

AUTHOR BIO AND RELATED INFORMATION



Judy Brizendine

Regardless of her title throughout her professional career, research and writing played key roles. And so, when considering a career shift five years ago due to major life changes, writing skyrocketed to the top of her list—along with a desire to make a difference.

Challenged by the difficulties of her grief experience and its impact on her life, Judy became especially concerned about others struggling to cope with the effects of grief and loss in their lives.

The result is a new concept—remapping—that separates the grieving process into its most basic elements: time, feelings, acceptance, release, renewal, and support. Remapping is a personal, practical approach that looks at grieving from a new perspective, and plainly illustrates the process of moving full-circle from loss to living a full and reconnected life again.

Remapping is a symbol of hope.

STUNNED by Grief **Backstory**

For too long, grief has been a misunderstood subject and one that is easily avoided. Grief is not a four-letter word. And grief is not something to be ashamed of.

STUNNED by Grief gradually took shape as Judy's response to the sudden death of her first husband John Brizendine, the illness and death of her father, her trials in facing loss, and the priceless insights gained through connecting with other grievers by facilitating grief-support groups.

Judy met Jon Kreider, a widower, years after both of their spouses died—and the two of them were married in 2002. Jon's wife died after fighting cancer for twenty years and his mother died four months later. Because of their opposite experiences with loss, they are uniquely equipped to communicate different perspectives about the healing process.

Seeing how critical resolved grief is for future health and happiness, Judy and Jon pledged to carry the message—and to diligently pursue the goal of bringing hope to people who are hurting.

Tragedy and grief are not the end of the story. Loss brings change, and while the change may be unexpected and even unwelcomed, loss leads to a new beginning. Judy and Jon want to help people understand that they have a *choice* about how to handle the tragedy and the new beginning that follows—and their *decision* makes all the difference.

Jon Kreider

Jon Kreider is a man with a mission. After his wife died and he participated in grief-support groups (first as a member and later as a facilitator), he realized how important it is to face grief head-on. Jon's passion for people who grieve came to life at that time.



Leaders realized Jon has an uncanny ability to relate to support-group members, give encouragement, and offer helpful direction. He is able to *connect* with people. Grievors need to believe that someone understands—and only someone who has been there really knows.

Jon is committed to fighting the battle to bring this issue to light—so people will start thinking and talking about it *honestly and openly*—and understand that the way they handle grief affects their entire lives.

Excerpts from *STUNNED by Grief*:

Many people do not have access to support groups, nor do they have anyone to turn to for answers to their questions about grieving. Even among professionals, the importance of the grieving process is sometimes minimized or misunderstood. Clearly, the effects of loss are far-reaching. And an ever-growing need exists for people to learn about the subject.

“Grief affects every area of one’s life. And sooner or later everyone will experience profound loss. Countless problems people face—often without knowing it—center on grief. Healing and restoration from grief are necessary for emotional, relational, spiritual, and physical health.

“Unresolved grief is the root of many problems people face such as divorce, other relational issues, addictions, depression, and various physical ailments. Unresolved grief is a serious matter.

“Since death is inescapable, each of us will inevitably lose someone we love dearly. And as the largest segments of our population age, the sheer number of people who encounter grief will increase dramatically. Each of us will also face devastating losses of many types that are not associated with death—but are still grief.”

Goal:

Judy and Jon are committed to focusing attention on grief and changing the way people view one of the toughest experiences each of us will face.

Their goal is to help more and more people recover from loss and live healthy, happy lives again, prompting them, in turn, to help others.