



Bearing the Unbearable: Love, Loss, and the Heartbreaking Path of Grief

Joanne Cacciatore

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Bearing the Unbearable: Love, Loss, and the Heartbreaking Path of Grief, by Joanne Cacciatore, covers the incredibly difficult topic of grief. With the insight that only someone who has experienced deep personal grief can offer, the author shares wisdom and advice for dealing with the most painful losses.

The book is gentle but honest. It does not dismiss grief or offer useless platitudes. It does not teach skills or practices intended to overcome or move beyond grief. Instead, using specific examples from Cacciatore's own life and from the lives of those whom she has counseled, the book embraces the idea that grief is the other side of love, and that it is necessary to truly experience it, to acknowledge and accept that it can occupy a permanent place in the heart and mind. The book focuses on living with grief and allows for the possibility that love and happiness, even beauty and joy, can exist in tandem with the kind of grief that never ends.

The book includes many helpful ideas for living with grief. The author states, "Grief, by its very nature, is labyrinthine and enigmatic; its implications are emotional, physical, social and interpersonal, economic, spiritual, and existential." The techniques for living with grief are therefore as myriad as the ways it can affect one's life. Examples include everything from simply making self-care a priority to keeping an emotional journal, observing cultural or religious rituals, and joining support groups and working to help others who are dealing with grief.

Bearing the Unbearable is an especially powerful book. It is not just for those who have suffered a loss. Anyone who's trying to deal with a loss, or anyone who know someone dealing with a loss, (and in truth, isn't that everyone?) will benefit from reading this amazing book.

CATHERINE REED-THURESON (May/June 2017)

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