

A Conversation about Loss with Donna Kane

Brittni Barcase: Grief is complicated. It can look like so many different things. Depression, moodiness, irritability, fatigue, and more. Grief is not an illness, it's a normal part of life that all of us experience from loss. Losing a job, a relationship, and experiencing the death of someone you love are some examples of life experiences that can elicit grief.

Another complication is that happy events can elicit grief. So think about that. Getting married may mean moving, less time with friends, dealing with a whole new family. All of that can elicit grief, and to add another layer, if your mom or dad, siblings, or best friends aren't there to celebrate with you, that's another loss, another little.

So today we are going to explore these issues and others with Donna Kane, a grief clinician from Jewish community services.

So, hi again, Donna, thank you for joining us. So can you tell us what it's like to be a grief counselor? How did you choose this path? Yeah, give us a little backstory.

Donna Kane: I've been working at Jewish community services for 15 years. And, about 14 years ago, I was asked to facilitate a grief group at a local synagogue because the facilitator couldn't do the group. And I did not have a lot of experience with grief. I did have a lot of experience with group work, so I learned what I could in a little short amount of time and went and did this group.

And everyone in the group had experienced the death of their spouse. And they were devastated. We ran the group for eight weeks and as we did grief work, I watched them become more resilient and, less fragile and less raw, they were healing. That doesn't mean that they got over their grief, but I saw them walk out differently than they walked in and that had a huge impact on me. And, that was how I started learning and doing grief work with people. and I think that there's a forgotten cohort because grief is not all about death. There's a lot of grieving in everyone's lives that it's helpful to address.

And that's where I feel there needs to be more outreach. So I'm really happy that you are highlighting this today because I think it is important and people don't always recognize that they're grieving.

Brittni Barcase: Yeah, I think it's sometimes... its one of those things where like, you know that it's coming, but you don't know that you're in the thick of it.

And it's kinda like, what do I do now? This is new, especially the first time you might experience a, you know, big loss. Like what do I do with it now? What's the next step? How do ... yeah, I'm

really glad you could, Thank you so much. So first, Donna, can you talk about...do you find it depressing to deal with this kind of sadness all the time?

Like, how do you take care you?

Donna Kane: So it is difficult work. I have to be a good listener and a good partner with people, and I am always reminding myself that there's no fix for grief. And so, I try very hard to be where the person is. Uh, do I find it depressing? I find it challenging, but I also find it rewarding when I see people in the process of healing and in the process of understanding, uh, understanding their grief.

And I just want to point out Brittini, that a lot of people use the term “grieving” and “mourning” interchangeably, like they're one in the same and they're very different. And I think it's important to recognize that when you're trying to determine if you're grieving. So Grief is that sick feeling in the pit of your stomach when you wake up or people have told me that they feel like they're missing an arm when their loved one is gone, or they suddenly find themselves struggling with their identity because they lost their job. Mourning is that outward expression of grief. So mourning is crying or sitting Shiva or saying kaddish for someone. Mourning is something that other people can see so they can see you mourning. The grieving is internal and sometimes people mistake grief for so many other things like you mentioned, and that's where it gets complicated.

Brittini Barcase: It's almost like this invisible layer. You don't know, like it's a hard thing to pinpoint. Okay, so this is a big one. Does grief ever end? Is there a timeline? I know like when I have been, when I've hit, been hit with like a really big, uh, loss, trauma, you know, grief, trauma, whatever, whatever words want to attach to that, it almost feels like you're in the bottom of a pit and you'll never get out, you know? So like, can you talk about that?

Donna Kane: Sure. Grief doesn't end. It's part of a continuum and you really need to engage with it and feel it to begin to start healing. There's sort of a persistent myth that children and teenagers, they'll get over it. They don't, you know, they're sad. They miss their parent or their grandparent or their friend, but they'll get over it. You don't, you don't ever get over it. It changes over time. The pain will soften over time. If the grief work is done, but it's an ongoing process. Someone who loses their parent at 10, or moves and loses all of their connections...Holidays, graduations, birthdays. You're going to feel it. It's a loss.

It doesn't disappear, but it does change. I can't say it gets easier because everyone's journey is different, but it does. It does change.

Brittini Barcase: It's almost like, I was reading recently about grief math or loss math, you know, in the terms of why we keep using both these words, very interchangeably here. You know, loss is loss and then grief is kind of the feelings from the experience. Right? So, whatever that experience is, there's, you know, grief math and talking about, you know, it's been one day since the event, it's been one week since the event, it's been a month since the event. And then there's also the idea around dates kind of becoming, triggering, or even for some people seasons. I've heard about seasons like different seasons of the year.

Like if the event occurred in the fall, then you may start to feel - And this kind of leads me into my next question. Like recognizing grief when it hits you. So for some people it's like, it could be years, but in the fall, every year in the fall, they start to feel irritable. They start to feel fatigued. They start to feel agitated and then it's like, what's going on?

Let me check in with myself. Oh, it's the fall. And this is my, the time of the year where I feel most triggered by this event that I experienced however long ago. And I really need to take care of myself in that moment. So can you kind of talk about that and recognizing when grief hits you or what that might look like.

Donna Kane: Sure. So grief is very chaotic and you can have a day or an hour or a week where you feel fine, and then all of a sudden out of nowhere, you feel like you've taken three steps backwards. So it's really important to not allow that to be your new normal. So in other words, if you find that you get irritable in the fall, to use your example, Brittini, I wouldn't say shrug it off, like it's fall and this is it's allergies or it's this, or it's that. It's time to take an inventory and remember the things that have happened that are painful in the fall. Like what happened to, you know, ask yourself whenever you're feeling out of sorts, not like yourself, whenever you're feeling something come over you say, why is this happening? And think about the losses that you've had and how that particular season or day or time of day could be a trigger, a huge trigger for, for people is, believe it or not, smell. It's a very powerful trigger as a matter of fact. And it can be very comforting, which is, which is sort of my hope for everyone that starts their grief work, that they eventually find comfort. Even though they don't have what it is that they lost, smells can be a big trigger. Music is a huge trigger for people.

And so it's important to be aware of what might be triggering you to be experiencing what you're experiencing, especially if it's uncomfortable for you. One of the things that I do with people that people find very interesting -and it's helpful for me too, when I work with them- is I do a death inventory with them and I have them go through a list of questions about, you know, who was

the first person that they knew of who died. And we go through a series of questions and inevitably many people think back, oh wait, it wasn't so and so, my first experience was...., and it's something else because it just, as you said, there's so many layers, it takes time to peel all of that back and get awareness of your loss and your grief.

Brittini Barcase: It kind of leads me to. Okay. So, you know, thinking about a death inventory or even loss inventory coming, navigating this new post pandemic world and, you know, I think people are, there were a lot of people who experienced a lot of loss over this last 18 months. And, you know, so taking inventory, that's a really interesting way of (like a good resource) shining the light on those dark corners of our mind and saying "oh, I see you." So that's what I like. I do a lot of work in that, shining the light on the loss inventory, the loss, the grief inventory. To be able to intertwine it into part of your every day, rather than feeling like, Uh, baggage.

Donna Kane: And you said that beautifully, because what we really hope for is that people reconcile their loss.

So it does become a part of their life. So if you dream about becoming a lawyer and you find that it's not for you and you have to give up your dream and look for something else. You have to reconcile that loss. You have to grieve because it was what you wanted, who you thought you were, but then you have to look at the positives of it. It's like, well, now, I am open to so many other things. I had

the resilience to let go of a dream that wasn't right for me, it may have been right at some point, but I'm different now. The way you will process those losses and help to reconcile them in your mind has a tremendous impact on grieving and healing.

So I think what you said was very true. It is something that you have to integrate.

Brittini Barcase: Interesting. It's almost like you have to do a lot of mind training in the aftermath.

Donna Kane: Yeah. Because life, it hits you from all sides and sometimes it feels like, Okay, you're just being pummeled and in this world we're sort of pushed to hurry up and forget and move on and not spend a lot of time working through things, you know. Well you look for another job and that's all, you know, it's, it's very simple. It's just "find another job". Well, it's not that simple. And I think we've learned to push things into the corners of our mind because we live in such a hurry up and get over it kind of world.

Brittini Barcase: Yeah. I feel like that's why -that's part of the reason - I think why this last year and a half has felt like it's come with so much loss because there's been so much time to sit with the dark corners. You know, people were forced into their own dark corners and...Yeah. So it's surfaced a lot of the underlying and it's just, it's felt really heavy.

So kind of, you know, this is an ongoing conversation through this conversation of different resources, but I really love the question that came in about proactively doing grief work. So this question is, specifically, how to best prepare yourself for loss. "My mom is in late stage Alzheimer's. Can you proactively do grief work?"

So, you know, is that a, is that a thing?

Donna Kane: So it's a great question. It's a courageous question. Uh, there is such a thing as anticipatory grief, which is a part of dealing with someone, or like your mom, who has Alzheimer's and simultaneously grieving for the mom, that's not there anymore. So yes, there are ways to handle that type of grief. It's a little bit different. Uh, the strategies are similar, but it's a little bit different because you still have your mom. You can touch, you can feel, you can, you can be with your mom. And when a person passes, you lose that. I would say some very important things are, if your mom is debilitated to the point where you can't really have a conversation with her, it would be helpful to write down the things that you want her to know, because that will help you with your journey. And it may bring out things that you hadn't thought about that you will have time to reconcile before your mom passes. I don't know how old your mom is - late stage Alzheimer does not, is not a death sentence in a physical sense. So there are certainly support groups that are helpful. We actually have a caregiver support group that might be very helpful depending on the relationship with your mom. But there are ways to make the transition a little bit less painful.

Brittini Barcase: So this next question. You know, just another layer to this whole conversation. But the question was "how does one not get caught obsessing and paralyzed by the grief, especially if you have anxiety and depression."

Donna Kane: Great question. I can give you an answer, but it's a lot harder than just the words that I'm speaking. A big concept in grief is taking care of yourself. So grief is exhausting and you never know when it's going to hit you. Sometimes you can, you know, it's going to be hard if there's a birthday or something like that, but you... it's unpredictable. So you're dealing with that. And then you're dealing with something like anxiety and depression, which also saps your

strength and makes it difficult to climb out of that hole that you were talking about before Brittini, so it is important and I know it might sound cliché. It's important to take care of yourself. It's important to put yourself first and practice self care, and that's different things for different people. It's hard to do that when you don't have any energy. And it's hard to do that when you're not sleeping. So I would suggest to you to work on the basics first, make a list of the things that you're having trouble with. If you see a doctor for your depression and anxiety, talk with them about medication and other ways to help yourself. Learn to say no and learn not to be embarrassed or feel guilty because you say no. If you have plans and you wake up and you feel like you can't do it, that's okay. You need to give yourself permission to grieve. You need to give yourself permission to rest and to do the things that you want to do. And I think that's very, very important. One of the things that I do. You had asked me earlier about self care, because I hear a lot of very sad and difficult things and I have to let it go, right? I can't let it live in me. One of the things that I do is I turn my phone off for an hour every day. And I tell my family - I have aging parents - everyone knows that they can't reach me from five to six, I'm done. I'm done. I don't hear dinging. I don't hear anything. And that's very helpful to me. Amazingly helpful to me. So find what it is that you can give yourself and be faithful to it. Use it.

Brittini Barcase: It's interesting. I guess, you know, in preparation for this conversation, I didn't expect the idea of self care and taking care of yourself to really be a huge part of this conversation, but it's true. It's, you know, how can you take care of yourself in these difficult moments when you're heavy with loss and grief.

Donna Kane: And people want to try to fix it for you. So they push you. You know, “come on, go out with us...oh, come on. You know, let's do whatever.” And you have to be able to say no and feel okay with “no, not feeling it right now”. Like “I can't do it right now, maybe another time” and be proud of yourself for, you know, taking care of yourself. Or trying it and saying, “you know what, I need to go, this isn't working for me tonight. I'm so sorry”. And feel good about that. It's hard, but it really does give you some serenity.

Brittini Barcase: So, in that sense, how could you, how do you best suggest (another tall order) to support somebody who's dealing with a loss? Like how would you show up? You know, as a grief clinician, you're constantly showing up for other people, but you know, for someone like me, who's not a grief clinician, what would you suggest?

Donna Kane: So the simplicity of this sometimes comes out, sounding like a cop out. And it is not. My best suggestion is to just be with that person. You don't have to talk. You listen, if they

want to talk, but just be with them, sit with them and sit with them in their grief. And if you can't be there, physically text them in the morning, you know? "Good morning thinking about you" No questions, no pressure. Text them at night. Just be there. That is the kindest and best way to support someone whether it's a death, a job loss, loss of a relationship. And then there's one more thing, Brittni, that I think it's very important - is don't let that loss be the elephant in the room. Don't let it just be there staring at you and you don't want to say anything. If you have a good memory, like, oh my God, these chocolate chip cookies suck compared to, you know, so-and-so's, I really wish she was here or anything that is a positive memory or brings up something positive about that person. That's a gift that you can give to someone because they're probably walking around with so many people not wanting to upset them, that it's almost as if to them they're loss didn't happen. So those are my two best suggestions.

Brittni Barcase: Yeah, and that kind of talks about like, as the relationship changes with the loss over time, you know, you get further away from the initial date of the incident, the initial experience. It's almost like, so in terms of like losing someone, you keep showing up for that person. And like, so as the receiver, you have all these people coming for you - coming to talk, check on you. And then even on the other end, that's the supporter, you're supporting, you're supporting, you're supporting, and then there's a natural, unfortunate, fade out. And then it's, we don't talk about it. It's not discussed, but the person who experienced the loss still carries it with them, but we don't talk about it anymore

Donna Kane: and they feel forgotten.

Brittni Barcase: Yeah.

Donna Kane: You know, I remember one of the most awkward. I can't think of another word, but it was, it was awkward.

And it was just out of sheer, I don't know. I just, I was on autopilot. I was here at work and somebody had returned after their mom had died and they took some grief leave and then they were back. And I saw them in the kitchen and they were grabbing coffee. I was grabbing my lunch and I was like, Hi, how are you?

And I didn't say it like I wanted to have a conversation with that person. I just saw them. I was breathing in and out and I said, "hi, how are you?" And I felt terrible. I was so embarrassed. And I looked at her and I just said, "I am so sorry. I was on autopilot." And I said, "I know this isn't the place to have this conversation, but I'll stop by later."

You know, we're all human. We all make mistakes, but acknowledge it. And then, you know, do something to correct it, do something to make it better, which is what I'm so grateful I had the presence of mind to do because, you know, we all have moments like that. But I do think it is very helpful to the person for it to be acknowledged, no matter what.

I know if somebody says to me, yeah, this is a tough time of year for me. My mom died two years ago. You don't just say, "oh, okay." You know now... that you gave me this information. Thank you. Okay. Now I get it and walk away. Just invite them to talk about it if they want to. It's not hard. But you're right, people tend to just let it go. And, when it's you experiencing that, it's very difficult. You just kind of have to be thoughtful and mindful of the people around you.

Brittini Barcase: Yeah. It's interesting. It's almost like you have to be very, you know, the people who are in your close circle, the people you're interacting with all the time, It's like, okay, I have to take inventory of these people and what's going on in their life and live very intentionally, to be a supportive friend, family member, spouse, mother, daughter, whatever it is, you know, just to just live very intentionally and mindfully and try to turn off that autopilot.

And if you do kick into autopilot, it's okay. If like you said, we're all human it's okay. You can just say "I'm so sorry. I just realized, I just realized it's October 5th and this might be a troubling time for you. How are you? How can I support you?"

Donna Kane: Right. That's a perfect way to handle it.

Brittini Barcase: How can you ask for forgiveness from someone who has passed?

Donna Kane: There's a misconception with a lot of people who have a loss that they had such a wonderful relationship. And that's why the grief is so painful and so difficult. But the truth is and this isn't a matter of opinion, this is the truth. The truth is that, people who have had a difficult relationship, sometimes have a more, a deeper loss and hurt, just as much as someone who had like the perfect relationship, because now their chance for that perfect relationship or that reconciliation or that forgiveness is gone. So what you're asking is a very difficult question, and I think it's a great question.

There are a lot of ways to still continue a relationship, even in death. Death doesn't really end our relationship, it ends that physical aspect of it, right? People who have lost a sibling or a parent or grandparent, they may still talk to that person. They may still think about what they would do if they were in the situation that you're in. They mark birthdays. So they do ways to keep that relationship with that person alive. And there are ways to do that when you need to ask for forgiveness. First of all, ask. You know, just because you can't see someone doesn't mean you

can't talk to them. None of us knows. We all have our own beliefs, but none of us knows what happens when people die.

You can still talk to that person. You can ask for forgiveness. You can tell them what you've done, how you've grown and continue that relationship in a positive way. I think that that's a very important aspect of healing when you've had a difficult time with someone. So that would be my first suggestion.

The other thing you can do is write them a letter and sit down and take the time to put all of that in words. And then you can do whatever you want with that letter. You can keep it, you can burn it, you can bury it. But sometimes people find that very helpful. So, I would suggest to you that you have a little bit more work ahead of you when you've had that kind of relationship, but it is reconcilable.

Brittini Barcase: So, there's so many resources, it's not a one size fits all. It's like what do you need to do for you in this moment? How can you support you? And there's that. This conversation is really like, WOW, let me write - there's another resource. Let me add that to the list.

So in terms of this last year being really hard, a lot of people experiencing loss, this person wrote in. "I lost my mother due to COVID. I was not able to see her. And sometimes I still feel like it isn't real. How can I get past this step?" and they also said "I also get upset and angry with people who expect me to forget and be over it and will lash out at them."

So we've kind of already touched on how things fizzle. But there's like, that will lash out at them. So there's that anger that kind of comes with some people's grieving experience.

Donna Kane: The feeling of, so a lot of people will say that they're in denial, and that it's unreal to them. And they just, can't, they're waiting for the person to walk in the door and that's very normal. I don't...I like to use the word that it's surreal or unreal. I don't like the word denial because you know, cognitively, that the person has gone and it is a very normal part of grief. You can have a long-term relationship with someone and they die, you accept, you totally absorb that and understand that.

It's important to remember that a death is a trauma that you can't see. Like you can't x-ray it, but it is a trauma. And your brain has a way of helping you cope by slowly allowing you to absorb the reality of it. So what you're saying about your difficulty believing, it is totally normal. And even more so in this type of situation, unfortunately, I hear this so often because of the pandemic and the guilt that people have for not being able to prevent this or, or help or be there and it is a part of the loss that you have to process, because the reality is you didn't have a choice. And not having a choice can make someone very angry, and it can also cause depression.

So I would suggest to you that the irritability is that anger of you not being able to do what you wanted to do and it's coming out when people are, I don't want to say not being thoughtful because that sounds judgmental, but because they don't understand grief, there are so many people that just, they don't have a concept of it.

And so instead of it becoming a moment where you can say this is still very hard for me, and leave it at that, that anger comes out. So I think one of the things that you might want to try is taking a deep breath and I mean it, I'm not just saying it like an expression, take a deep breath before you respond.

I'm not going to tell you not to lash out because you know that if you lash out, you do, but take a deep breath and think about something, you can say, have it ready, practice it. Like, "you know, I hope you never have to struggle the way I'm struggling." Again, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but that might help. And also forgiving yourself for being in a situation that you really had no control over. It would be a big step too. So my suggestion is if this, if your parent passed away like let's say in the very beginning, when this all started, maybe like a year and a half ago or so, and you're still finding yourself handling this the same way that you did then, it might be a good time for an intervention so that you are given some options to work with. If it was more recent, I would say, give yourself a little bit of time and give yourself a break. If you lash out, take a breath and say, maybe I'll handle this better next time.

Brittini Barcase: It's interesting listening to you answer that question. Had me thinking about how, I have two little kids and I, this word keeps coming up. I'm doing a lot of "unlearning". Unlearning in my...unlearning from all the things I was taught as a kid, or how I was programmed, you know, growing up...the things that I learned from my family and seeing people interact with one another. And you know, so now, even in this conversation talking about grief and how to process it, you're right. We probably don't know how to handle these types of situations, these traumatic events that happen. And it's like, so then it's like really getting mindful (there's that word again!) to what's happening, taking inventory, (there's that word again, too) at what's happening and trying to break it down and accept, and say I'm doing a good job. But here are these other resources and, and maybe, you know, lashing out I'm recognizing that I'm lashing out. I'm recognizing that I'm angry. So let me pull back the reins a little bit and start over here instead of immediately letting myself lash out every time. Like I'm pulling it back. I'm panning the camera out on myself and I can... I can see what's happening. I can see the habits that I'm stuck in. And yeah, just kind of reexamining and digging a little bit deeper.

Retraining or unlearning.

Donna Kane: That's a great example.

Brittini Barcase: So when you're new to grief and you're in the thick of it, how can you recognize and help possible buried grief in your children who were suffering the same loss? So, kind of bringing the idea of children into this.

Donna Kane: So that, that is an, that's such a thoughtful question and it is a real issue for families. Because grief is so draining, it's very hard to find the energy to go beyond yourself. Or maybe even, even if you have the energy to work through things with your spouse, it's even, it's just hard to go past that little bit. And so children often grieve in silence because they don't, you know, they don't know where to put it and they don't really understand it.

So again, as with adults, grief does not end. So every Simcha, every graduation, birthday, anniversary, anything, children will grieve for their loss and it changes as they change. You know, a five-year-old is going to think about it very differently than a 10 year old, than a 15 year old, and 20 year old. So my best suggestion would be to talk with them. Talk with somebody who understands, you know, who can get an understanding of your children, of the family dynamics, and then they can give you strategies for working with your children. You, you just, by asking this question, what it says to me is that you recognize that they are grieving and that's like half of the battle right there. So you're already probably ahead of where you think you are. And I would suggest to you that there are all kinds of things you can do. You can include them in rituals. You can have them make a craft, make a card, you know, like I was talking about earlier with relationships, you can do things to help keep that relationship alive for them.

Brittini Barcase: And another suggestion for children's stuff in dealing with really anything heavy with kids... role-playing is a really great idea. Having their favorite figurines, like acting out a scenario, which seems kind of morbid in a sense, but it does very much help children process a lot of what's going on. And sometimes in those moments, when you're playing, when you're bringing play into the situation, the experience, you as the caregiver, the supporter, the parent, whatever it is, you can kind of see their inner workings a little bit better because if you ask them, they might not have the words to. They probably don't have the words. It's not even, they might not, they don't have the words, in a sophisticated way to say, I'm feeling XYZ. They don't.

One question is, can you speak a little to the process of a self life review and reconciliation of the past for positives and negatives as I moved through and into the next phase of my life.

Donna Kane: Dependent on who you are and what resonates with you. There are different ways to go about that. One of the most successful ways that has been, that there's a lot of data on in terms of moving through that process that you talked about and doing it successfully, one of the best ways to work through that is through journaling.

Like you mentioned when you're journaling that experience, it's important to work through the issues that you're having, the struggles that you're having, as well as. The positive aspects. And that can be a double-edged sword because, let's say you were a caregiver and the person died and you're relieved because they're not struggling anymore. And you're relieved because you can now breathe and you have more freedom. And then sometimes with that comes some guilt. For, you know, I shouldn't be feeling positive about this. Well, journaling all of that through, helps you look at it through a different lens. When you reread what you write, it can be a very healing experience.

I worked with a mom whose son died very young. And she started while she was working with me. We started working on a journal for her and about, I would say about two months of journaling, not every day, I always suggest that people do it once a week at the same time and the same day in the same place. But sometimes people who love to write can, you know, they might do it every day. So we, after two months, I asked her to review everything she wrote and we talked about that it would be difficult and painful, but she did, she came back and I said, "what did you, did you learn anything? Did you find a gem? Anything in rereading what you wrote?" And she said, "I felt happy that I had my son for the time that I had him.". And you don't see that when you're in the middle of it, you can look back and see the process and see the progress that you've made. And sometimes you can find those gems. So I am a big, big believer in journaling.

Brittni Barcase: All right. So this last question is, "what do you suggest to someone who buried their emotions and feelings for years and never healthily dealt with grief from a young age and until adulthood?"

Donna Kane: I would say that what is being described could be an indication of trauma. And I'm not implying that anything happened, but that there may have been some sort of trauma that kept you so closed off from your grief. And then the other possibility is that you haven't had the time. If you've had multiple losses to grieve each loss. So my best suggestion is therapy because it's a very difficult thing.

It's one of the hardest things you can do on your own. It really is. And when you've kept it in for so long you don't want to just open a cork and let it all come out because it will just be so

overwhelming. So my suggestion would be to work with somebody who understands grief and take your time, but set aside specific time to do your grief work.

Brittni Barcase: Yeah, All of these questions, it's like, How do you dive into that question in, one minute or two minutes, you know, it's a per person, per instant. Yeah. They're great questions, but it really is going to be different for everyone. And you know, everybody processes things so differently, and what works for me is not going to work for you, which could work for someone else, so it's really not a one size fits all.

So I really, you know, the takeaway from this conversation is just that it's not a one size fits all and it's being patient with yourself, with others. Giving yourself a lot of grace, and really, truly just meeting yourself where you're at, and letting it be. Being okay with meeting yourself where you are, being okay with sitting in the grief, sitting in the sadness. There's a quote - I don't know exactly how it goes, but - you can't know complete utter happiness without also knowing sadness. Right? It's knowing those two extremes and being okay with that. So just to wrap up, are there any other final thoughts you have Donna, on this very big topic of loss and grief.

Donna Kane: I think that the biggest, most important message is that it's a journey and it is a journey for a lifetime. And just know that it does change. It softens over time and you are able to reconcile loss. It just takes a lot of work. Fortunately, there are people who are able to, and want to do that work with you.

That's my best thought, final thought.

Brittni Barcase: That's great. Thank you so much. And, you know, there are a lot of free resources out there. As far as support groups and things like this, where we just come on and talk about it. There's podcasts, there's books. So you know, for someone who does a lot of self study. (That's where I thrive) I thrive in that...you know, having the audible, having the podcast, doing the journaling on my own. But there's definitely times where I need the extra support in therapy, you know, bigger, more professional help, I guess, in that sense.

Thank you so much for tuning into this session. A conversation about loss hosted by The Mental Well. My name is Brittni Barcase, one of the faces of The Mental Well. We so enjoyed having grief clinician, Donna Kane with us, and are looking forward to our upcoming two weeks series with Donna starting on October 19th, using journaling to manage loss.

If you're looking for more resources regarding loss, please head over to TheMentalWellblog.org, where you can contact us for more information or see details for any upcoming events such as

using journaling to Manage Loss. Be sure to also check out the plethora of resources available through Jewish community services at jesbalt.org. That's jesbalt.org. And lastly, be on the lookout for more conversations, just like this one by following us on Instagram at [@the_mentalwell](https://www.instagram.com/the_mentalwell). And if you have any topics you'd like us to cover, just send us a message. Be well, everyone .