

FREE YOURSELF FROM THE STRUGGLE TO 'GET OVER' YOUR GRIEF

When a loved one dies, we find ourselves bereft and isolated in a dark place of sorrow. We feel isolated from the world – in fact, we often feel frustrated that the world *obstinately* continues on. We ask, “*How can the world go on when my world has come to a halt?*”

This feels like a heavy weight we cannot release. We feel our world is out of control and we will never regain a sense of contentment. *We are sorrowful, we are overwhelmed and we feel we have **no choice** but to get over what has happened in our lives and in our world.*

Does this sound right?

I would like to ask all of you a question. What if you didn't have to get over what has happened? What if, despite the well wishes of those who care deeply about us, we don't have to get over, move on from or move past loss?

There is a growing body of work in the research that invites all of us to *stop trying to do the impossible!*

For a very long time, our efforts as bereaved people have been focused upon doing just that. Think about it. Is it truly possible to ever forget someone we have loved? It is possible – ever – to get over, move on or move past?

Rather, as new research invites, let us acknowledge and honor our continuing bonds with our loved ones who have gone before us. These “continuing bonds” are those components of our relationships that gave us strength,

bolstered us up, gave us a sense of trust and provided us with uncompromised love.

These are the building blocks that allow us to move forward from life-altering loss. These “bonds” comprise the foundation that *we have built for ourselves*, in union with our loved ones.

Note that this does not suggest we try to live in the past. In fact, it is quite the opposite. From this foundation, *we take our loved ones with us* in spiritual and emotional ways that empower us to re-invest in life, to live fully and to love.

So, as grievors, how do we move forward and create lives that offer hope? To some, the prospect of hope seems impossible. However, in my work, I have seen people re-create lives that are satisfying and in many, many ways, profoundly meaningful.