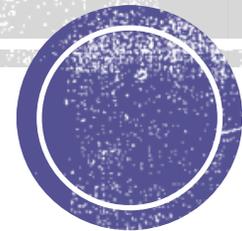


# Coping with the Ambiguous Losses and Stress of the Pandemic

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# Learning Objectives

- **List** the SIX stages of grief according to recent clinical theory and research
- **Describe** three strategies for encouraging the post-loss meaning-making process
- **Practice** acceptance of the non-linear process of resolving pandemic-related grief



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

# That Discomfort You're Feeling Is Grief

by [Scott Berinato](#)

March 23, 2020



## HBR Article

Jump started the public awareness of what we are experiencing

With accurate diagnosis comes effective treatment



1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining
4. Depression
5. Acceptance
6. Meaning\*\*



## Stages of Grief

We no longer view these stages as linear

The feelings will come and go as grief is gradually resolved

**Ambiguous loss** – cancellations, loss of routine, no goodbyes



# First-Aid

- Mindful breathing
- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Social connection

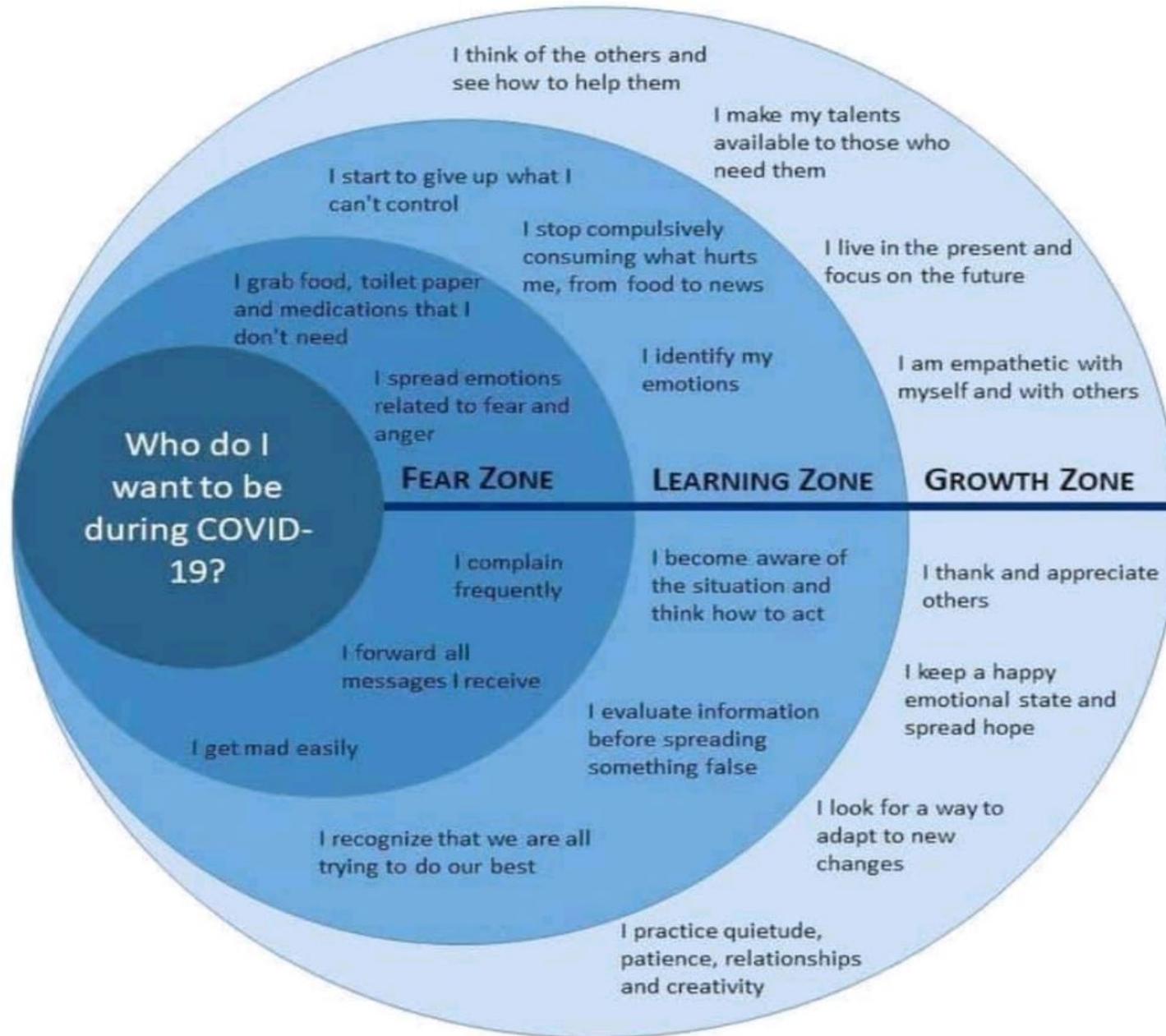


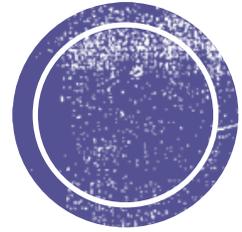
# Controlled Breathing



- Consciously changing the way you breathe appears to send a signal to the brain to adjust the parasympathetic branch of the nervous system, which can
  - slow heart rate and digestion
  - promote feelings of calm
  - Downregulate the sympathetic system, which controls the release of stress hormones like cortisol.
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/09/well/mind/breathe-exhale-repeat-the-benefits-of-controlled-breathing.html>







**Ask yourself: How  
will I emerge from  
this crisis?**

*You may need to think out loud with a trusted friend, partner,  
or therapist on this task.*



**Cheryl Brown** • 2nd

Political Director at Save The Bay

1mo •



When planning something important (like a vacation or a special event), I often think about the story I want to be able to tell about it afterwards. This article is useful in starting to think about what stories we can tell about ourselves after this big unplanned trip we are all on.



**Alexander Chan**

Extension Specialist and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

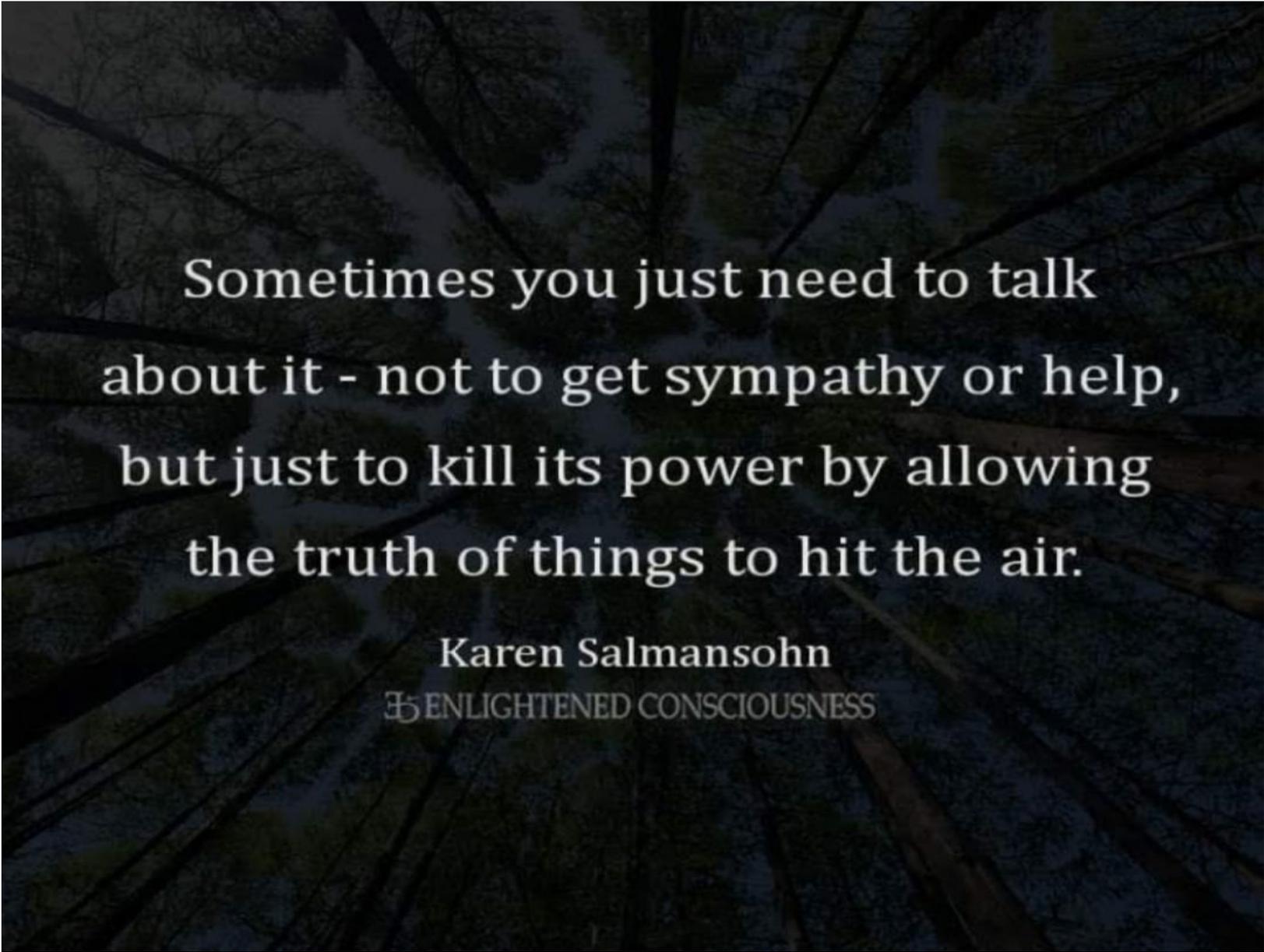
2mo •

Here's a quick article I wrote meant to stimulate the conversation on mental health during the pandemic [#mentalhealth](#) [#selfcare](#) [#griefandloss](#)

**Coping with Losses during the Pandemic** • 1 page

**In someone  
else's words**



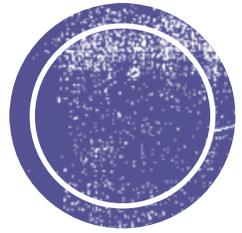


Sometimes you just need to talk  
about it - not to get sympathy or help,  
but just to kill its power by allowing  
the truth of things to hit the air.

Karen Salmansohn

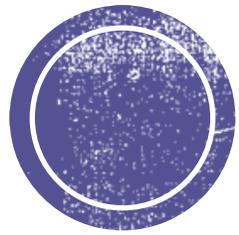
☯ ENLIGHTENED CONSCIOUSNESS





**Support others, but don't let them make meaning for you.**

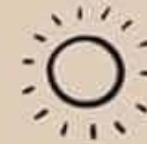
*Friends and family need you to recognize their process just as much as you need them to give credit to yours.*



**Welcome all  
emotions daily.**

*On any given day, allow yourself to laugh, cry, and  
everything in between.*

# Happiness Chemicals and how to hack them



## DOPAMINE

THE REWARD CHEMICAL

- Completing a task
- Doing self-care activities
- Eating food
- Celebrating little wins



## OXYTOCIN

THE LOVE HORMONE

- Playing with a dog
- Playing with a baby
- Holding hand
- Hugging your family
- Give compliment



## SEROTONIN

THE MOOD STABILIZER

- Meditating
- Running
- Sun exposure
- Walk in nature
- Swimming
- Cycling

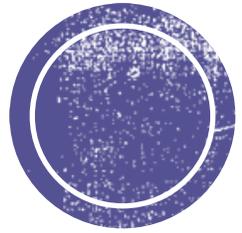


## ENDORPHIN

THE PAIN KILLER

- Laughter exercise
- Essential oils
- Watch a comedy
- Dark chocolate
- Exercising





# These tasks are ongoing

*Just as the COVID situation evolves, so does your work in adapting to it emotionally.*

**Email me at:**  
**[alexchan@umd.edu](mailto:alexchan@umd.edu)**

**Get on my calendar for a meeting at:**  
**<https://alexchan.youcanbook.me>**

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# CME Accreditation and Designation

CMEs will be available at no cost, as will Participant Certificates, which for other disciplines can qualify for continuing education credit.

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Presenters and Planners: Aliya Jones, MD and Steve Whitefield, MD have reported no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Alex Chan, PhD, LMFT and Hinda Dubin, MD have reported no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

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