

"*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



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## HOPE FOR YOU

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*There are only two ways to live your life.  
One is as though nothing is a miracle.  
The other is as though everything is a miracle.*

—ALBERT EINSTEIN

To move forward, sometimes we need a few words to make us smile, a bit of “positive reinforcement” to nudge us along, and someone who understands.

When you need a boost, turn to these pages and start reading! Here you will find encouragement as you read thoughts and heartfelt suggestions written by fellow travelers at various stages in their grief journeys.

You are not alone. You *can* pull through. Others have been where you are now, and they have found hope.  
This hope is also for you.

Finally, a short collection of positive writings, lessons learned, and powerful verses from the Bible are included to reassure you, build your faith—and stimulate your thinking to new possibilities.

Simply read, savor, and *dream*. Let the optimistic words saturate your mind and provoke your thinking with new seeds of promise and hope.

## **ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUGGESTIONS FROM GRIEF TRAVELERS**

### **You Are not Alone—Others Have Made It**

*“Know that you are not alone—and many have fought the battle you’re in and have come through to continue with life. Yes, you will have scars, but they will just make you a stronger and better person.”*

### **Don’t Be Afraid to Talk about Your Loved One**

*“My five-year-old son and I talk about my husband/his daddy every day. It makes us feel better to share our happy memories and sad and mad feelings about our loss. It feels normal and natural to include his [daddy’s] memory throughout our daily activities.”*

### **Journaling Helps**

*“I have a journal where I write letters to my husband whenever the need arises. Putting my feelings down on paper is cathartic.”*

### **Don’t Try to Hurry Your Grieving**

*“Don’t be in a hurry to try to get your life back to ‘normal.’ Just go with your feelings as you navigate your way to a ‘new normal.’ It took me over*

*six months before I started to pack away only half of the things from my husband's closet.”*

### **Pamper Yourself and Help Others**

*“Engage in activities that make you feel good: exercise, meeting with friends, spa treatments, weekends away, hobbies, etc. Volunteering and helping others in grief takes your mind off of your own pain for a while.”*

### **Grieving Is not a ‘Lone Ranger’ Process**

*“For those of you joining this group [grief-support group], you will find encouragement and insight by being with people who share this same painful chapter in life. I lost my faith in God when I lost my husband, but being part of this group has helped to repair my cold heart and restore my faith.*

*“Sharing my memories and feelings with people who are grieving is especially helpful and comforting. I've learned that what I'm going through is normal, and I have learned good tools to cope when the sad times hit. This group was a Godsend straight to me. So please hang in there and give it time, and realize that the answer to our pain in our own lives lies within us, as we feel free to give and receive help in an open way.”*

### **Grief Takes Time, but a Meaningful New Life Is Possible**

*“It has been two and one-half years now since my husband passed away. I am left with raising my two sons, ages ten and seven, alone. I put much of my grieving aside, to tend to the everyday living and school activities. I was there for them, putting on the brave face and comforting them, telling them it would be all right.*

*“Now, after two and one-half years, I realized I need to address my loss head-on. I don’t cry as much anymore, and my memories of our life together are very precious. I have taken baby steps forward, just a little at a time, to try and accomplish things on my own.*

*“I have hope that there is a life for me without him. At first, I was content to stay living in the memories, but now I realize he would not want me to mourn for the rest of my life. He would not want me and our sons to be unhappy because he was not there. He loved us too much for that. So I am going forward.*

*“I, like many of you, was stuck for a long while. But now I can see that there is my life to be lived . . . A life that is different, finding meaning in different things from what we knew before.*

*“I have come to know that it is best to reach out to people for help and to help others. I relish my family relationships and friendships. I do not take any relationships for granted. Especially my sons.*

*“Thank you, dear God, for loving me and showing me there is hope, love, and strength in You.”*

### **Victor or Victim? It’s a Choice Every Day**

*“I wanted to share with you what I learned through this grief-support group. When I first came, it was so hard to get out of my car and walk into this group.*

*“I was so devastated by the loss of my husband and the previous two years of pain and turmoil cancer brought into our lives. I am a stay-at-home mom with two children, five and six years old. I felt scared and was clutching a small thread to keep me going. I hung onto my faith in God and my belief that He loved me and has a bigger plan for my life that I can’t see now.*

*“This group gave me a safe place to come and share with people who really understood. I have come so far in ten weeks. This group showed me*

*that it's a 'choice every day to choose being a victor rather than being a victim.' The more you talk about it, listen to others, and learn, and above all pray and give it to God, the more you're on the way to healing."*

### **There Is Hope—with God, I Can Make It**

*"There is light at the end of the tunnel. This ten-week group has not ended my grief, but the love and support I received have helped me to face the new chapter in my life . . . I lost my beloved husband seven months ago and have dealt with many challenges that he handled. I never thought I'd get through these hurdles, but God has carried me through. I pray the Lord will wrap His loving arms around you and grant you the peace you're seeking."*

### **Don't Look too Far Ahead and Ask God for Help**

*"I know your pain! I would like to tell you what has helped me the most thus far. Get through the moment only—try not to look too far ahead. Cry those tears of sorrow. And cry out to God for help and watch how He shows Himself."*

### **Trust Others Who Have Traveled Before You**

*"I am so tired of the pain and reality of your death. I see your clothes and my heart stops. Everything I see, feel, touch, and smell has a connection to you.*

*"I don't want to let go of the best thing that ever happened to me, but I am being pulled by the realities of living. I am being encouraged by those who have gone before me.*

*"I wonder when I will say, 'Enough pain—I choose to live,' as others have in the group."*

**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](http://www.StunnedByGrief.com)

Companion *STUNNED by Grief Journal* available

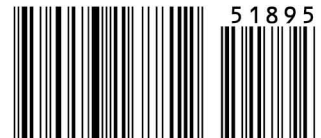


**Judy Brizendine** is a business professional whose life radically changed course after the tragic, sudden death of her husband. That experience, along with facilitating grief-support workshops, helped her define a new, practical, and personal approach to grief.

  
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