

The Grief Roadtrip: 6 Must Pack Essentials 2015

When we embark on a road trip, we pack the essentials. These are the very basic "go-to" items in our "carry on" luggage. Here are the 6 must pack essentials. These essentials will help you while grieving the loss of a loved one because grief is a journey that can seem like a marathon. Throughout your grief journey, your own "carry on" piece will expand. It will grow to receive the limitless ideas and possibilities you add as your own "go-to" items for coping and surviving this journey. I encourage you to add and share your own "go-to" items with others embarking on their own grief road trip.

1. Patience

The grief journey can be emotionally unpredictable. At times, those emotions may come out of nowhere. We don't "get over" the death of our loved one. It is a process of "living with the loss" that takes time and patience. We need patience with those who are grieving with us, patience with those who don't understand our grief for they do not know any better and patience with ourselves while enduring a life forever changed. We need patience as we feel the vast array of emotions that we do not understand to be completely "normal". Find your own comfortable pace in this marathon.

2. Humility

"I cannot do this alone". A humble person knows, is aware of, and realizes their limitations. It takes courage and great inner strength to break the silent suffering of going it alone. A humble person knows it is okay to ASK for help. Create a Reverse Wish List naming people you trust and things they can do. Those wanting to help and don't know what to do are waiting. With a little help, your luggage will be lighter to carry on this journey.

3. Food, Tea, and a Blanket

Grieving is tiring and sometimes exhausting. We need sustenance for our own mind, body and soul. Self-care is key. We need a healthy diet and know when to rest our mind and bodies. We may brew a cup of favorite tea, have a snack, wrap up in a warm blanket, lose ourselves in a good book and just "be". Taking a Personal Time Out (PTO) to recharge our batteries on a regular basis helps keep us strong to continue on this journey without our loved one. Love yourself.

4. A Doodle Pad

Using a doodle pad, a journal, or any type of media, jot down or draw your feelings without judging them. Use any creative constructive outlet to let them out. (Bubbles!) We are human and have feelings that we cannot control. We can however, control the way we express them in a healthy and safe way. Grief provides a fertile ground for a variety of feelings. Give your feelings constructive expression and let them flow. It is a great release. Name some of your feelings...

5. Forgiveness

We need to find any extra weight in our "carry on" that is slowing us down and "LET GO" of it. It is that stuff that won't help us on this journey. Bitterness and resentment are two "weights" we sometimes carry. Forgiveness lightens our heart. Accepting the reality of life with and living one day at a time allows us to focus on what we can do. Forgiveness allows us to carry on in the present being available for every precious moment.

6. Humor

We need to laugh on this journey at ourselves and with our loved ones. Laughter is a great release. Humor helps us survive. I remember a time I put the toaster in the refrigerator. It was no wonder why I could not find it in the pantry! Yes, I laughed at myself. Can you remember a laughable moment?

Please make copies of this packing list and share it with anyone you know that is on their own grief road trip or journey. Sharing knowledge and tips are gifts of love from one to another. Through sharing, we learn that we are not alone on this journey.

In support of you,

Debbie

Debbie Pausig, MFT, CT
Psychotherapist, Author, Bereavement Support Group Leader, Counselor & Workshop Presenter.
Professional Support Group Leader for HDSA-CT Affiliate & Newtown Parent Connection, Inc.
www.debbiepausigmft.com. Author of *"An Affair Worth Remembering with Huntington's Disease, Incurable love and intimacy during an incurable illness."*

If you are interested in a custom presentation for your group, organization or business, please contact me at: debbiepausig.mft@gmail.com or 203.985.8246.

Adapted from: Packing for the Grief Journey: Six Essential Items
By my colleague, Cheryl Amari, M.A.,C.T., GriefTeach.com.