

Self-Healing Newsletter

For People Who Enjoy Helping Themselves

September 2006

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### **IN THIS ISSUE**

#### **GRIEF AND SADNESS**

Hi Everybody!

During my very busy summer that involved getting kids ready for college and visiting relatives in other states, I began to look forward to fall as my season to relax and slow down. I have heard from several clients that their summers were unexpectedly stressful with children home all day, more frequent family events, and vacations which were often a mixed bag of fun and fatigue. As much as most of us hate to see the days growing shorter, fall can be a time to slow down and recover from the intensity of summer heat and activities. Now that September has arrived, I am eager to begin communicating with you again through my monthly newsletters. This month's newsletter will focus on recovering from grief.

#### **Layers of Grief**

Recently, several of my clients have been dealing with the stress of losing a loved one. In particular, they have been puzzled by the intensity of their grief. Over the years, I have observed that the grieving process is often complicated by what I call a "layering effect." The layering effect occurs when a current loss reminds us of previous losses. For example, the loss of a parent may cause us to recall other losses including a divorce, job loss, or deaths of other loved ones. So when a parent dies, not only is it common to experience sadness for the parent, it is common to re-experience sadness surrounding previous losses. Complicating matters, a second layering effect can occur when a current loss invokes not only sadness but a multitude of feelings, including anger and guilt. Often these feelings arise from unresolved issues with the person who has died. Sometimes people also experience anxiety or fear especially if abuse or trauma occurred with the deceased person. Often these secondary feelings are either fully or partially masked by the initial stronger feeling of sadness.

In the past, the only way to treat grief was to have the person talk endlessly about the loss and about their sadness. However, this often resulted in the person being stuck in his or her sadness. For the last five years, I have used

Emotional Transformation Therapy (ETT) to quickly treat intense grief by relieving the sadness, anger, guilt, and fear that often accompany the loss of someone important. Emotional Transformation Therapy often resolves grief in three or four sessions unless the grief is complicated by unresolved trauma. In these cases, it can take two to three months to resolve grief.

For those of you who have not yet experienced Emotional Transformation Therapy, it combines looking at colored light that shines from a specialized light box while talking about one's concerns. This process creates a state of calm that neutralizes stress, anger, and anxiety, as well as many other negative emotions arising from abuse, illness, trauma, and unresolved loss. The positive emotional changes that occur are almost always long lasting and lead to improvements in many areas of a person's life.

### **Pam's Story**

My client, Pam, had recently lost her mother to cancer. By the time she came to see me, she had been grieving for several months and was amazed at the amount of sadness that she still felt. She had begun to show signs of depression, such as sleeplessness, overeating, difficulty concentrating, and extreme fatigue. She stated that she was unaware of any feelings besides sadness that might be complicating her grief. I had her talk about her experience while sitting in front of the light box, and I began utilizing a color that helps people become more aware of their feelings. She was surprised to discover that she was feeling quite a bit of anger at her mother, in addition to sadness. She began to talk about her anger and recall situations with her mother that had made angry. I then changed the color of the light to the one related to anger and had her use an expressive technique to dissipate the intensity of her feelings.

With the anger relieved, Pam realized that her mother's death also caused her to re-experience feelings of loss and resentment that she had felt after her divorce several years ago. After several sessions using the light box in conjunction with talking about her experiences, these feelings also subsided and her depressive symptoms disappeared. Her sadness over her mother's death, while still present, was less intense, and she was able to function well on a day to day basis.

### **Take Care of Yourself!**

I explain to clients dealing with grief that there is no correct timetable for overcoming grief. Each person progresses through grief at his or her own rate based on highly individual needs.

The purpose of Emotional Transformation Therapy is not to make grief disappear instantly, since grief is a natural response to loss. However, when grief becomes so overwhelming that it consumes one's thoughts and makes it difficult to function, ETT can be used to lessen the intensity of grief and uncover feelings contributing to grief.

With Emotional Transformation Therapy, difficult emotional concerns that used to require lengthy therapy now can be resolved in a relatively short period of time. There is no need to suffer if you are experiencing emotional upset. If you or someone you care about is struggling with grief, trauma, or other emotional upsets, please call me at 630-960-2887 or email me at [dlippmann@att.net](mailto:dlippmann@att.net) to schedule an appointment. To learn more about Emotional Transformation Therapy, please visit my website at [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://www.wellness-innovations.com) where you can download a free booklet on this innovative technique.

The newsletter topic for this month, written by my colleague, Tony, is entitled ***Natural Sadness***. It describes the importance of recognizing and expressing your sadness. If you or someone you know is dealing with a loss or trauma, please give me a call.

## **NATURAL SADNESS**

### WHAT SADNESS IS

Sadness is a natural emotion or feeling.  
We feel sadness whenever we LOSE something that we previously enjoyed. Experiencing sadness is good for us because it offers RELIEF from the pain of the loss and gives us a MEASURE of the importance of what we have lost.

### HOW IT WORKS

Whenever we lose something, part of our energy goes into feeling sad.

If it's a major loss (like the death of a loved one), almost all of our energy goes into sadness.

If it's a minor loss (like if we've lost a favorite shirt), it may be so small we don't even notice it.

Sadness has a natural duration.  
We will get over it within a certain amount of time if we admit to it and express it. If we don't admit to it (if we deny that it's there), we can feel "uncentered" or "crazy."

If we don't express it (if we keep it inside), it takes a much longer time to get over it.

Although sadness feels bad when we first notice it, it feels good to express it (by crying if needed).  
However, it feels much worse when we deny or squelch it.

It helps to express our sadness to people who care about us, but expressing it alone is good for us, too.

However, it often takes longer to overcome sadness when we can't share our feelings with others.

Sadness is really just raw energy.

After we have admitted to it and expressed it enough, we often feel a major boost in our energy level.

We each experience a particular set of physical sensations in our bodies which indicate sadness to us.

People feel sadness in various ways and in various parts of their bodies.

The most common sensations are "a lump in the throat," "emptiness" in the chest, or swelling in the face and around the eyes.

Your sensation of sadness may be one of these, or it may be entirely different.

### FEELING YOUR SADNESS

It is vital to your emotional health to know how sadness feels to you in your body.

So, right now, take a moment to remind yourself of the worst sadness you ever felt.

As you remember losing something very important to you, ask yourself, "What do I FEEL in my body?"

Once you recognize your own "sad place" in your body, you can stop thinking about that bad event in your life!

Notice that you are able to let go of that memory almost as quickly as you were able to remember it!

It is very important that you admit to yourself that you are sad whenever you feel this sensation in this part of your body.

As a matter of fact, you will need to get better and better at recognizing even very slight sensations of sadness if you want to improve your life.

### SADNESS OR SOME OTHER FEELING?

It is possible to believe that you are sad when what you are really feeling is angry (most common), scared, or guilty.

If your sadness masks these other feelings, this may be part of your strategy for getting along in the world.

Often this is a way of coping, subconsciously, with life's difficulties.

The best way to handle sadness and other feelings is to try to discover what is causing them.

Talking to a therapist can be especially helpful when you are having difficulty understanding what you're feeling and why you're feeling it.

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If grief, depression, or other feelings are making it difficult for you to enjoy life, please give me a call. It is possible to experience rapid, long lasting relief through Emotional Transformation Therapy. You deserve peace of mind and healing.

Wishing you a peaceful fall,

**Dan Lippmann, LCSW, BCD**

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P.S. I want to thank all of you who have recently referred friends and family to me. If your friends would like more information on my services, have them visit my website at [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://www.wellness-innovations.com). Please forward this newsletter to your friends and associates who may be experiencing grief.

*Dan Lippmann has more than 25 years of individual and marital counseling experience. In addition to being licensed, he is a Board Certified Diplomate in Clinical Social Work. After facilitating his own recovery from a chronic pain condition in 1987, Mr. Lippmann began collaborating with experts in the field of mind-body health to develop innovative stress reduction and wellness techniques. He has been cited as a "Master Practitioner" in the book, Light Years Ahead, and in July 1999 his work on stress reduction was featured in the Chicago Tribune. He has also been interviewed about his work on radio and television. To receive this free monthly email newsletter, visit [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://www.wellness-innovations.com).*