

"*STUNNED* brings purpose and direction to the painful grief process from someone who's been there: It meets you right where you are."

—DARRELL AND STEVIE WALTRIP,
founders of Motor Racing Outreach



STUNNED BY GRIEF

REMAPPING YOUR LIFE

WHEN LOSS CHANGES EVERYTHING

Judy Brizendine



scraping the rocks by pressing their feet against it to maintain clearance. He was so proud of having conquered this treacherous pass! However, he could not have done it alone.

A mental picture similar to that of jeeping can represent grief. The path is bumpy, and the obstacles are challenging. In grief, as in jeeping, the path and terrain are uncertain. Often, we come very close to scraping ourselves on the jagged rock edges—and sometimes we actually do, because we just cannot stop it from happening. The many ups and downs will frequently take us by surprise.

Sometimes we have no idea what is happening to us—or why.

Controlling Emotional Chaos

Grief, by its very nature, is a disorderly process. Tangled emotions threaten to strangle us at times as we struggle to control our out-of-control emotional roller coasters. Now and then, total upheaval and chaos reign. Nevertheless, we must *learn* to be gentle with ourselves.

The grief journey is certainly a back-and-forth, uneven path to an unfamiliar destination. We take one step forward, followed by two or three steps back. We advance slowly, and then we suffer a stunning blow as we suddenly collapse on our knees or fall flat on our faces, yet again.

Recognize (*and remember*) that this jagged path is actually not a *regression* in our healing journeys, but a *progression*—and simply part of the process. You *are* getting better, so try to be patient with yourself. What is important is to get back up and keep on going.

*Our greatest glory
is not in never
falling, but in rising
every time we fall.*

—Confucius

An erratic journey is the reality of grief. Learning what to expect can free us to experience the process, work through the pain, see beyond it—and stop beating ourselves up when we tumble down.

Sometimes we have to struggle to gain control over our emotions because if we do not, our emotions will rule our lives.

We must take action—or more specifically, *counter-action*—to regain control and change direction instead of giving in to an emotional state we do not want to occupy. We may need to laugh when we don't feel like it. Or act even though we are frozen with fear. Or remember we are God's handiwork when we are hypercritical of ourselves.

Episodes of feeling sorry for oneself are common responses to loss, and falling into that mindset is easy. I was no different. Luckily, I generally caught myself before sinking too deep (or someone reminded me) and I stopped. Instead, I switched gears toward counting my blessings—my beautiful daughter who needed me, family and great friends, God, a satisfying job, and more. Before long, my *counter-action* worked! Negative and positive emotions can't occupy the same space simultaneously—at least not in my experience.

With God's Help, We Have Power

We are far more powerful than we realize. During grief, we would do ourselves a favor if we reflected on things that remind us of our strengths rather than our weaknesses. Try to stay focused on positive, life-affirming, faith-building ideas and truths.

Unless you've been through it, you can't understand it. It's that simple.

You can't breathe. You can't think. You can't move.

STUNNED by Grief is a highly focused, conversational book that cuts through the clutter and zeroes in on "flashpoint" issues critical to a griever's healing. It's realistic. Revealing. Practical.

A fellow traveler's down-to-earth approach to grief, ***STUNNED*** is for anyone struggling with death—or any of life's tragic losses. Don't go through grief alone. Join the author to discover:

- ▶ Straight talk from people who have been there
- ▶ What to expect and how to thrive again
- ▶ Tools, tips and strategies to enhance healing and remap your life
- ▶ How God can transform your grief

— EASY TO USE FORMAT. READ STRAIGHT THROUGH—OR TURN TO ANY KEY TOPIC. —

"From loss to renewal, *STUNNED* provides clear, inspirational steps to manage the death of a loved one. Everyone, from military spouses to parents and friends, will find calm, steady guidance that resonates."

—SCOTT RUTTER (LTC, U.S. Army, Ret.), national spokesman,
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

"Life is about the never-ending beginnings we all experience through loss and change. Read and learn from Judy's experience."

—BERNIE SIEGEL, MD, author of *365 Prescriptions for the Soul*
and *Prescriptions for Living*

Do you feel confused? Overwhelmed? Lost?
11 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GRIEF – Find out more at
www.StunnedByGrief.com

Companion *STUNNED by Grief Journal* available

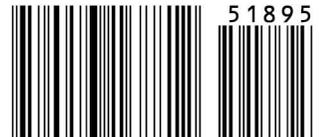


Judy Brizendine is a business professional whose life radically changed course after the tragic, sudden death of her husband. That experience, along with facilitating grief-support workshops, helped her define a new, practical, and personal approach to grief.


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