# **BRAIN RULES FOR GRIEVING (2019)**

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## 1. **All brains are unique.** Brains are shaped by personal experiences and the environment. Because no two people occupy the same space at the same time, they have unique experiences which translates to unique brains and behaviors. Identical twins share 100% of their DNA in common but each has a unique brain due to experience. Research suggest that we have neurons dedicated to familiar and famous people. (Halle Berry Neuron Hypothesis, Dan page UCLA, 2005). Your grief experience will be as unique as you are.

## **2. Stress, threat, and trauma hamper new learning.** Emotions shape learning and help determine what is important and keep you safe. While the cortisol released during high period of stress can be helpful, too much stress produces incoherent brain/heart rhythms and can interfere with memory, sleep, mood, and ability to function.

## **3. Brains thrive on social interaction**. The human brain is a social brain and is wired from birth through the action of mirror neurons to imitate the intentional motor actions of others. Babies can imitate the purposeful motor actions of adults. Our brains grow and develop from interactions and experiences with others. Isolation, apathy, neglect, or poor stimulation deprive the brain of the necessary stimuli to make healthy connections. Grief is no time to withdraw and “be only alone” to recover.” Balance is the key. A certain amount of alone time is good for mindfulness and to refocus one's energy but in general, it is in concert with others we will find healing and helpful strategies to reframe our lives without the one we lost.

## **4. Meaning motivates learners and creates understanding**. Brains are natural pattern “seekers and makers” taking in and processing information from 19+ senses. Five sense organs manage 19+ different kinds of sensory input.(Sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch, vomeronasal, ultraviolet rays, proximal, pain, balance, vestibular, barometric, Geogravimetric, temperature, eidetic imagery, magnetic waves, infrared rays, ionic rays) The more senses we engage in thinking and learning, the more balanced the outcome.

## **5. All Learning is Mind/Body.** Movement is important for learning. The brain requires stimulation to learn new information. All learning is mind/body and movement engages the entire physiology. Brain Gym exercises help focus the brains for relaxation and learning. Eye position is key to brain function.

## **6. Brains are multimodal processors processing parts and wholes simultaneously**. Thoughts have energy that shape behavior. Automatic Negative Thoughts (Ants) cause the body to produce negative chemicals that work against positive thinking and moving on. Brains are naturally wired for ANTS so we must work to outthink our negative brains with positive messages. Play the glad game and find ways to incorporate gratitude in your day.

## **7. Cycles and rhythms are important for learning.** Learning too fast won’t last and brains need downtime to fix learning pathways. Grieving takes time. The heart has its own rhythm that affects the brain. Heart rhythms can be detected as much as 6-8 feet from the body. Negative emotions produce incoherent heart/brain rhythms that interfere with well-being and success. Positive emotions such as appreciation, joy, care and love create coherent heart/brain rhythms leading to feelings of well-being and success.