
Certified Grief Facilitator Training

Denise M. Brown



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About Me

- Sold CareGiving.com in March 2020 to Ohio's Hospice to focus on training
- Launched CCC training in 2016 and CCF in 2018
- Regularly share insights with reporters
- 2017 Influencer in Aging
- Helped my parents; my mom died in 2022, my dad in 2023
- My brother died unexpectedly in August 2021

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The Grieving Experience

- Universal Emotions
- Common Experiences
- Unexpected Reactions

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Your support group may include individuals with a variety of grieving experiences.

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What's it like to grieve:

- A child
- A sibling
- A spouse
- A parent
- A grandparent
- A friend
- A colleague
- A pet

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What's it like to grieve for more than one?

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Your support group may include individuals along a varying grieving timeline.

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What's grieving like:

- One month after a loss
- Six months after a loss
- One year after a loss
- Two years after a loss
- Three and more years after a loss

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The Tool

- Daily Healing Plan

MY DAILY HEALING PLAN

I AM HEALING.

I AM HEALING
THROUGH:

THROUGH:

I AM HEALING
WITH:

WITH:

.....

.....

.....

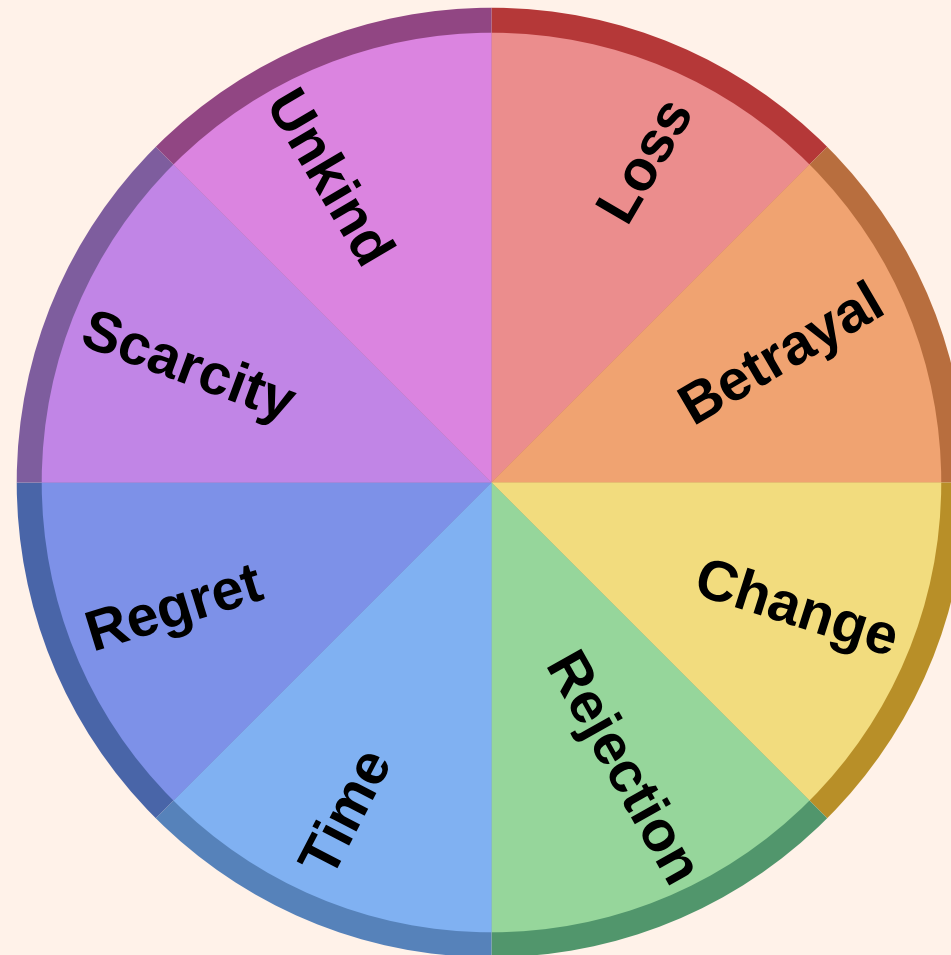
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4 I AM HEALING TO:

I AM HEALING TO:

HEALING WHEEL

We can start our healing process by naming what hurts.



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Your group will be successful when participants:

- Feel understood
- Connect consistently
- Trust the safeness of your group

(Inspired by Shasta's definition of success: Positivity + Consistency + Vulnerability)

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You are fostering healthy relationships through meaningful conversations.

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Healthy Relationships

“Both persons within the relationship feel seen in a safe and satisfying way.” ~ Shasta Nelson

Learn more: www.shastanelson.com

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The lack of connections and understanding mean your support group members may be really lonely.

Our loneliness is one reason we feel at our worst during our grieving experience.

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Loneliness is feeling alone or disconnected from others. It is feeling like you do not have meaningful or close relationships or a sense of belonging. It reflects the difference between a person's actual and desired level of connection. This means that even a person with a lot of friends can feel lonely.

~ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Social connection with others can help:

- Improve our ability to recover from stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Promote healthy eating, physical activity, and weight.
- Improve sleep, well-being, and quality of life.
- Reduce our risk of violent and suicidal behaviors.
- Prevent death from chronic diseases.

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/emotional-wellbeing/index.htm>

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Let's create that success for your group. Consider:

- Environment
- Facilitation
- Communication
- Resources

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Environment – In-person

- Circle
- Name tags
- Simple snacks break the ice

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Environment – Virtual

- Video can be optional
- Anonymous names are okay
- Encourage conversation in the chat room (a Zoom feature)

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Environment

- Your goal:
 - Everyone feels welcome
 - Everyone belongs

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Environment

- You arrive early, ready to welcome
- You commit to learning names and stories
 - Everyone is important

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Environment

- Rules for the group
 - We listen to understand
 - We support not judge
 - We encourage rather than compare
 - We embrace everyone's journey and appreciate the challenges and blessings of each

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Environment

- Rules for the group
 - We wish everyone well
 - We allow everyone a chance
 - We remind each other that everyone gets a chance
 - Our discussions remain confidential

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Environment

- Rules for the group
 - Phones on vibrate
 - Leave as you need
 - Respect everyone's personal wishes (discussed during first attended meeting)

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Environment

- Rules for the group
 - Our role is to listen and support each other, not to coach each other.
 - “If this group is the not the right one for you, I’ll refer you to another resource.”

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Facilitator Characteristics

- Curious
- Calm (inside)
- Concise
- Composed (outside)
- Engaging

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You can be impatient on the inside
as long as you're patient on the outside.

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Facilitation Skills

- Engaged without controlling
- Open-ended questions
- Accepting the conversation
- Nurture the conversation

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Facilitation Skills

- Group leads the conversation
- You guide the discussion
- Group knows the answer

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If you're talking, you're not facilitating.

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Managing the participants

- Talker
- Take-Over
- Over Steps
- Tough One
- Spotlight
- Quiet One

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Managing the participants

- Ego
- Dysfunction
- “It Won’t Work”

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Talker

- Oversharing can be a symptom of loneliness.
- Allow “too much” a few times.
- Is this temporary?
- Is this a habit?

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Talker

- If it's a habit, interrupt when you can tell everyone feels it's "too much."
- "Forgive me for interrupting, Jane. I want to give everyone a chance to contribute. Frank, when do you feel challenged during your day?"
- "Got it. Take us to today."

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Take-Over

- Acknowledge their expertise.
- Invite them to share that expertise with you after the meeting.
- “That’s wonderful, Judy. I’d love to learn more. Let’s connect after today’s meeting for a few moments.”

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Over Steps

- Talks over others; believes boundaries are for others; minimizes the experiences others have.
- Set new boundaries and reinforce.
- Share consequences:
 - “I’ll remove you if this happens again.”
 - “I’ll ask you to leave if this happens again.”

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Tough One

- Acknowledge the tough times.
- “You’ve had such a tough time, Sue. It just isn’t fair.”

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Spotlight

- Meet her need to be acknowledged for having a special situation.
- “You’ve experienced such significant losses, Andrea.”
- Then move on.

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Quiet One

- Check in: “How are you?”
- Thank them for being such great listeners.
- “We’re grateful that you join us and share.”

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Ego

- Un-engage.
- Thank and celebrate.
- Then move on.

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Dysfunction

- Disengage from judging the choice.
- “I’m so sorry for your tough day.”

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“It Won’t Work”

- Accept that, for him or her, it won’t work.
- “You’ve got a tough situation.”
- Then move on.

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Be ready to refer to another support group
if yours isn't the right fit.

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Additional challenges

- Cliques
- Life of a group

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Body language

- How do you know when the group is engaged?
- How do you know when the group has checked out?

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Go-to tips

- Express gratitude
- Rest into the silence

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Managing the group means
minimizing the chaos and dysfunction
while maximizing the connections and support.

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Resources

- Know about the resources in your community which can help
- Develop relationships with the resources which can help
- Have group discussions about which resources in the community can help

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Let's practice.

HEALING WHEEL

We can start our healing process by naming what hurts.



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Meeting Structure

- Updates
- Memories
- Challenges
- Healing

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Engage

- Members take turns leading the meeting (you still facilitate)
- Members drive the topics
- Members take turns “drawing” notes on a Flipchart
- Break up into small groups for more personal discussions

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Innovate

- Journaling Support Group
- Knitting Circle
- Doodling Support Group
- Photography Support Group

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Grow Your Group

- Ask members to promote and invite
- Share on social media
- Email monthly reminders which are easy to share

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Promote Your Group

- NextDoor
- meetup.com
- Local social service agencies and employers

Your Important Work

Your group can offer your members a cure for their loneliness.

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Certification Next Steps

- Pass the CGF Exam.
- Participate in a four-hour training session
- Join grief support groups (online or in your community) for two hours
- Host a FB Live, Instagram Live, in-person or Zoom meeting

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Our Affiliate Program

- Earn 15% when you share about our program
- Use coupon code CGF for a 15% discount on our program

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