrassment to everyone I meet...perhaps the bereaved ought to be isolated in special settlements like lepers.” (C. S. Lewis)

# Three Harmful Reactions to Death & Counter-Reactions



“It does not matter how slowly you go, so long as you do not stop.” (Confucius)

## From 30,000 Feet

Part 1: Why are we here today?

Part 2: Problems, pitfalls, speedbumps, and chasms

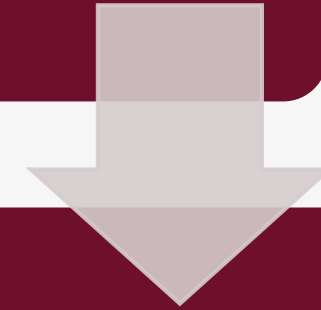
Part 3: Tools in our belt

## An Integrative Approach to Grief

Finding the Right Tools to Cope

# Let's Start with the Obvious

*Death Anxiety*



*Death Illiteracy*

# 3 Factors of the Death Event

Factor #1

Circumstances of the Death

Factor #2

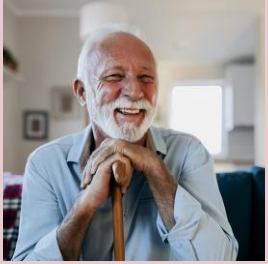
Culture

Factor #3

Family History

Moos, 1995

# 3 Reasons for NOT Talking About End of Life



Sadness



Emotional burden of the other



Difficulty finding the right words

# Fear of Death and Dying

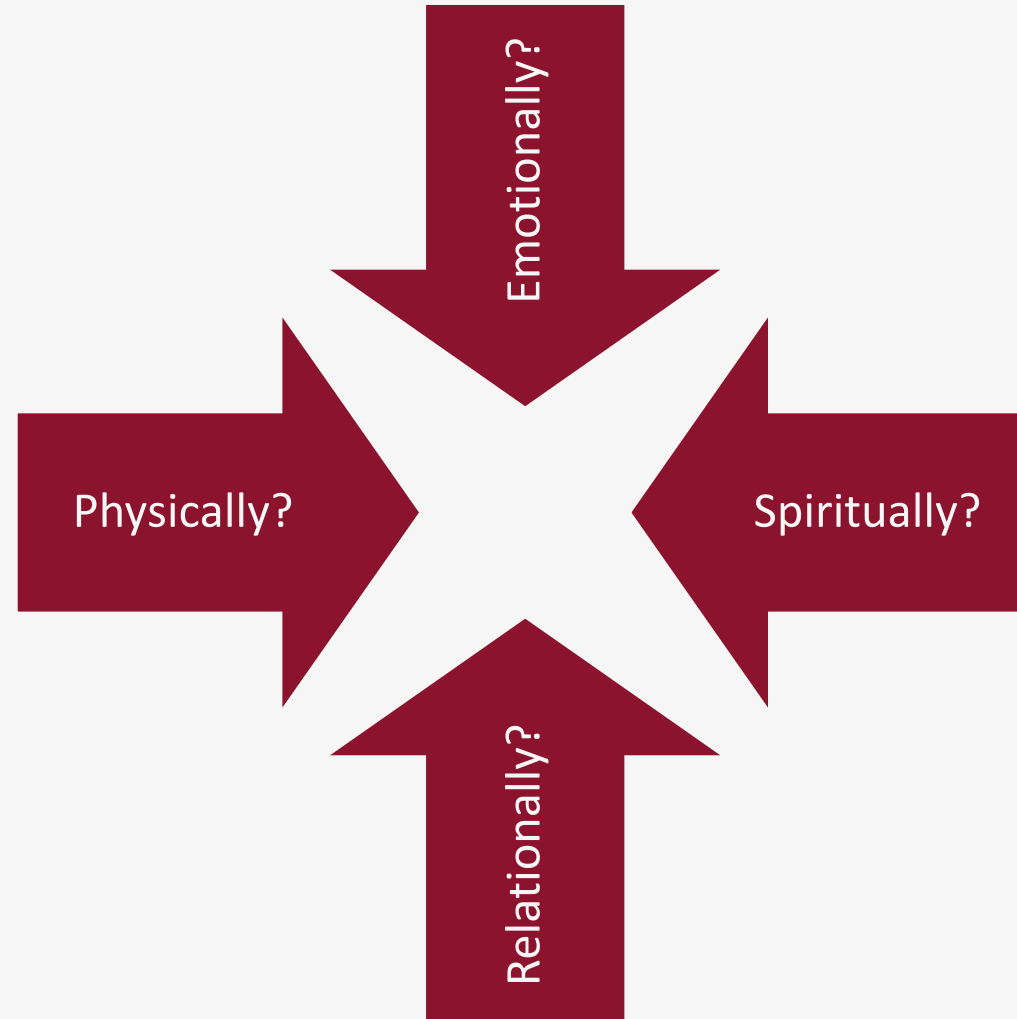


“...refers to a stable disposition to feel uneasy, nervous, or frightened when thinking of the possible circumstances of the dying process on the one hand and of losing life on the other.”  
*(Handbook of Thanatology, p. 42)*

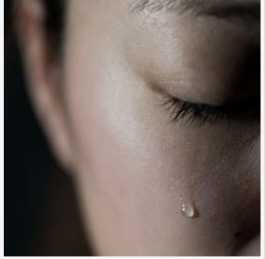
**A Question I've  
Asked 1000s of  
Times:**

**“Are you afraid of death, or are you afraid of dying?”**

# “How do I feel about death?”



# 3 Levels of Responses from What We Say



Low Facilitative – leads to feeling alienated and hurt



Facilitative – leads to feeling understood, accepted, and respected



High Facilitative – leads to feeling encouraged, supported, and cared for

Wittmer and Myrick (1980)

## From 30,000 Feet

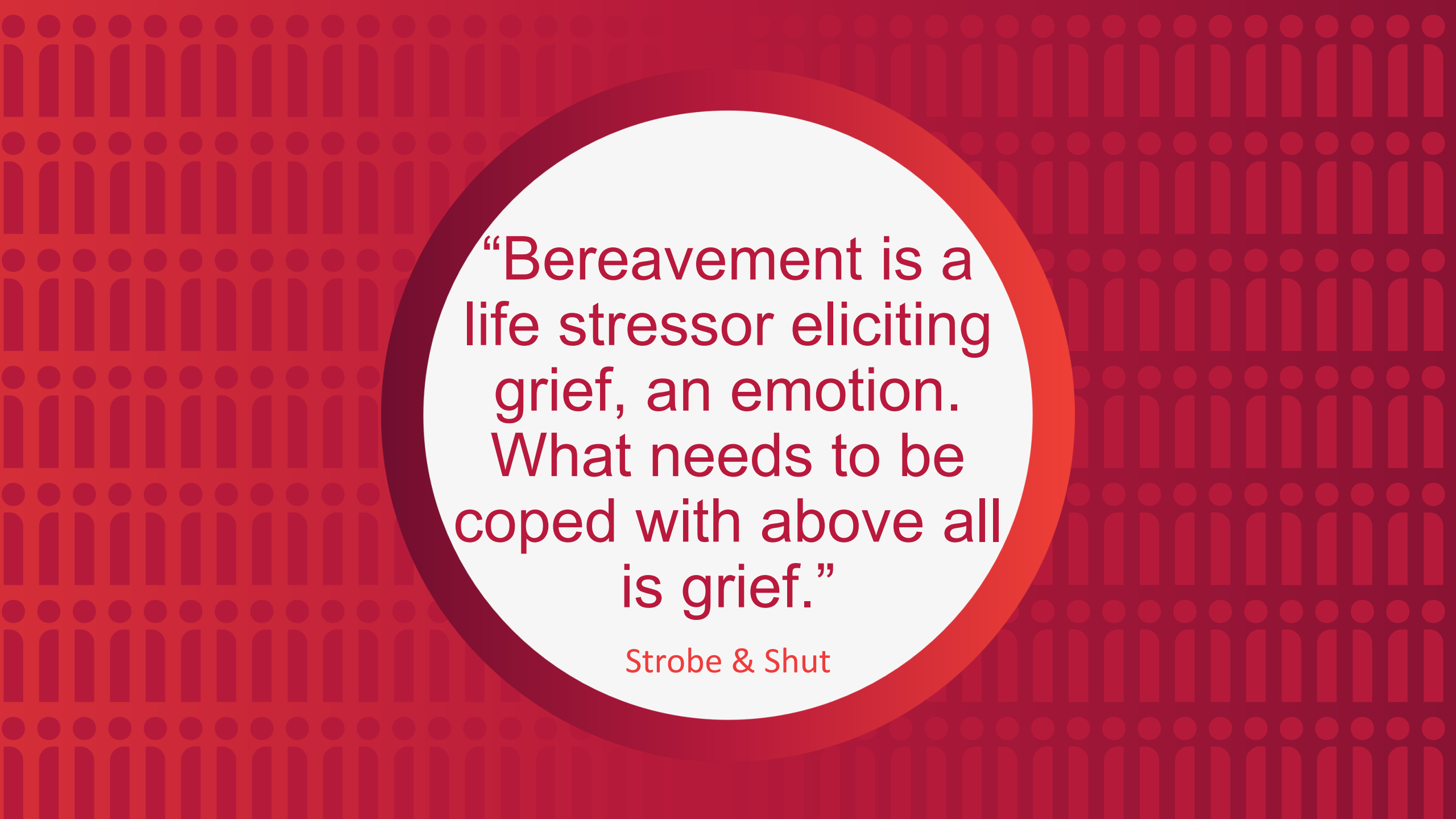
Part 1: Your Hospice “Why?”

Part 2: What is helpful and not so helpful

Part 3: Tools in our belt

# Interim Hospice Grief Support Across All Disciplines

Goal: reduce our anxiety, empower our voices, and strengthen our presence



“Bereavement is a  
life stressor eliciting  
grief, an emotion.  
What needs to be  
coped with above all  
is grief.”

Strobe & Shut

Start with the end...

Healthy, hoping, whole  
people who successfully  
integrate loss through  
effective coping strategies.





# Grief Touches Everything



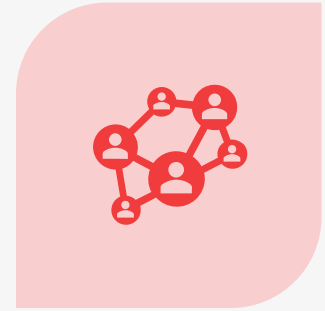
EMOTIONS



THOUGHTS



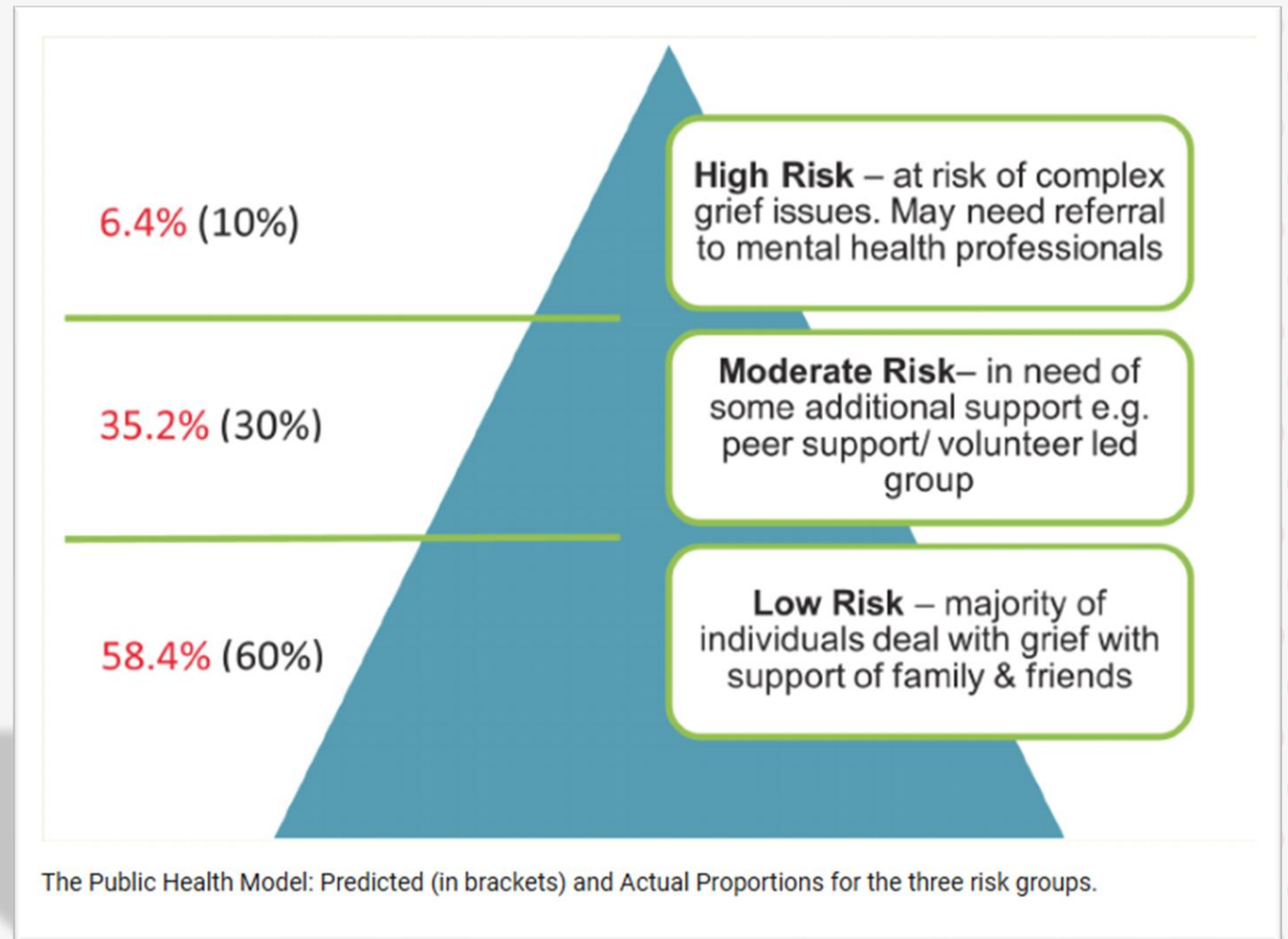
BODY



RELATIONSHIPS

# The Public Health Model

## Grief Support Needs



# Models of Grief



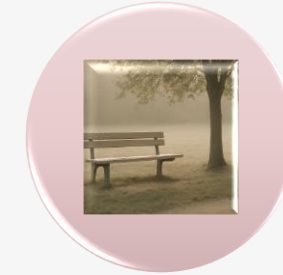
5 STAGES (KUBLER-ROSS)



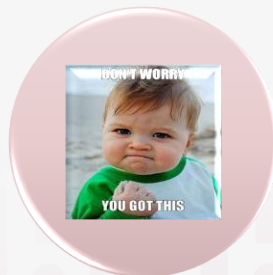
MEANING-MAKING (PARK)



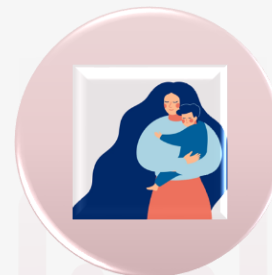
MEANING-  
RECONSTRUCTION  
(NEIMEYER)



CONTINUING BONDS  
(KLASS)



4 TASKS (WORDEN)

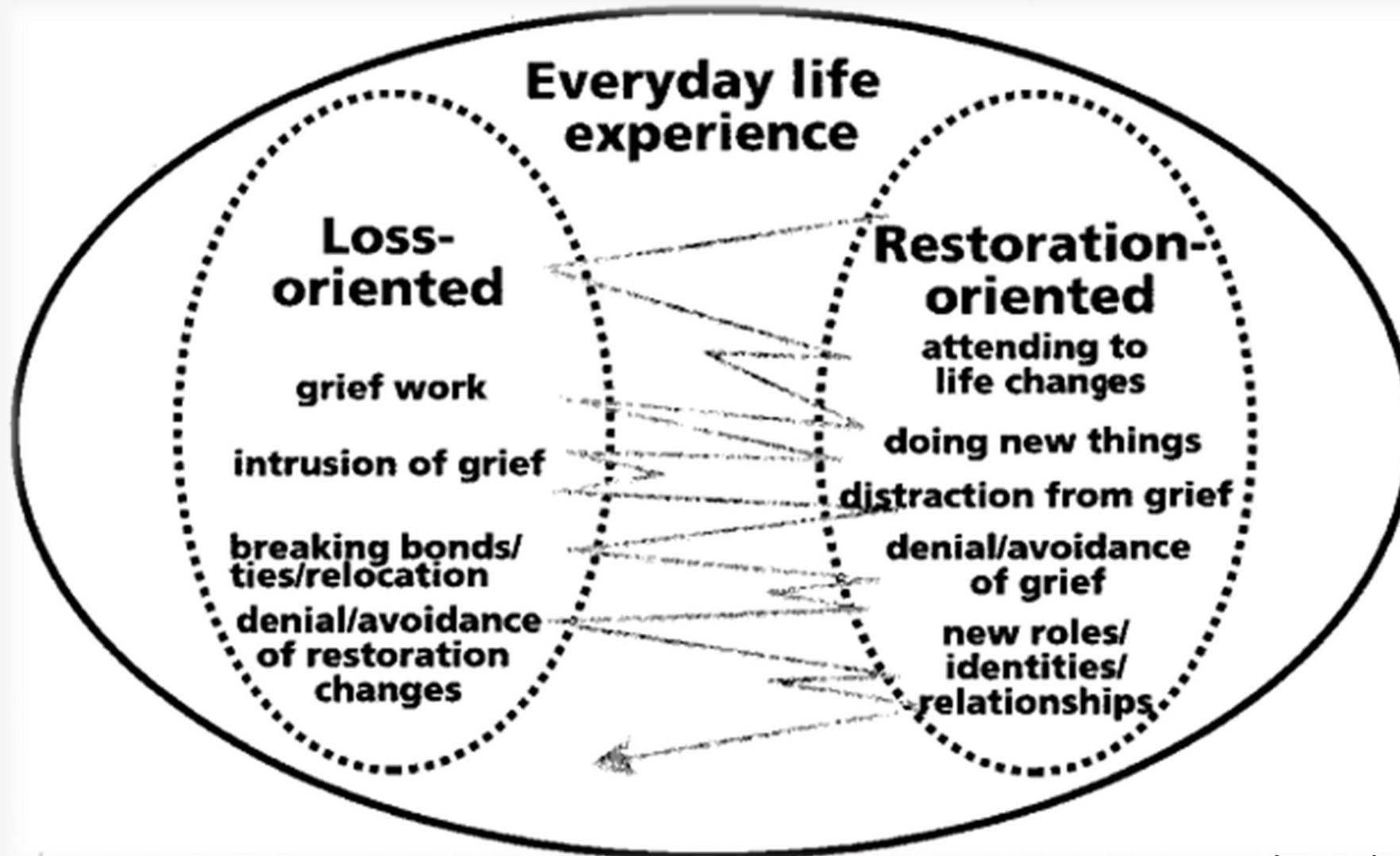


ATTACHMENT (BOWLBY)



6 NEEDS OF MOURNING  
(WOLFELT)

# Dual-Process Model



Margaret Strobe and Henke Shut (1999)

# Understanding Grief Through Metaphors...Visualization



Wave

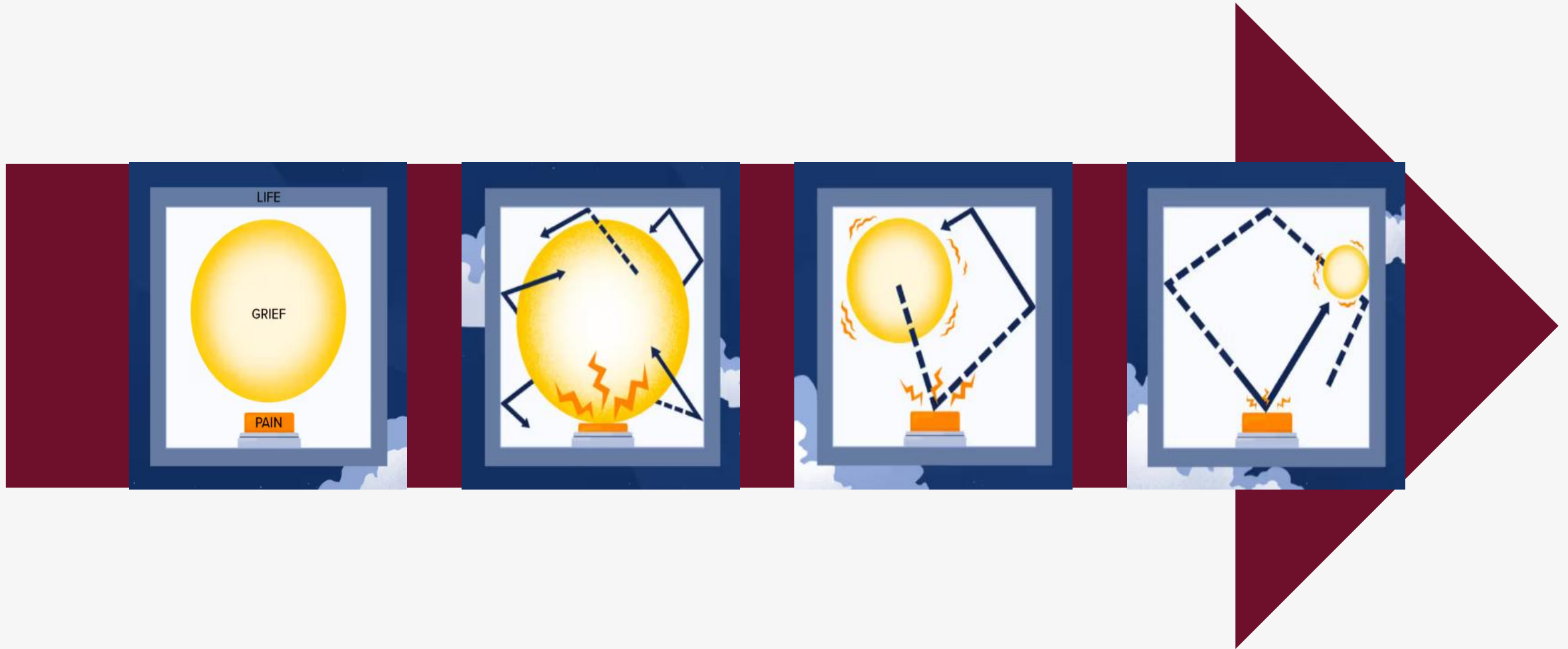


Waterfall



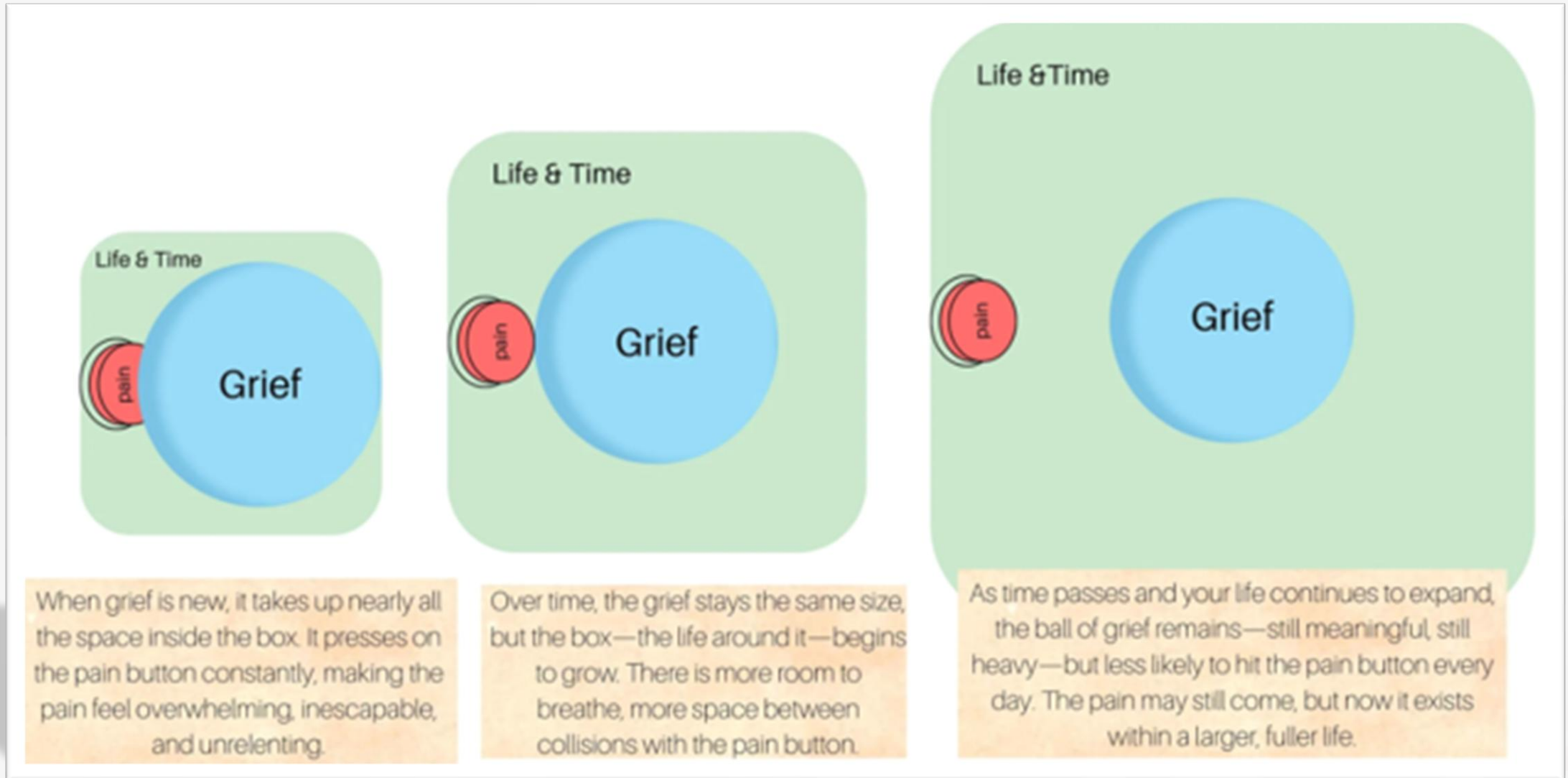
Tornado

# The Ball & The Box



Francesca Weher, “Understanding Grief: The ‘Ball in a Box’ Analogy and Its Impact on Mental Health”

# The Ball & The Box



Francesca Weher, “Understanding Grief: The ‘Ball in a Box’ Analogy and Its Impact on Mental Health”

- Dugdale, L. D., *The Lost Art of Dying* (HaperCollins, 2021)
- Interim HealthCare, *Finding Peace*, “Feeling Wheel for Meaningful Goodbyes” (2026)
- Kievernagel, S., Bendel, Y., Schulz-Quach, C., & von Blanckenburg, P. (2026). “Expectations in the communication about death and dying from a caregiver’s perspective: The end-of-life conversation – Expectation scale” – Caregiver (EOLC-E-c). *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, EPub ahead of print 12 January 2026. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00302228251414755>
- Lewis, C. S., *A Grief Observed* (United Kingdom, 1961)
- Wolfelt, Alan D., *Understanding Your Grief* (Companion Press, 2021)

# Sources Continued



- Mitchell Davidowitz & Robert D. Myrick (1984) Responding to the bereaved: An analysis of “helping” statements, *Death Education*, 8:1, 1-10, DOI: 10.1080/07481188408251378
- Interim HealthCare, *Finding Peace*, “Family: Engaging Your Family Early in the Journey” (2026)
- S. Kievernagel,, Y. Bendel, C. Schulz-Quach, & P. von Blanckenburg, (2026). “Expectations in the communication about death and dying from a caregiver’s perspective: The end-of-life conversation – Expectation scale” – Caregiver (EOLC-E-c). *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, Epub ahead of print 12 January 2026. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00302228251414755>
- Lillian Range, PhD, Andrea S. Walston, Pamela M. Pollard; “Helpful and Unhelpful Comments After Suicide, Homicide, Accident, or Natural Death” (*Omega*, Volume 25(1), 25-31, 1992, Southern Mississippi)
- Heather L. Servaty-Seib & Helen Stanton Chappell, eds; *Handbook of Thanatology* Third edition, Association for Death Education and Counseling, 2021.

# Sources Continued Again



- Interim HealthCare, *Finding Peace*, “Family: Engaging Your Family Early in the Journey” (2026)
- PsychCentral; “Coping with Grief: How the Ball and the Box Analogy May Help”; <https://psychcentral.com/blog/coping-with-grief-ball-and-box-analogy>
- Research Gate; The Public Health Model; [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Demographic-characteristics-of-the-bereaved\\_fig4\\_277594066](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Demographic-characteristics-of-the-bereaved_fig4_277594066)
- Margaret Strobe, Henk Shut (1999) THE DUAL PROCESS MODEL OF COPING WITH BEREAVEMENT: RATIONALE AND DESCRIPTION, *Death Studies*, 23:3, 197-224, DOI: 10.1080/074811899201046
- Francesca Wehr, LCSW, “Understanding Grief: The ‘Ball in a Box’ Analogy and Its Impact on Mental Health”; <https://francescawehrlicsw.com/pathways-to-wellness-insights-from-francesca-wehr-lcsw/grief-analogy>
- Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D., *Understanding Your Grief* (Companion Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, 2021)



# What tools will you carry with you to Cope?

Thank you!

Scott Linnerud, SCC-BC, CT

Bereavement Program Manager