

Name

# Your Attitude and Your Grief

## by Sherry Williams White

**A B C** — a Simple Guideline for Grief

When it comes to grief, many people think of it as just an emotional response to a loss, but grief is much more.  Grief is the emotional, psychological, social, physical, and spiritual reaction to loss. Grief takes a lot of hard work. It is a time where we are forced to look at our belief systems and search for meaning in life. Grief is not a place or thing. It is not an illness or disease. Grief is a process that requires movement forward toward a different kind of life. It is movement toward a life without our loved one, a life that is not better or worse but different.

I recently had a friend send me an e-mail about attitude and as I looked at it, I realized that it was the perfect formula for moving through grief in a positive and constructive way. This e-mail was truly an eye opener. For once, I received verification that many of the answers to life's questions are right in front of us, we just have to take the time to look for them. Here is what the e-mail said:

When...

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

are represented as...

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

Then...

* HARDWORK =  98%
* KNOWLEDGE  =  96%
* ATTITUDE  =  100%

So, if we look at **HARDWORK** it is important to know that you do have some choices about the outcomes of your grief journey.  You do have control over how you move through this challenging time in your life, but it is hard work. You have to make some hard decisions. Sometimes you have to struggle daily just to get out of bed. You have to work to keep your mind focused on what you are doing. It requires real effort on your part sometimes just to breathe because you are so tired, overwhelmed and confused. Your mind is filled with questions and you are looking for answers that will tell you how to go on. This is not easy. It is not something that you can do without thinking or without effort. It takes commitment. You have to commit to yourself, to your family, and to your loved one who died that you will make it. You have to work hard to make your loved one's life have meaning and the best way you can do that is by working hard to make a new life for yourself. With hard work you can create a new life that will be a tribute to your loved one and the person that they have helped you become.

**Then there is KNOWLEDGE — KNOWLEDGE = 96%**

When you are in situations that require new skills, you have to have information in order to master them. So, knowledge and information can provide a great sense of power over situations where you feel out of control. And that only stands to reason if you look at other situations where you have felt most out of control. What helped you most? It was gathering the facts, knowing what you could expect and what options you had.

Grief is a time in your life where you feel totally out of control because everything around you has changed and the only thing you have control over is how you move forward. It is through information that you gain a sense of control and control gives you a sense of power over what is happening to you.

It is important to gather information about the process of grief. This will help validate your feelings and relieve your fears.  Knowledge gives you the confidence that you are okay and that you are not going crazy. It lets you know that what you are feeling is normal and okay.  Knowledge and information can give you the tools to make decisions. And when you feel prepared, it is easier to make those decisions no matter how difficult they may seem.  Information and knowledge is power.

**But ATTITUDE = 100%**

Attitude is what it is all about. Do you see the glass half full or half empty? Is this the worst thing that has ever happened to you and you don't know how you will go on? Or, is this the worst thing that has ever happened to you and you might not know exactly how you will make it, but you know that through the grace of God and with the help of friends and loved ones you will survive?  You see, how you look at life and what you believe plays a major role in how we cope. Your mind set and point of view about the world around you are very powerful tools that can help you overcome great obstacles.

Your attitude or disposition or mood greatly impact how you look at the world. In fact, you may even see great obstacles as challenges to grow and learn more about yourself. Grief is indeed not a journey that you chose to take, but you can determine that you can grow from it. You can learn a lot about yourself, your family and your value systems. You can learn new skills and find new strengths in yourself that will help you become a different person. You can accept the challenge of grief and find a new you.