



The Grief Club: The Secret to Getting Through All Kinds of Change

Melody Beattie

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The Grief Club is Melody Beattie's profoundly personal, powerfully healing book to help readers through life's most difficult times.

Part memoir, part self-help book, part journalism, *The Grief Club* is a book of stories bound together by the human experience of loss in its many forms such as death, divorce, drug addiction, and the tumultuous yet tender process of recovery. It's a book you need to read and share.

Twenty years ago, *Codependent No More* established Melody Beattie as a pioneering voice in self-help literature and endeared her to readers who longed for healthier relationships. Over the years, Melody has invited readers into her life with several more best-selling books--each punctuated with her trademark candor and intuitive wisdom.

The Grief Club: The Secret to Getting Through All Kinds of Change Details

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From Reader Review The Grief Club: The Secret to Getting Through All Kinds of Change for online ebook

Nancy says

Melody Beattie's (of Codependent no More, etc) son died at the age of twelve. After many years of struggling and coming to terms with her grief she wrote this book to help others through various kinds of grief--loss of a child, a relationship, suicide, ill health, the empty nest syndrome, etc.

While she has some useful things to say about acceptance -- much taken from AA and Al-Anon, much of how she has come to terms with the losses and difficulties in her life, and what she recommends is religious faith, which is not always accessible to others. She finds comfort in believing that she will be re-united with her son when she dies. Not not all religious faiths hold with this concept, and for those who never had, or who lost their religious faith due to a an extremely painful loss, will not find this useful.

On the other hand, those with a strong connection to AA and/or AL-Anon, or to a Christian religious faith, will find some hope and comfort in this book.

Michele says

Not her best work; however, this book has many valuable insights. The Master List of Losses is the most exhaustive I have seen. I think the author needed to write this to aid in her own healing after the loss of her son. At times you can feel the author's grief through her words and many times it was emotionally difficult for me to read. I would still recommend it for anyone that is going through loss if only to enforce that we are not alone.

Shelly Petrelli says

One of the best books I've read on grief. This book encounters all forms of grief, not just through the loss of a loved one, yet all these types of grief circle back to the same emotive, change and self-discovery on every level. There are stories of reflection within each chapter that centers on that specific type of loss and shapes the tragedy into triumph, sometimes not...the point is, this book REALLY helped break through some of my own personal stigmas whether it's the way I was conditioned from childhood to what I struggle with now as an adult.

Beattie also shares her personal losses which includes the death of her own son, but she does it in such a way that delivers such a profound impact that goes beyond transparent poignancy. I delved into this book deeply and even started going through the Master List of Losses. She offers journaling activities after each chapter if that particular chapter pertains to your life circumstance and has the Master List of Losses in the back of the book to go through and list and just ponder and work through on your end. I liked the interactive approach here as I was encouraged by my grief counselor to keep a grief journal so this is just a nice little benchmark to touch on things I never thought of or realized until I read through this book.

This book touches on everything! Abuse of any kind; physical, emotional, psychological, drugs, alcohol.

Loss of parents, children, spouse. Tragedies in every form; loss of a job, home, family. Health issues regarding life and death. I highly recommend it to anyone trying to filter through their own life tragedies at least this would provide some deep insight into what they may be feeling and going through.

Jo says

I've seen really good reviews of it elsewhere. Maybe I'm not ready for it yet, or maybe it tries to cover too much stuff, too many different sorts of "change" & the grief therefrom & how to work through it, to be sufficiently coherent or deal with each in sufficient (emotional) depth to be a good book for me. I'm also not crazy about the activities she suggests at the end of each chapter, though to be fair I soon stopped reading those sections entirely, as I stopped reading the book and started just skimming it.

I should say that approximately 15 years ago, her book "Codependant No More" helped me immensely. I do like the author. I'm just not crazy about this book at this time.

I did like her brief discussion on "radical faith" vs. simple faith (If I am good, only good thing will happen to me). She says with Radical faith you recognize that you can be good and still bad things will happen to you--and it's nobody's fault. It gave me something to think about.

Candice says

In reality I'd give this book 1.5 stars. They're were parts that were ok, some that were actually good, but on a whole I didn't like this book much.

The author tries to cover a lot of territory in this book. It seems like she tries to include anything that might remotely have something to do with feeling a sense of loss or grief. I found, however, that this book had less to do with grief than it does about finding yourself in a "club" you don't want to be in...which, of course, can involve grief, but the focus seemed to be the opposite of what the title conveys. I also found few "secrets" and mostly just a lot of description and stories--not many insights or tips to aid healing.

The back cover of the book describes it as "part memoir, part self-help book, part journalism," which is (sort of) true. And I guess it's all of these. It's schizophrenic, at least. Sometimes Beattie talks about people she knows, sometimes it's about her personal connection to the topic, or someone who simply happens to have gone through the "club" she's trying to cover. There's little cohesiveness or consistency to the book, either in content, writing style, or approach--or quality. Some chapters seem slapdash and haphazard; others are actually pretty good...or at least pretty good in some parts. It's very uneven.

I picked this book because I'm a young widow and always searching for grief books that feel accurate, that resonate with me, that tell me something new. This wasn't one of them. Also, I found it rather offensive as a widow that the author didn't even give my situation any attention. She lumped it in with other types of club--noticeably under the club of Losing Someone You Deeply Love--but the focus of the chapter was really on the death of child; losing a spouse was barely even mentioned. Losing your way after a divorce was given more attention than losing your spouse to death. But I'm inherently biased here, so take my opinion with a grain of salt.

Anna says

I got this book when I was reading up on grief therapy a lot. And this was by far the least helpful book I read on the subject.

This book is interesting because it focuses on grief for various life events and stages and that's the part I appreciated. Grief can be about more than losing someone - and this book does an excellent job of acknowledging that.

However, this book wasn't very helpful as a resource for therapists. A lot of this book feels autobiographical - Beattie shares experiences she's had throughout her life (or the experiences of people she knows) and talks about how her experiences have made her a better person or how she got through difficult things. And in some settings and for some people, I can see this book being very helpful. However, for me, it was not.

And that's partly because a lot of the stories are kind of random and aren't the sort of things I'll be helping clients with on a regular basis. At the end of each chapter, Beattie includes statistics that relate to whatever the chapter is about. So one chapter was all about how difficult it is to be a first-time horse owner and the end of the chapter was a list of horse facts. It was random and not at all applicable to my clinical work.

I didn't become a better therapist by reading this book. And while some clients could probably benefit from Beattie's positive outlook on situations, her style is so different from mine that I don't feel this would be a book I'd recommend for clients.

Jana says

Wow wow wow. 5 stars isn't enough. I really thought, by chapter names, I would skip half the book and only read the chapters pertinent to me. I changed my mind quickly. Every chapter offered depth of insight and very relatable and applicable truths. This will be a book I will keep on my bookshelf and reread.

Peter Green says

I read this book after numerous major losses in my life in quick succession. Although every vignette/story did not resonate a theme of compassion and wisdom runs throughout. What do we do with intolerable loss, the kind that feels like it is our own death? Life changing loss is a forge of sorts that forever changes who we are. This book looks at such loss. The stories helped me hold my own pain in a larger context and to open myself to my own evolution. I recommend the read.

Sue says

I actually didn't finish the book, but I am not reading any more of it. This is a self-help book sent to me by my sister-in-law who had found it helpful as she was climbing out of a long depression. It is based on stories

about changes in your life and how to handle them - from losing a child to losing your health to losing your financial means - dealing with profound changes in your life. It encourages you to find others who are going through something similar to what you are going through. You know how people say "Join the club" when you are telling them your troubles. Thus the title - The Grief Club. I did get something out of reading it, but it is just a long litany of sad stories and how people got back up and put their lives back together. About halfway through, I realized I just couldn't read about any more grief. If you are going through a hard time, it is probably worth a look. I just gleaned what I needed from it, but it tended to get depressing after a while. It did change my sister-in-law's life, so I am grateful for that.

Aimee says

This was the first book I'd read by Melody Beattie, although I'd heard of her other books about codependency. Some parts of this book spoke to me more than others, but overall I felt a sense of comfort while reading it. I enjoyed the mix of advice/lessons, anecdotes, and memoir.

Kristin says

page 305 "Some people need help managing depression. They want to feel normal, feel like themselves. Sometimes depression is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. Some people are depressed because they're stuck in jobs or relationships they hate. Other times, depression and anxiety are created by all the feelings we've buried, and those feelings create an imbalance in us. Those old feelings are trying to come out so our hearts can heal and we can feel peace. For many years I thought drugs would make me feel good or a relationship would make me happy. Feeling happy and normal aren't out there. They're inside, underneath all those emotions we try so hard not to feel.

When life is changing, we need to be willing not to feel like ourselves for a while.....

I trudged through the feelings - thick, heavy sludge. Finally they lifted. I found me underneath, and a new normal began."

Sandra says

Lifechanging.

Nikki says

I got told to read this by my councillor to help deal with various issues of grief I am going through in my life.. particularly the loss of my grandmother who I was very close to.

Parts of the book I found really related to me whilst others.. although bad situations did not relate to me at all...

I struggled to get through parts of the book, but in saying that other parts I was able to just fly through..

The idea of the book was to be able to highlight that parts that I found I could relate to.. turns out there was alot of highlighting I was able to do..

Overall this book was a very indepth look into the grief subject but, I'm not sure it has helped with with my own grief.. I have a different outlook on it now admittedly but that's about it.

Emily Green says

Melody Beattie's *The Grief Club* explores not just grief, but the loss that accompanies most life changes. It is a self-help book, and focuses on telling different people's stories as a means to understanding the process by which one grieves.

I sought this book out from the local library after my beautiful pup, Boogie, died. I found myself unsure how to deal with the grief, as, fortunately, I have not yet had the experience of losing someone to whom I have been extremely close. My grandmother died nearly two years ago, but I was not terribly close to her. Boogie, however, had been my companion for six years, moving with me from Mississippi to Memphis to Princeton and on to Cherry Hill. We had been through a lot together—from finding him sick and wandering through the snow in Mississippi, to bringing him back to health, to cancer and multiple surgeries, I spent a lot of time caring for Boogie. In return, I had the sweetest dog ever. He never even barked. He loved to chase rabbits, tease the cats, and beg for food. Even though I watched him slowly grow older and become sick, his death was still a shock for me. It was still too soon, even though he was sixteen. I know that I will always miss him and I will always love him.

Did *The Grief Club* help me? Yes, it did. Several of Beattie's messages were very important to hear. First, that we need to find meaning in our experiences. Boogie was a blessing to me. Finding him was a gift. I am sorry that I had to lose him, but I am so grateful that he shared his life with me. And while I am so sorry that such a good soul had to get old and die, it happens to all creatures.

The second message that I needed to hear was about the necessity of loss in life. No change can happen without loss. Several of Beattie's chapters focus not on death, but other life changes, such as parents dealing with children leaving home and people having to give up or live in their dreams. When Boogie first died, all I wanted to do was get through the grief, so that I could be past it and on to the next thing. I thought of his death as something to simply get over. After reading *The Grief Club*, I feel as though I don't just have to live through this, but that this is life. Sad, painful, and difficult, but nothing is going to stop. Everything around me continues. My heart beats, the fall is coming, the traffic speeds by, the cars full of people going and going. Everything has changed for me, but I am still in the world.

That being said, this is a self-help book. Some of it is cheesy. It acknowledges pain and suffering, and encourages feeling those emotions, but it looks to how we grow through these experiences. It addresses feelings head on. It does not tell you how to get up in the morning when all you want to do is drown in your bed sheets. It does, however, offer some commiseration.

Jenny says

Right away I trusted the author, Melody Beattie. She was totally human in her book and does not shy away from the darkest points of her life, from a neglected childhood, to decades of terrible addiction, to learning she has Hepatitis C, to losing her teenage son. Her book covers many different types of loss, but the one I most identify with is the loss of her son. Though many chapters are NOT about the loss of a child specifically, she instructs the reader to read each one because there are elements throughout that can pertain to any loss.

I agree with the book's main thread that there are others going through what you are, and you should not go through your grief alone. There are groups for just about any loss and hardship you can imagine. Another point Melody makes is that there are innumerable types of "losses" people can experience in life. She has a pages-long list at the end of her book that attempts to cover all possible loss. The point she makes with this list, to me, is that while you are in the middle of it, you think you are the only person in the world dealing with it. When you see it printed in black and white, it makes you realize there are others out there who "get it" and get you.

I appreciated Melody's honesty about topics that may have been stigmatized in the past.
