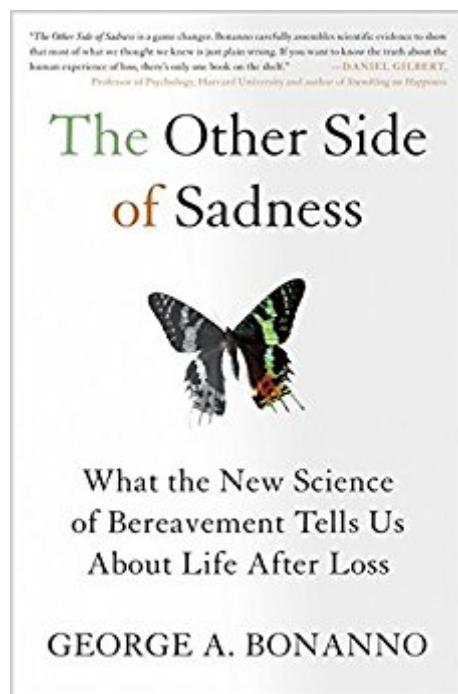


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The Other Side Of Sadness: What The New Science Of Bereavement Tells Us About Life After Loss



Synopsis

We tend to understand grief as a predictable five-stage process of denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. But in *The Other Side of Sadness*, George Bonanno shows that our conventional model discounts our capacity for resilience. In fact, he reveals that we are already hardwired to deal with our losses efficiently—not by graduating through static phases. Weaving in explorations of mourning rituals and the universal experiences of the death of a parent or child, Bonanno examines how our inborn emotions—anger and denial, but also relief and joy—help us deal effectively with loss. And grieving goes beyond mere sadness: it can deepen interpersonal connections and often involves positive experiences. In the end, mourning is not predictable, but incredibly sophisticated. Combining personal anecdotes and original research, *The Other Side of Sadness* is a must-read for those going through the death of a loved one, mental health professionals, and readers interested in neuroscience and positive psychology.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

He once helped debunk the theory of repressed memory; now this Columbia clinical psychology professor takes on the conventional wisdom about grieving. There's little evidence to support the existence of stages of mourning or the corollary that if the stages aren't followed completely, there's cause for alarm. What Bonanno does find is a natural resilience that guides us through the sadness of loss, and grief, rather than distracting us, actually causes the mind to focus; it also elicits the compassion and concern that humans are hard-wired to offer in response to another's suffering.

Bonanno acknowledges that grief is sometimes extreme and requires treatment, much like post-traumatic stress disorder. But with this work, science and common sense come together in a thoughtful, kindhearted way; stories of loss go far beyond striking a familiar chord— they give us hope. As one mother who lost her daughter tells Bonanno, even years later she felt her daughter was like a little ember, and if I need to, if I want to have Claire next to me, I blow on it, ever so gently, and it glows bright again. (Oct.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Library Journal —“Illuminating—while the popular and the professional literature on death and dying continue to surge, Bonanno’s work manages to offer a clearly professed alternative way to understand grief that will be a refreshing new resource for professionals, as well as for the grieving.” Publishers Weekly —“Bonanno acknowledges that grief is sometimes extreme and requires treatment, much like post-traumatic stress disorder. But with this work, science and common sense come together in a thoughtful, kindhearted way; stories of loss go far beyond striking a familiar chord— they give us hope.” Camille Wortman, Professor of Psychology, Stony Brook University —“Bonanno, the most productive and influential bereavement researcher in America today, has changed the scientific landscape in the field of grief and bereavement.” Dacher Keltner, Professor of Psychology, University of California Berkeley and author of *Born To Be Good* —“The Other Side of Sadness is brilliant and moving. Bonanno turns our thinking about loss on its head. He reveals the subtle and myriad ways we are resilient, how we find new layers of meaning, why we laugh, and gain insight when loved ones pass. This inspiring book will fill you with wisdom about the other side of loss, and make life immeasurably richer.” Barbara L. Fredrickson, Ph.D., Kenan Distinguished Professor, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and author of *Positivity* —“The Other Side of Sadness paints a refreshingly new and scientifically-grounded portrait of the grieving process, one infused with positivity, laughter, and enduring bonds. Anyone interested in the emotional nuances of the human condition will value this warm, engaging, and accessible book.” Jim Whitaker, Founder and Director Project Rebirth —“George Bonanno’s ground-breaking research on grief illuminates mankind’s profound capacity for resilience, and shows us how to find meaning in life after death.” Daniel Gilbert, Professor of Psychology, Harvard University; author of *Stumbling on Happiness* —“There are a lot of books on bereavement and now you can throw them all away. Bonanno carefully assembles scientific evidence to show that

most of what we thought we knew is just plain wrong. *The Other Side of Sadness* is a game changer. There's nothing else like it. If you want to know the truth about the human experience of loss, there's only one book on the shelf. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

It was an interesting book, but not what I expected. It was not really helpful for me but that doesn't mean it wouldn't be for someone else. Everyone is different and grieves in their own way. I was searching for something different than this. This book was on the list at our Hospice as a possibility.

I am a student doing a graduate diploma in counselling, and I bought this book to do some reading on grief as I will be studying grief trauma and loss next semester. Long story short this is a beautiful book, just beautiful. Plenty of scientific information about grief as well as many illustrative stories. George explores his own grieving of his father's death, and the book ends in a marvellous exploration of many cultures, and the ultimate mysticism of the loss of a loved one. I have recommended this book to many and have read it twice.

An excellent book for all of us to read since everyone will experience and struggle with the death of a loved one or know of someone who has experienced the death of a loved one. Highly recommend it!

After reading the reviews and being aware of Prof. Bonanno's groundbreaking research and articles, the book was not what I expected. The book contained some excellent nuggets of helpful information, but they could fit in 15 pages. Much of the book was fluff, filler and anecdotes that are typical of trade books.

given to me as a result of the sudden death of my daughter. The book helped me through those initial weeks as I thirsted for a reason why and wondered how could I and my family survive the pain, despair and anguish of such an unexpected, unnatural, tragic, shocking loss. The book provided factual research on the grieving process and psychological insight reinforcing resilience of the spirit.

I come to this book from 2 directions, personal and professional. I have been a nurse for several decades and have had experience being with those who are suffering and I now teach nursing

students about grief. I have also lost a young son as well as a beloved husband. Years ago when I sat with a mother whose 4 year old son was dying, I said to her, "You will survive this and feel joy again, not today, not today, but someday. You will never forget Jimmy, and stop missing him but you will survive" (I have no idea where these words came from, since I was very young and inexperienced, but the did come from somewhere deep within me) She burst into tears and said "I needed so badly to hear that" When my son died, someone else used similar words, and I cherished them. People who are grieving need acceptance for their grieving process AND a vision that they can survive the grief. George Bonanno provides a scientific knowledge for this belief. This book shows that grief is a part of life. I would not give this book to someone in the throws of grief, but I think it would be extremely helpful to those supporting the grieving. I would also recommend "Saturday Night Widows" to those involved with working with widows

The best book I've found for dealing with the grief of losing my husband - the other half of me. Most other books that I thought would help soon got thrown across the room within the first chapter, not this one!

Bonanno is clearly an academic and, as such, provides a great deal of credibility to his premise that, in the face of loss, we are more resilient than we think we are or can be. I only gave it four stars because as someone in the middle of grieving such a loss, the first couple of chapters seemed a bit dismissive of the pain I've been trying to manage the last few months. I'm glad I continued reading, however, because he redeems himself in later chapters and what he has to offer provides a great deal of hope for those of us mourning the loss of a loved one and wondering how life can ever be once again joyful in their absence. I was grateful to the author when I finished this read.

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