

## Conquering My Grief

Written by Charmaine Beasley, LPC-S

Grief is very real. It is a natural reaction to the loss of someone or something. The stages of grief include denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Not always in that order. These cycles can come in varying degrees. The lengths can also be different for everyone. Most people do not know how to handle grief for themselves or address it for loved ones. I have dealt with grief and going through the stages was hard. Everyone did not understand it. Everyone did not know how to handle my feelings. Neither did I.

My mom passed last January. She was my best friend. Hands down. She's first to my mind when I think about unconditional love. She was amazing. I envied her style and the culture she embodied. I don't think it took me long to realize that I had something that a lot of people didn't. Boundaries didn't exist between me and her. That was normal and secure for me even through adulthood. Of course I went through times when she got on my nerves. Duh! I told her darn near everything. Not only was she my mother, she was my therapist, my nurse, my fellow music lover, my hairstylist, my chef... my everything.

She would call me randomly and not want anything. As soon as I answered she would sing Stevie Wonder "I Just Called To Say I Love You". Needless to say, I can't listen to that song anymore. She loved and nurtured me in a very specific way. With her whole heart, unconditionally. Sometimes when I think about how she loved me, I am overwhelmed. I can't breathe. It hurts. Even when I rejected her, she was still there. She loved me through some of my worst things I've endured and the worst ways I behaved towards her. It's hard to wrap my mind around sometimes. It's even harder to wrap my mind around her not being here anymore.

After my mom passed denial came first. It was serious. I refused to believe she was gone. I can't tell you how many times I tried to call her. Not to mention when I tried to convince myself that she was she just at work.

Anger....whew. I felt rage and anyone could get it. People got cut off and people got yelled at. I even envied and got mad at people who still had their mother. My poor husband took a lot of my anger. Unfortunately, the people closest to us usually do.

Then came bargaining. Well, I tried bargaining before and throughout the anger cycle too. This literally was me pleading and begging to God. I promised to make changes and do things different. I was even trying to offer other people (bad, I know). I just wanted to wake up from the nightmare. I just wanted her back.

I felt depression for a long time. Some days I just wanted to sit in the corner and cry. I still do from time to time. I don't always want to be bothered. Sometimes I don't want to talk, I just want to cry.

To be honest, I'm not sure I'll ever fully accept her not being here anymore. I don't know, maybe that is something that will change later. I miss her every day and I get terrified about things to come in life without her. My head knows that she is in a better place but my heart is not always okay with it.

That's my grief. I had to let myself go through those stages. Maybe your grief looks the same. Maybe it doesn't. What is known for sure about grief is that you can't run from it. You can't rush it either. You

can't compare it to anyone else's. There is no way to conquer grief other than letting it happen and dealing with it. The joy is in knowing that all of the pain does not have to be permanent. You can choose to heal. Your grief will either transform you or destroy you, but it won't leave you the same...and that is okay.

Conquer your grief and stay mentally fly

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