

An email that had a great open rate.
My business is Healing For Grieving Hearts -> FB page:
<https://www.facebook.com/healingforgrievinghearts>
Cheers, Jacqueline Steudler

This week I was introduced to Dr. Lois Tonkin's model of grief. After a little bit more research, I discovered that this model wasn't her idea. Instead, it came to her in a story of a grieving mother that she met at a conference.

Excerpt from an article published by Lois Tonkin in 2009 (citation with the link below)

"The woman's child had died some years before. At this time, she said, grief consumed her totally, filling every part of her life, awake and asleep. She drew a circle to represent her life and shading it all in to indicate her grief.

She had imagined that as time went by, the grief would shrink and become neatly encapsulated in her life in a small and manageable way; she was realistic enough to assume that it would not go away entirely.

But what happened was different. The grief stayed just as big, but her life grew around it. There were times, anniversaries, or moments which reminded her of her child when she operated entirely from out of the shaded circle in her life, and her grief felt just as intense as it ever had. ... What helps some clients about this model (and it does not fit everyone) is that it relieves them of the expectation that their grief should largely go away. ..."

Citation and Link to article

Lois Tonkin TTC, Cert Counselling (NZ) (1996) Growing around grief—another way of looking at grief and recovery, *Bereavement Care*, 15:1, 10, DOI: 10.1080/02682629608657376 link is <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02682629608657376>

This image is a representation of the model.



People tend to believe that grief shrinks over time



What really happens is that we grow around our grief

What do you think?

Does it reflect or point in a direction that makes sense to you?

I'm always very cautious in adopting any models around grief because our grief experiences are so personal.

This one, however, made sense for my own grief journey. It also resonates with what I've heard from my one-on-one clients over the years.

I wonder now if my grief has become gentler, or if I perceive it as a gentler feeling because I've added a big jar full of compassionate actions around it. 🥰

I know for sure in talking to my clients that compassionate actions help them find their footing again and build a new life and purpose.

Compassionate Action 💜

- Draw a circle of your grief and choose a colour for it.
- Draw another circle around it and add colours (it can be one colour or several colours).
- Make a journal entry reflecting on the size of your circles and the colours you choose.

If the journal entry triggers any questions you would like to discuss, please get in touch.

Jacqueline x