

**Touchstone #10 For Hope and Healing Your Heart; Appreciate Your Transformation**  
**Adapted from: Understanding Your Grief by Alan D Wolfelt, PhD**

"Nature does not know extinction, all it knows is transformation." Wernher Von Braun.

The Journey through grief is life-changing. When you leave the wilderness of your grief, you are simply not the same person as you were when you entered the wilderness. You have been through so much. How could you be the same?

I'm certain you have discovered that you have been transformed by your journey into grief. Transformation literally means an entire change in form. Many mourners have said to me, "I have grown from this experience. I am a different person." You are indeed different now. Your inner form has changed.

Of course, these are not gifts you masochistically went looking for. You would rather the person were still alive and well. But the person is not alive and well. He or she has died, you are grieving and, I hope, mourning, and you are probably finding yourself a changed and possibly better person. To understand how transformation in your grief occurs, let us explore some aspects of growth in grief.

Growth means change

We as human beings are forever changed by the death of someone in our lives. You are "new," different than you were prior to the death. To the extent that you are different, you can say you have grown.

Growth means a new inner balance with no end points.

The word growth reflects that you do not reach some final end point in your grief journey. You don't return to a previous "inner balance" or "normal" but instead eventually achieve a new inner balance and a new normal.

Growth means exploring your assumptions about life.

Your loss experiences have a tendency to transform your assumptions, values, and priorities. What you may have thought of as being important before may not matter any longer. You may now more strongly value relationships.

Growth means utilizing your potential

In some ways, death loss seems to free the potential within. Questions such as "Who am I? What am I meant to do with my life?" often naturally arise during grief. Answering them inspires a hunt. You may find yourself searching for your very soul.

Your Responsibility to Live

No matter how deep your grief or how anguished your soul, bereavement does not free you from your responsibility to live until you die.

Carrying Your Transformation Forward

Tomorrow is now. It is here. It is waiting for you. You have many choices in living the transformation that grief has brought to your life. You can choose to visualize your heart opening each and every day. When your heart is open, you are receptive to what life brings you, both happy and sad. By "staying open," you create a gateway to your healing. When this happens you will know what the long nights of suffering in the wilderness have given way to a journey towards the dawn.

"I have been trying to make the best of grief and  
am just beginning to learn to allow it to make the best of me."  
Barbara Lazear Ascher

**Reflection Questions:**

How are you changing as a result of this death? (regarding attitudes, insights, skills, etc)

How are your relationships with others changing?

How are your values changing?

If you would like more information on any of our programs,  
or would like to arrange for bereavement support for yourself or a family member, please contact:

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