

COMPANION GUIDE

HEALING
AFTER GRIEF

A Resource for Loss and
What Was Never Received

ERIKA R. WINDFLOW

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This guide is not a substitute for professional mental health care.

This guide accompanies *Healing the Relationship with Yourself*.

An extension of
Healing the Relationship with Yourself

A Gentle Beginning

If you are reading this, something tender may be moving inside you.

Perhaps you began inner child work hoping for clarity, relief, or peace—and instead found grief rising to the surface. Grief for relationships that ended. Grief for parts of yourself that learned to stay small. Grief for the safety, love, or understanding you did not receive when you needed it most. This grief may come from many places—loss of a loved one, the end of a relationship, or the recognition of what was never received. Or grief for futures that never unfolded.

If this is happening, nothing has gone wrong.

Grief often appears after healing begins, not before. It emerges when the nervous system feels safe enough to feel what was once overwhelming. This guide exists to remind you of that truth—and to offer you steadiness, not solutions.

This is not a workbook. There is nothing here to complete or fix. You are invited simply to read slowly, pause where needed, and stay connected to yourself.

Why Grief Often Emerges During Healing

Inner child healing helps you reconnect with parts of yourself that learned to disconnect in order to belong. As you build safety, compassion, and self-trust, your system may finally relax its defenses.

And when defenses soften, grief can surface.

This grief may not be tied to a single event. It may be layered, diffuse, or difficult to name. You might grieve:

- Relationships that required self-abandonment
- Childhoods that looked “fine” but felt lonely
- Versions of yourself shaped by survival rather than choice
- Time spent believing you were the problem
- Futures that once felt possible but never arrived

Grief does not mean you are regressing. It means you are **integrating**.

How Grief Can Feel in the Body

Grief is not only emotional—it is physiological. You may notice:

- Heaviness or fatigue
- Waves of sadness that come and go
- Numbness or emotional distance
- Longing without a clear object
- Sudden tenderness triggered by small moments

These responses are not signs that you are “doing healing wrong.” They are signs that your body is processing truth at its own pace.

Grief is not linear. Some days you may feel grounded and calm. Other days, the weight may return unexpectedly. Both are part of the same movement toward wholeness.

Grief Is Not the Same as Inner Child Wounds

It can help to name the distinction.

Inner child work focuses on unmet needs, emotional safety, and rebuilding self-connection. **Grief** arises when you fully acknowledge what cannot be changed.

Inner child healing asks: *What did I need, and how can I offer it now?*

Grief asks: *Can I stay present with what was lost, without needing to resolve it?*

Grief does not require insight. It does not respond to reframing. It asks only for presence.

Reflection Pause: Naming What Is Here

You do not need to answer these questions perfectly—or at all. Let them rest with you.

- What feels most tender right now?
- Am I grieving something specific, or a general sense of loss?
- What part of me wants to be seen rather than solved?

There is no right response. Not knowing is part of the experience.

When the Urge to Fix or Move On Appears

Many of us learned that emotions should be resolved quickly. That lingering feelings mean we are stuck, weak, or failing.

If you notice an urge to:

- Move on
- Distract yourself
- Intellectualize your grief
- Compare your experience to others

Pause gently.

These impulses often arise not because grief is wrong, but because it feels unfamiliar to stay with something unresolved.

You are not required to make meaning out of grief right now. You are allowed to let it exist without interpretation.

A Simple Grounding Practice (Optional)

Only if it feels supportive.

Take a slow breath. Notice where your body is making contact with what supports you. Name one sensation you can feel right now—warmth, pressure, weight, movement.

You are here. This moment is contained. You do not have to carry everything at once.

Grief and Self-Compassion

Grief often brings vulnerability. Vulnerability can awaken old self-critical voices.

If you notice thoughts like:

- *I should be past this*
- *Why am I still feeling this way?*

- *Something must be wrong with me*

Try offering yourself a different response:

Of course this hurts. Of course this matters.

Self-compassion does not make grief disappear. It makes grief safer to hold.

Reflection Pause: Allowing Rather Than Forcing

- What would it mean to allow grief without needing it to change?
- What part of me feels most afraid of slowing down?
- What does kindness look like today—not in general, but right now?

You Are Not Falling Apart

Grief can feel destabilizing, especially if you have spent years being the strong one, the functional one, the one who keeps going.

But grief is not collapse. It is contact.

It is the meeting point between honesty and care.

You are not being undone—you are becoming more real.

Closing Words

This guide is not here to move you through grief. It is here to remind you that you do not have to move away from yourself while grief is present.

Healing is not about feeling better all the time. It is about staying connected—to your body, your truth, and your humanity—even when feelings are complex.

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Grief does not erase the progress you've made. It is often evidence of it.

You are allowed to take this slowly. You are allowed to rest. You are allowed to feel what is here.

And you are not alone in this.

About the author



Erika R. Windflow is a certified life coach and author of *Healing the Relationship with Yourself*. Her work centers on emotional awareness, inner child healing, and building grounded, self-connected relationships.

This companion guide extends the work of that book, offering steady support for grief that may emerge during healing.