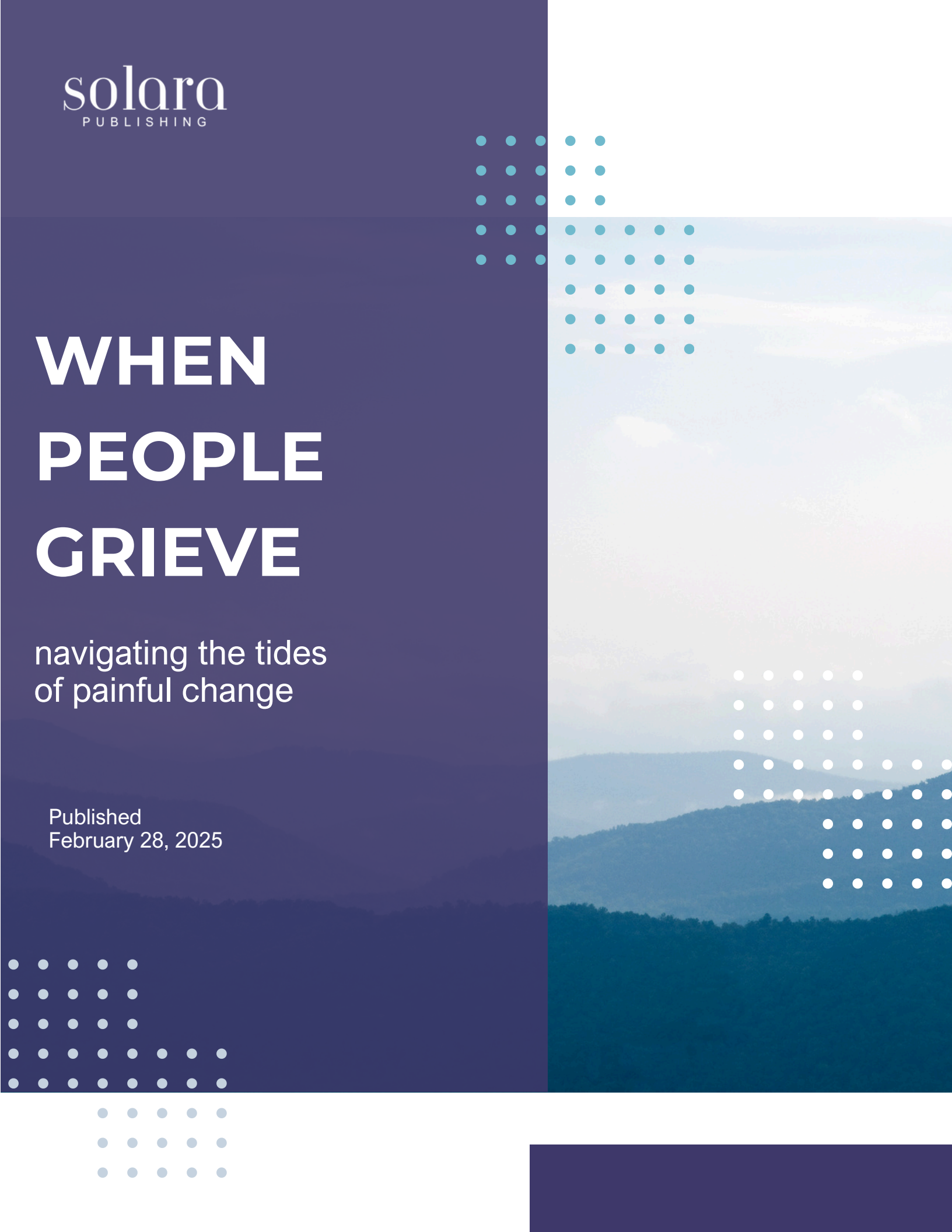


# WHEN PEOPLE GRIEVE

navigating the tides  
of painful change

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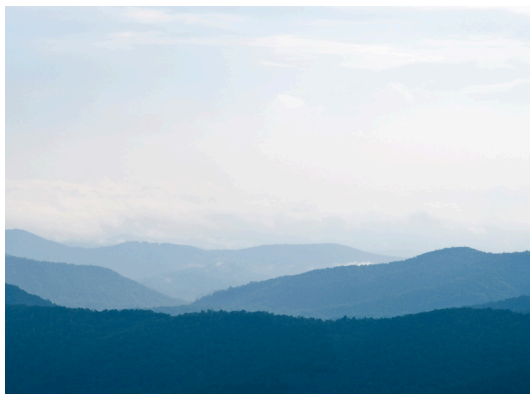


## ABOUT

Grief is an individual and collective human experience. For each of us grief holds the power to awaken our spirits, deepen our capacity for compassion, and illuminate the path towards personal mastery and regeneration. Despite these benefits, grief can be a steep, destructive, and often frightening process-- one all of us must navigate.

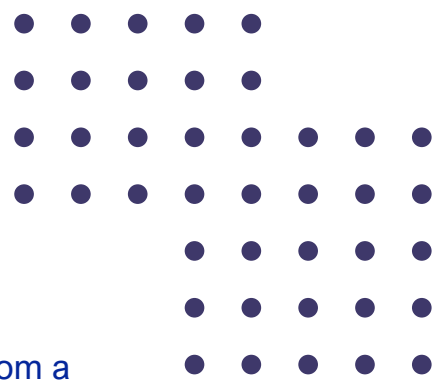
This publication highlights the major stages and symptoms of grief in its aim to support individuals and communities through the grieving process.

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## What's the point of grief?

Grief is often seen as an unpleasant and painful process, yet from a spiritual and evolutionary perspective, it enables deep transformation and personal growth.

### 4 spiritual benefits of grieving

**Opening** - While grief stems from loss, it also expands our heart's capacity for compassion, making one more open to love—not just personal, but divine and universal love.

**Deepening** – Grief often opens or strengthens our awareness that we're not alone in this life. It also strips the illusion of control, therefore bringing us into the awareness of the divine in us.

**Purifying** - In many spiritual traditions, sorrow is seen as a fire that burns away ego, illusions, and attachments, leaving behind a clearer sense of self and purpose.

**Understanding** - Grief often makes people more attuned to spiritual signs, synchronicities, and subtle energies, increasing their awareness of the unseen, multi-dimensional reality of the universe.



## What's the point of grief? (continued)

### 3 evolutionary benefits of grieving

**Emotional intelligence** - Processing grief teaches the nervous system how to handle deep emotions, increasing emotional intelligence and adaptability over time.

**Collective bonding** – In human evolution, shared grief has strengthened communities by deepening social bonds and reinforcing empathy, ensuring survival through mutual care.

**Personal growth** – Loss forces an identity shift, pushing people to evolve beyond their previous self-concept and embrace new roles, perspectives, and deeper wisdom.

Every man casts a shadow; not his body  
only but his imperfectly mingled spirit.

This is his grief.

Let him turn which way he will, it falls  
opposite to the sun; short at noon, long at  
eve. Did you never see it?

Henry David Thoreau



## Understanding acute grief

Acute grief is the intense immediate response to loss. It is often marked by overwhelming waves of sadness, confusion, or even physical discomfort. It can feel all-consuming making it difficult to focus on daily tasks or engage with others. Emotionally, a person may experience deep sorrow, rage, or shock, while physically, they might struggle with sleep, appetite, or energy levels. This stage is natural and necessary as the mind and body process the reality of change or loss.

**Intense emotions** - Sudden, overwhelming sadness, crying spells, or even moments of anger and despair that come in waves.

**Physical symptoms** – Fatigue, loss of appetite, difficulty sleeping, or even physical pain (like a heavy chest or stomach discomfort).

**Cognitive fog** – Trouble concentrating, forgetfulness, or feeling mentally "disconnected" from reality.

**Social withdrawal or hyper-talking** – Some people isolate, avoiding others, while others may excessively talk about their loss as a way to process it.



## Embracing our unprocessed sorrow

Unprocessed grief is grief that lingers beneath the surface. It often manifests as emotional numbness, irritability, or a persistent sense of emptiness. Instead of openly mourning, a person may unconsciously suppress their feelings, leading to patterns of anger, avoidance, chronic fatigue, or difficulty forming deep emotional connections. Over time this unresolved grief can resurface in unexpected ways—through anxiety, depression, heart disease and other physical illnesses, as well as strong emotional reactions to minor triggers—signaling that grieving is incomplete.

**Chronic irritability or emotional numbness** – The person may either be easily triggered into frustration or appear detached, feeling little joy or sadness.

**Persistent physical ailments** – Unresolved grief can manifest as headaches, chronic fatigue, body tension, heart disease, or autoimmune flare-ups.

**Difficulty forming or maintaining deep relationships** – There may be a pattern of avoiding emotional intimacy, fearing loss, or struggling with commitment.

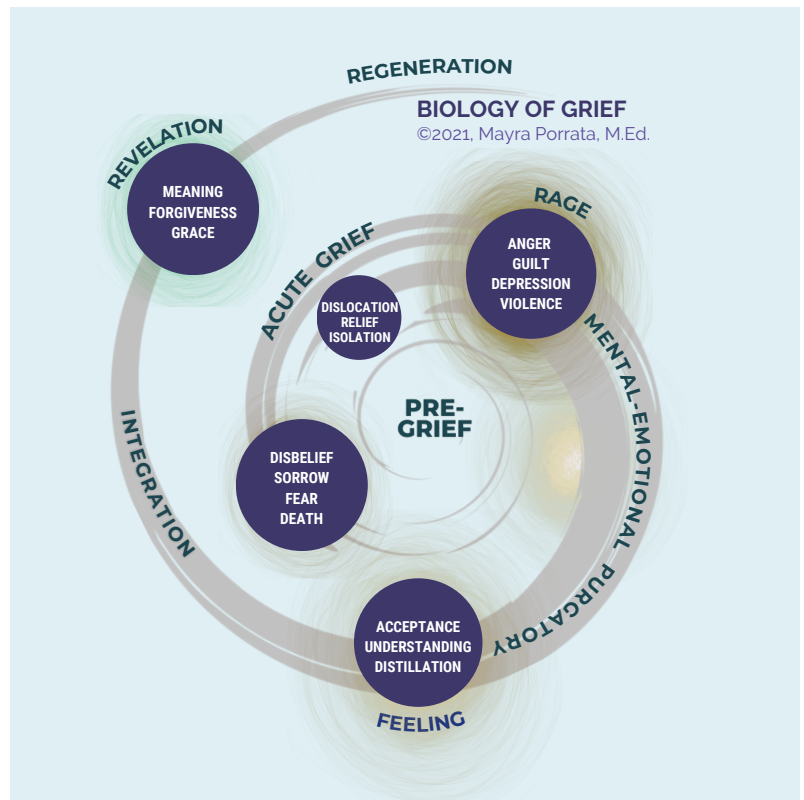
**Repetitive or unexplained triggers** – Unexpected strong reactions to minor events, like anger, anxiety, or sadness when something unconsciously reminds them of their loss.

## Where are you in the grieving process?

Embedded in grief's luminous and expansive landscape, we encounter physical, emotional, mental, and energetic (spiritual) phenomena. Without a map it's easy to get angry, discouraged, or lost.

1. PRE- GRIEF
2. ACUTE GRIEF
3. CAREGIVER'S PATH
4. RAGING
5. MENTAL-EMOTIONAL PURGATORY
6. FEELING
7. INTEGRATING
8. REVEALING
9. REGENERATING

See *Honoring your grief*, Solara Publishing, 2025 for descriptions of each stage



The examination and processing of our grief has nothing to do with morality, but with **revealing the inherent goodness** (benevolence) and wisdom already present in you.



## How do we know we're done?

As a collective experience, grief is so ubiquitous we don't often notice its presence in the lives of our friends, neighbors, or leaders, but grief is the common ocean you and everyone you know must swim through—the passage that awakens us to the shadow aspects of all human life.

In many ways, grief-work is soul work-- the integration of our present human journey with the invisible realm of our divine existence. When people have gone through their grieving process you may notice the following in yourself or others:

- They're not angry with God/life
- Victim patterning is released — they accept/own their loss
- They're no longer confused about why something happened
- They don't talk about the pain or loss, but more so the lessons and insights
- They want to help others
- They're at peace
- They find joy in living and being

Grief ends when we end the wars within us. Grief ends when we understand its meaning and our sacred purpose. Grief ends when we're at peace.

Mayra Porrata



## Towards radical humanity

Those among us who are **chronically angry** are still grieving acutely-- they/we have unmet needs for which they are seeking understanding. Those who live in the past and its notions are often caught in the **mental-emotional purgatory stage**. Notice all of this without judgement-- only awareness. Remember that all of us on this planet are on a journey— both individually and collectively.

Reminding ourselves and those we love that they're worthy, benevolent, and capable is the first step in reframing everything that now separates us and encourage our acceptance of grief's wisdom as *divine software* every single one of us are invited to integrate.

It's easy to argue logic, dogma, or beliefs-- but that will never help us through our grieving, in fact, it only keeps us stuck in its swirls. As you navigate the landscape through your grief it's important to keep your focus and attention on that which ***you love***.

***Love is life itself.***

Grief can be the garden of compassion. If you keep your heart open through everything, your pain can become your greatest ally in your life's search for love and wisdom.

Rumi

## REGENERATION

### BIOLOGY OF GRIEF

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#### REVELATION

MEANING  
FORGIVENESS  
GRACE

#### ACUTE GRIEF

DISLOCATION  
RELIEF  
ISOLATION

#### RAGE

ANGER  
GUILT  
DEPRESSION  
VIOLENCE

#### MENTAL-EMOTIONAL PURGATORY

#### PRE-GRIEF

DISBELIEF  
SORROW  
FEAR  
DEATH

ACCEPTANCE  
UNDERSTANDING  
DISTILLATION

#### FEELING

#### INTEGRATION

Those who have  
successfully navigated  
grief's complicated terrain  
know that it doesn't  
respond to reason-- its  
single requirement is that  
it be felt and understood.

