


Through the Lens



Celebrate What's Right to Fix What's Wrong

Patti DiMiceli



The most painful tears are not the
ones that fall from your eyes and
cover your face.

They're the ones that fall from your
heart and cover your soul.

Lessons Learned In Life

The Injury

- When our child died, we suffered a severe injury
- Emotions and feelings of being swept away, out of our control, sucked down a drain, lifeless
- Grief and pain is a natural response to an injury
- *Being* injured is not a natural state
- Body seeks homeostasis and balance
- It's natural to *want* to heal an injury
- Healing is what our loved ones, our children, and our deepest selves want
- Each individual is unique, no rules or expectations
- Be gentle, follow your natural desire to heal



Resilience: a concept worth exploring.

“The ability of adults in otherwise normal circumstances who are exposed to an isolated and potentially highly disruptive event, such as the death of a close relation or a violent or life-threatening situation, to maintain relatively stable, healthy levels of psychological and physical functioning” as well as “the capacity for generative experiences and positive emotions.”



- George A. Bonanno, professor of clinical psychology @ Columbia University
- Author, “The Other Side of Sadness: What the New Science of Bereavement Tells Us About Life After a Loss”
- *Scientific* study of bereavement and trauma
- Findings:
 1. The idea that **Resilience** is the most common, natural reaction to loss or trauma.
 2. Natural resilience is the main component of grief and trauma reactions
 3. Genuine laughter and smiling is a healthy response to a loss or stressor event and is protective
 - 4 trajectories of grief and trauma reactions:
 1. Resilience
 2. Recovery
 3. Chronic dysfunction
 4. Delayed grief or trauma

6th Stage of Grief and Beyond



- Mike Robbins, motivational speaker, author, “Focus on the Good Stuff,” “Be Yourself, Everyone Else is Already Taken,” and “Nothing Changes Until You Do.”
- “Embrace Death, Live Life” Huffington Post article: Not an easy thing to do but it alters our experience of ourselves, others, and life in a fundamental and transformational way.
- It allows us to remember what truly matters and to put things in a healthy and empowering perspective.
- Key lessons learned from his dying mother, Lois:
 - **Express Yourself:** Let go of your limiting filters and live life “out loud.”
 - **Forgive:** “Life’s too short” stops being a catch phrase and becomes your reality.
 - **Live With Passion:** Going for it, being bold, live life with a genuine sense of passion.
 - **Acknowledge Others:** Elevating and appreciating others reminds us we are a powerful force for good. A few words can change a life forever. Look for ways to express it.
 - **Surrender:** It isn’t giving up, giving in, or selling out; it’s about making peace with what IS and choosing to embrace life (and sometimes death) as it shows up.

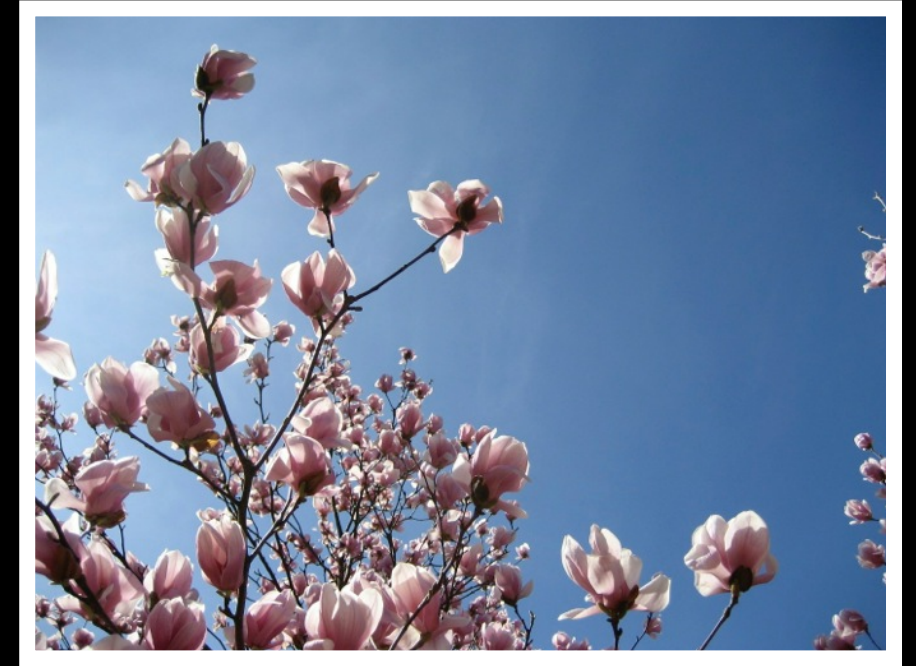


“We are each of
us angels with
only one wing and
we can only fly
by embracing
each other.”

— *Luciano de Crescenzo*

- 5 Stages of Grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance
- Like a fingerprint...no set pattern or timeline or rules
- Moving beyond *accepting* with resignation to
- Incorporating life *and death* into our lives
- Discover the power, transform, move out of the shadow & into the light

Believe it and you'll see it.



- Not meant to suggest that life doesn't test us severely at times.
- When we wholeheartedly commit to a goal, we can ultimately find it.
- Making a conscience effort to “believe it and see it” can help us recognize some positive aspects in even the most dire situations. Maybe our situation is temporary or we can help others, thereby helping ourselves.
- If we are able to find that positive perspective, we serve as beacons for others.
- Creativity and the idea of “believing it and then seeing it” are inextricable linked. We build on something that initially existed in our minds and hearts.

Celebrate What's Right With the World

Click the link above to view Dewitt Jones' 22 minute film that I used in my Bereaved Parents of the USA workshop.

Recognize abundance.



- Most of us grow up learning that our world is one of scarcity, fear, and loss. Most of the time, this is an attitude, not reality.
- Learning from nature, he saw a banquet of incredible proportions. Nature never stood in front of a forest and said, “There is only one great photograph hidden here. One photographer will find it and the rest of you will be hopeless losers.”
- If the world is one of abundance, much of the responsibility for our own success and happiness lies within.
- As a photographer, Dewitt learned to ask not “What will I take today?” but instead “What will I be given?”

Look for possibilities.



- The opposite of scarcity isn't abundance, but possibility. No matter how desperate our situation, if we can see a glimmer of possibility and hope, we know we can keep going and take action to improve things.
- As Dewitt found when he was photographing the field of puffballs, it can be difficult to give up our preconceived notion of just how something is supposed to be or look.
- There's more than one right answer. It is the key to creativity; it's the key to a happy life, a life based on a vision of possibilities, a life of continually finding the next right answer.

Unleash your energy to fix what's wrong (or at least make it better).



- Celebrating what's right helps us see the possibilities out there.
- When we acknowledge the many good things that occur in the world, we realize that solutions are possible; that many challenges can be surmounted.
- Celebrating what's right gives us a much-needed break from our efforts to fix what's wrong. Looking only at the negative can be draining.
- Sometimes we *can't* fix what's wrong, but we can make it better. Time, the healing touch of people who care, using your gifts to help and elevate others, and indulging in the beauty and bounty of nature can all soothe your soul.

Ride the changes.



- The awesome change curve is really your ally. If you view it from a slightly different perspective, it isn't a change curve at all. It's a possibility curve. Change is possibility. Times of change hold the most potential.
- Most of us resist change. Easy to focus on the negative aspects of change. It requires energy, upsets the status quo, challenges the order in our lives, and leaves us uncomfortable for a while.
- There *is* a positive side to change. It is exciting and rejuvenating, forces us to grow... to view our own lives with a new perspective, and become better people.
- Viewed as change, it threatens to overwhelm is. Viewed as possibility, it can be exciting. We may not control it, but we can ride it.

Take yourself to the edge.



- Dewitt: “If I really wanted to soar, that was the edge I had to push; that edge in each of our lives between success and significance...could I trust myself, my values, and my vision to step out beyond my own edge?”
- It isn't always easy. It takes intense commitment and energy.
- If we don't give 110% to our goal, we have a handy excuse for coming up short.
- Trust yourself enough to allow yourself to be the best *for* the world, without worrying about the results...the effect of your efforts.
- Even if we don't make our goal, there's value in trying.

Be your best *for* the world.



- Changing one word can lead to a dramatic shift in how we approach our lives.
- Dewitt: “It’s that subtle shift between pushing ourselves to be the best *in* the world and allowing ourselves to be the best *for* the world.”
- “*In* the world” focuses on the trappings that often come with talent and effort, such as money, status, and recognition.
- “*For* the world” is when we approach our tasks with an attitude of service and grace. Our perspective widens, as we are not only thinking of ourselves.
- Dewitt: “Our joy has to be in the very act of giving... in making a contribution.”



Change your perspective (your *lens*)
and you change your life!

Thank you for coming!

