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COPING WITH LOSING SOMEONE WHO ISN'T GONE

Tools for the Travel

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Symptoms of Grief

FEELINGS

Sadness
Anger
Guilt
Anxiety
Loneliness
Fatigue
Helplessness
Shock
Yearning
Emancipation

COGNITIVE

Disbelief
Confusion
Preoccupation
Sense of presence
Visions/Hallucinations

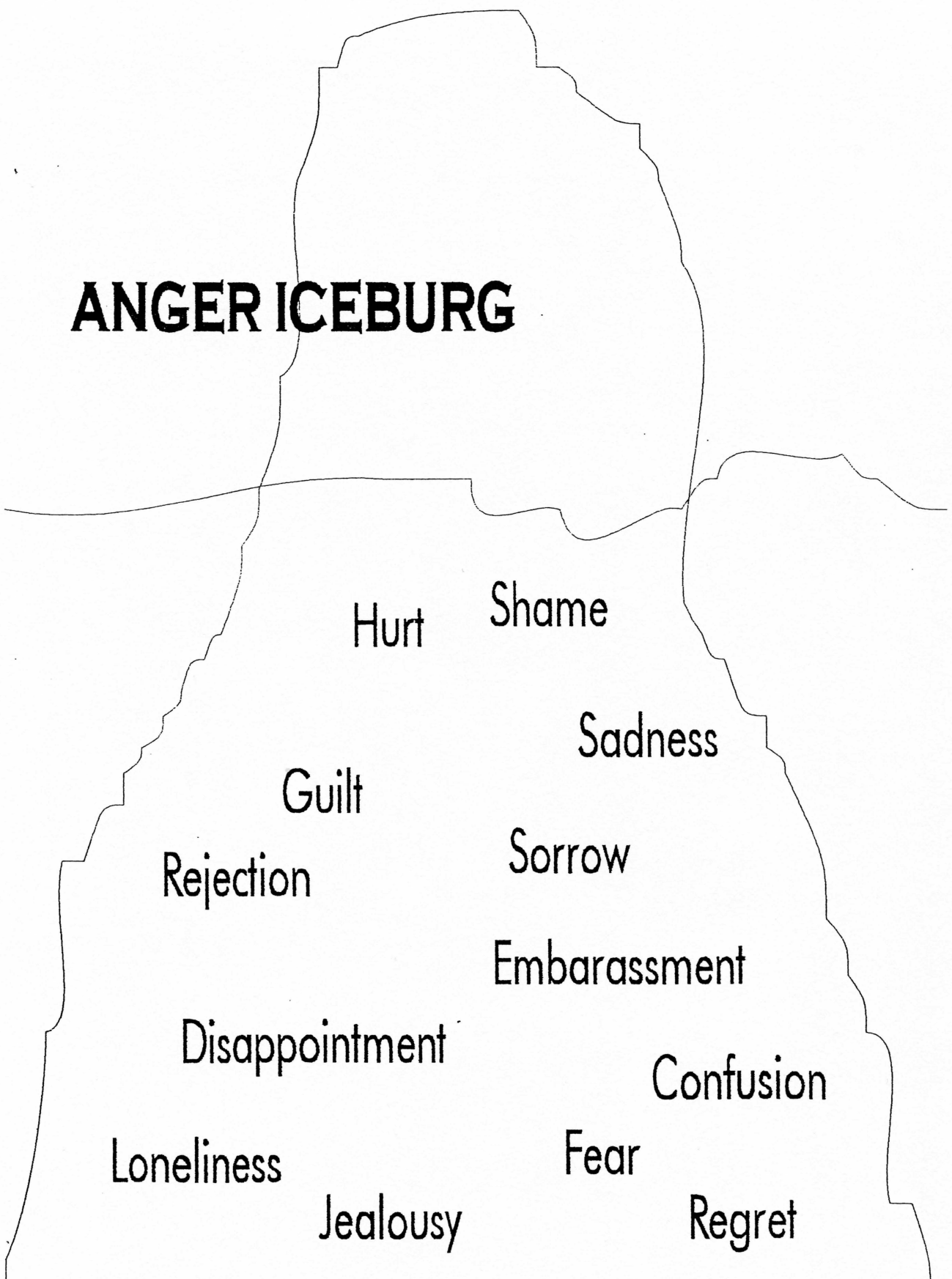
PHYSICAL

Relief
Numbness
Hollowness in stomach
Tightness in chest
Tightness in throat
Sense of
 depersonalization
 (nothing seems real)
Breathlessness
Weakness
Lack of energy
Dry mouth

BEHAVIORAL

Sleep disturbance
Appetite disturbance
Absent-mindedness
Social withdrawal
Dreams of the deceased
Avoidance of reminders
Searching, calling out
Restless overactivity
Crying
Visiting places or
 carrying objects as
 reminders
Treasuring objects of the
 deceased

ANGER ICEBURG

An iceberg diagram where the tip above the water is labeled 'ANGER ICEBURG'. The submerged part of the iceberg contains a list of emotions: Hurt, Shame, Guilt, Sadness, Rejection, Sorrow, Disappointment, Embarrassment, Loneliness, Fear, Jealousy, Confusion, and Regret.

Hurt

Shame

Sadness

Guilt

Sorrow

Rejection

Embarrassment

Disappointment

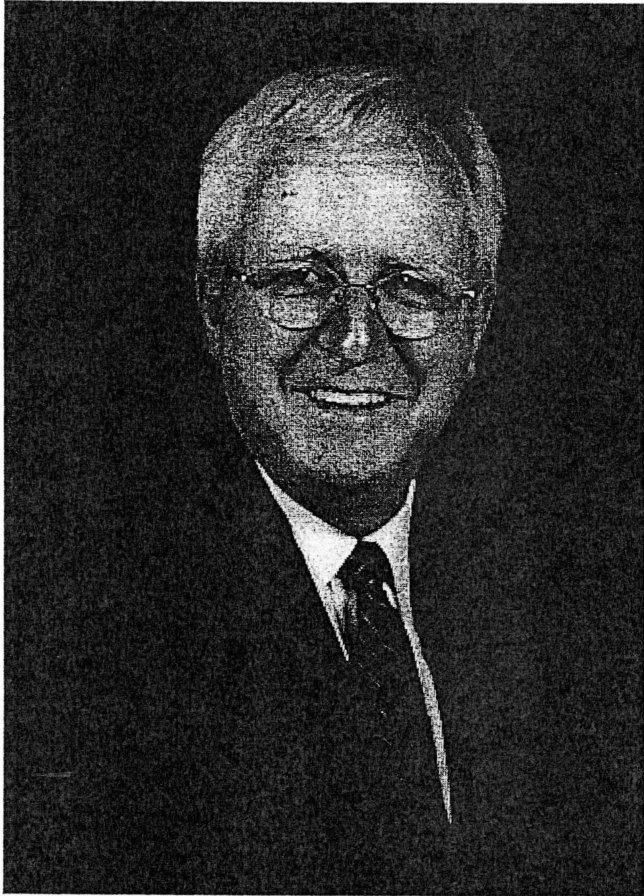
Confusion

Loneliness

Fear

Jealousy

Regret



Q&A with Doug Manning

Q. What inspired your work as an author and lecturer?

A. My work began when a couple from the church where I was the pastor lost a young daughter from a simple case of the croup. The mother was distraught and crying in the hospital room. The doctor and her husband were trying to calm her when she looked up and said, *"Don't take my grief away from me. I deserve it and I am going to have it."* I found that to be one of the most profound statements about what people in grief need. So this became the title of one of my first books and started me on the road to my second career.

GOOD GRIEF TOOLS

- ❖ EXPRESSION — TAKE THE TIME & BE PURPOSEFUL
 - WRITE
 - TALK
 - USE ARTISTIC TALENTS IN MUSIC, PAINTING, DRAWING
 - SOB
 - SEE THE HUMOR, USE IT, & LAUGH
 - REMINISCE WITH TRUSTED FRIEND/PROFESSIONAL/FAMILY MEMBER

- ❖ REDEFINE
 - SELF
 - ROLES
 - TERMS
 - STRENGTH = COURAGE [TO SEE, FEEL, GRIEVE] NOT STOICISM
 - SOBBING = EXPRESSION OF GRIEF & IS COURAGEOUS NOT “FALLING APART”, “LOSING IT”, “LOSS OF CONTROL”
 - ACCEPTANCE = ACKNOWLEDGMENT NOT NECESSARILY APPROVAL

- ❖ LEARN ABOUT YOUR SITUATION
 - READ
 - ASK PROFESSIONALS

- ❖ USE/SEEK SUPPORT
 - TRUSTED FRIENDS/FAMILY
 - PROFESSIONALS

- ❖ BALANCE
 - WALLOW WITH DISTRACTION
 - EXPRESSION WITH WITHDRAWAL
 - SOLITUDE WITH SOCIAL
 - LOOKING BACK WITH LOOKING FORWARD

- ❖ EXAMINE BELIEFS/LIFE PHILOSOPHIES

- ❖ MEDITATE/PRAY/AFFIRM

- ❖ GIVE PERMISSIONS
 - TO GRIEVE
 - TO DO ALL OF THE ABOVE

TEARS and GRIEF

There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love.

Washington Irving

Grief can't be shared. Everyone carries it alone. His own burden in his own way.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Grief changes shape, but it never ends.

Keanu Reeves

Grief is a normal and natural response to loss. It is originally an unlearned feeling process. Keeping grief inside increases your pain.

Anne Grant

Grief is perhaps an unknown territory for you. You might feel both helpless and hopeless without a sense of a "map" for the journey. Confusion is the hallmark of a transition. To rebuild both your inner and outer world is a major project.

Anne Grant

Grief is the price we pay for love.

Queen Elizabeth II

If you suppress grief too much, it can well redouble.

Moliere

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how.

James Russell Lowell

THINGS I MISS MOST ABOUT MY _____

RELATIONSHIP

NAME

DATE: _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

MESSAGE OF THE MAPLES

by Edward Ziegler

I knew him to be a wise man, living in seclusion with his wife, but willing, he said, to receive me if I were ever in his part of New England.

I had heard him speak years before and recently had read several of his books. Now I was seeking him out because I had hopes his wisdom might relieve the gnawing melancholy that darkened my days. Financial losses and an old disability had combined to take much of the savor from life.

On a clear, late-winter day, I found him on his farm near Corinth, Vt., surrounded by fields and woodlands shrouded in snow. After years of writing and lecturing and helping others, as a minister and 'physician to the soul,' Edgar N. Jackson was now applying his own wisdom to himself. He had been struck down by a severe stroke. It left him paralyzed on his right side and unable to speak.

The early prognosis had been grave. They told Estelle, his wife of 53 years, that recovery of speech was unlikely. Yet within a few weeks he had regained his ability to talk and he was determined to recover still more of his faculties.

He rose to greet me. He was a distinguished-looking man of middle height, moving slowly, aided by a cane, with an unmistakable sparkle in his gaze. He led me into his study. It was lined with books, new and old, all surrounding a desk on which sat a word processor and reams of papers and magazines.

He said he was glad to hear that his books had helped me. They had, indeed, I said, but still, a series of setbacks had added up to a sorrow I wasn't sure I could master.

"Then, in a sense, you're grief-stricken," he said.

But I hadn't lost anyone close to me, I protested.

"Nevertheless, what you're going through is related to grief. What's essential is to mourn your losses fully and find solace by learning to live with them." People who don't, he added, wind up bitter and disillusioned by sorrow. They're unable to find solace. But others who creatively use the act of mourning can gain new sensitivity and a richer faith. "That's why you so often hear that we have to talk out our feelings, express our emotions. That's part of the mourning process. Only then can healing follow.

"Let me show you something," he offered, pointing through the window to a stand of bare sugar maples, stolidly facing the sharp winds that plucked at their barren branches and sent a dusting of yesterday's snowfall shimmering downward. A former owner had planted the maples around the perimeter of a three-acre pasture.

We walked out a side door and moved slowly on the crunching snow to the pasture. It was a rocky expanse rife with grass and wild flowers in summer, but now brown and wizened by frost-kill. Strung between each large tree, I noticed, were strands of old barbed wire.

"Sixty years ago the man who planted these trees used them to fence in this pasture, and saved a lot of work digging post holes. It was a trauma for the young trees to have barbed wire hammered into their tender bark. Some fought it. Others adapted. So you can see here, the barbed wire has been accepted and incorporated into the life of this tree - but not of that one over there."

He pointed to an old tree severely disfigured by the wire. "Why did that tree injure itself by fighting against the barbed wire, while this one here became master of the wire instead of its victim?"

The nearby tree showed no marks at all. Instead of the long, anguished scars, all that appeared was the wire entering one side and emerging on the other - almost as if it had been inserted by a drill bit.

"I've thought a lot about this grove of trees," he said as we turned to go back to the house. "What internal forces make it possible to overcome an injury like barbed wire, rather than allowing it to distort the rest of life? How can one person transform grief into new growth instead of allowing it to become a life-destroying intrusion?"

Edgar could not explain what happened to the maples, he admitted. "But with people," he continued, "things are much clearer. There are ways to confront adversity and work your way through that mourning period. First, you try to keep a youthful outlook. Then you don't bear grudges. And perhaps most important, you make every effort to be kind to yourself. That's the tough one. You have to spend a lot of time with yourself, and most of us tend to be far too critical. Sign a peace treaty with yourself, I say. Forgive yourself for the dumb mistakes you've made."

After another pensive glance at the maple grove, he led the way back into the house. "If we are wise in the way we handle grief, if we can mourn promptly and fully, the barbed wire doesn't win. We can overcome any sorrow, and life can be lived triumphantly."

Estelle appeared with a piece of applesauce cake and a cup of coffee. "I try to keep a growing edge on my life, seeking new knowledge, new friendships, new experience," Edgar continued, glancing over to the new computer and a half-dozen new books on his desk. He had been waging his own battle. He was still frustrated by his partially paralyzed right side, but he wasn't conceding defeat.

"We can use our painful experiences as excuses for retreat. Or we can accept the promises of resurrection and rebirth." His gaze turned toward the snow-mantled pasture across the road. "You have your problems. I have my own struggles. I'll work on mine," he offered, "if you work on yours."

"Thanks, I will," I promised, and we shook hands. We had a deal. I felt I had won some new understanding - and now had a strategy for handling my sorrows.

As I drove down the valley, I could glimpse his farm across the meadows. The wind toyed with the lofty tops of those living fence posts, which, though still mysterious, had so much to say to all of us.