

# *TFT Allows Us the Feelings We Need*

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In my experience the most common problem with grief is people not grieving. When a client comes in looking for help with grief the first question I ask is what are you doing? How are you grieving? The most common response is it hurts too much and I cry every time I remember he or she is gone. Avoiding the memories, avoiding the parts of their current life that triggers the memories, or avoiding sharing memories with others is a common coping mechanism to manage the pain even for the toughest person. Taking the time to be with feelings of love for the one who has died and integrating the fact that person is no longer with him or her is a necessary component in reconstructing a life.

Grieving is an active process requiring our engagement. Time passively passed without our conscious awareness is of little help in this process. Time spent locked in overwhelming emotion that freezes our thinking and prevents us from taking action is of less help. Making the change in our being requires living with the reality of having been given the gifts of our loved one and now being without the physical presence of his or her. TFT provides a means to getting unstuck and using our feelings in this change process.

A woman in her late forties approached me after a presentation at a conference and asked for help dealing with the loss of her son three years earlier. In his early twenties he had been killed in an industrial accident. She was an experienced mental health professional and was able to describe her sense of being stuck in her grief. She was unable to move beyond the overwhelming pain she feels whenever she started to think of her son. The tears started and pain spread across her face as soon as she began to respond to my question “How may I help?” Without further prompting I lead her through a TFT treatment sequence and calm returned to her face and the tears slowed. I asked her “what happen to your son” and the pain returned just as strong as before. After another treatment sequence she was able to describe the thought field at first was a general overwhelmed feeling in knowing he was gone and she was without him. The second thought field was imaging how he died—the moments before, the pain he may have felt, the thoughts he probably had and the feelings experienced in dying alone.

As she talked about her understanding of his death in the work he loved the pain returned to her face and she started to cry hard again. The thought field was now associated with the fact she had encouraged her son to pursue this work he love and was good at doing. After more TFT treatment she was able to talk about this guilt as irrational and put these feeling in a manageable place. As we talked more about her son and their relationship we had to treat a thought feel having to do with the anger she was feeling towards him about some choices he was making. Then as we talked more, without the anger and guilt, about her love for her son she start to cry again. This time with deep powerful sobs. I offered immediately to do more treatment but she refused any further help saying “this is where I have been trying to get to for three years—I am remembering the last time I saw him at the airport and I hugged my baby good-bye.”

Grieving is painful and hard work as we suffer through a loss. Not even TFT can alter this reality. TFT can manage the overwhelming pain and allow conscious engagement in a process of integrating the loss. A card came about six months later from this mother reporting she was doing much better. She was grieving and had finished a couple of projects done in her son’s name. These projects had been started right after his death. She was able to do the work of grieving because she had a way with TFT to manage the pain when it was too much. To fully integrate the loss we must be able to feel the love and accept a life that is changed.