

# *A faith that grieves...*

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# Passages to consider

- ▣ Genesis 1:22
- ▣ Genesis 45:1-8
- ▣ Job 1:21; 2:3, 9-10      *Key passage to study*
- ▣ Lamentations 3      *Key passage to study*
- ▣ Luke 19:41-44
- ▣ John 11

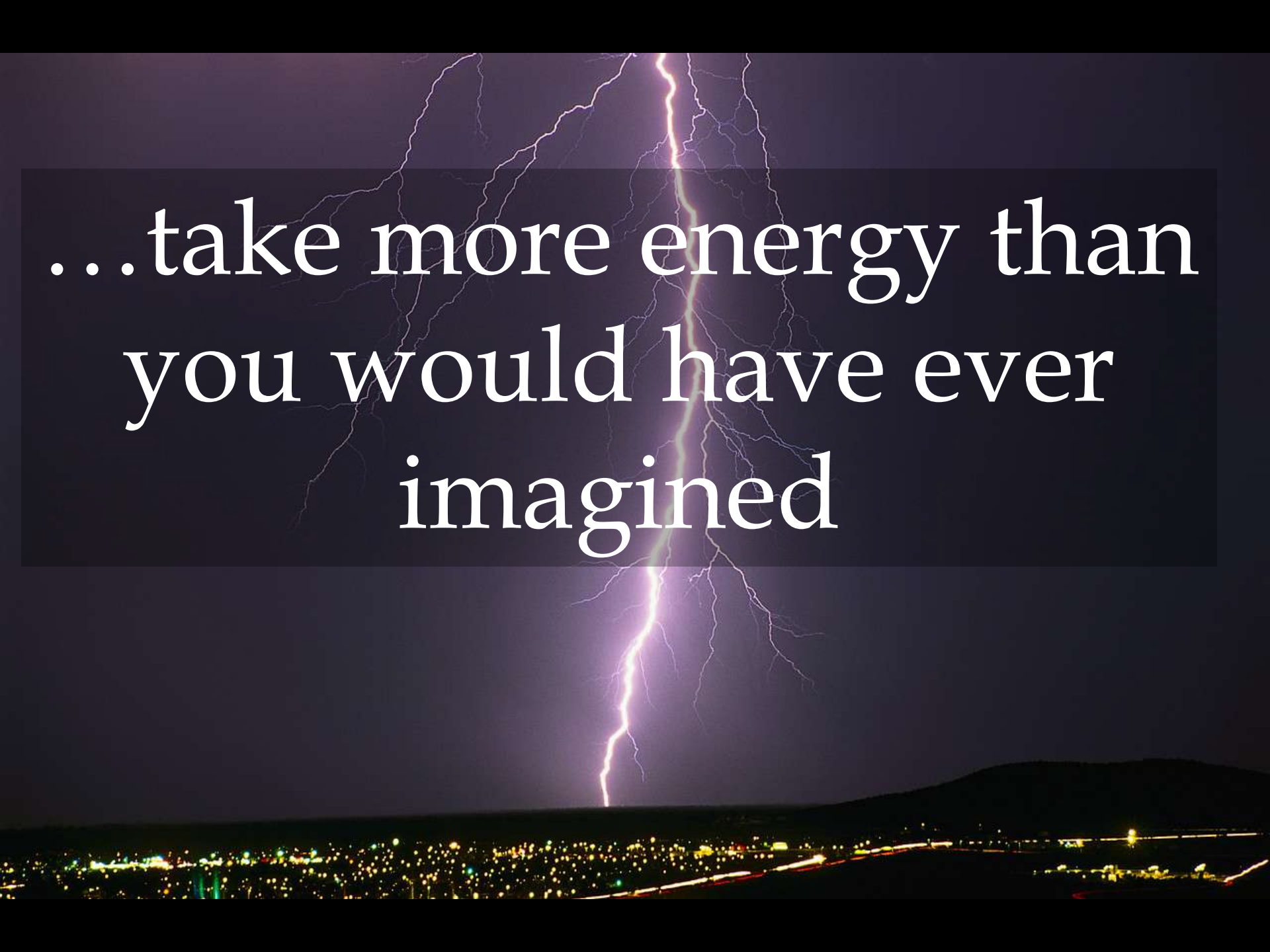


# Appropriate Expectations for Grief

Your grief will ...

A dramatic night scene featuring a bright purple lightning bolt striking down from a dark sky over a cityscape with lights and a road.


...take longer than most  
people think

A night landscape featuring a city skyline with numerous lights at the bottom. A bright purple lightning bolt strikes down from a dark sky, illuminating the scene. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent dark band across the middle of the image.

...take more energy than  
you would have ever  
imagined

A night landscape featuring a city skyline with numerous lights at the bottom. A bright purple lightning bolt strikes the ground in the center, with several smaller bolts branching out. The sky is dark, and the overall scene is dramatic and high-contrast.

...involve many changes  
and will be continually  
developing

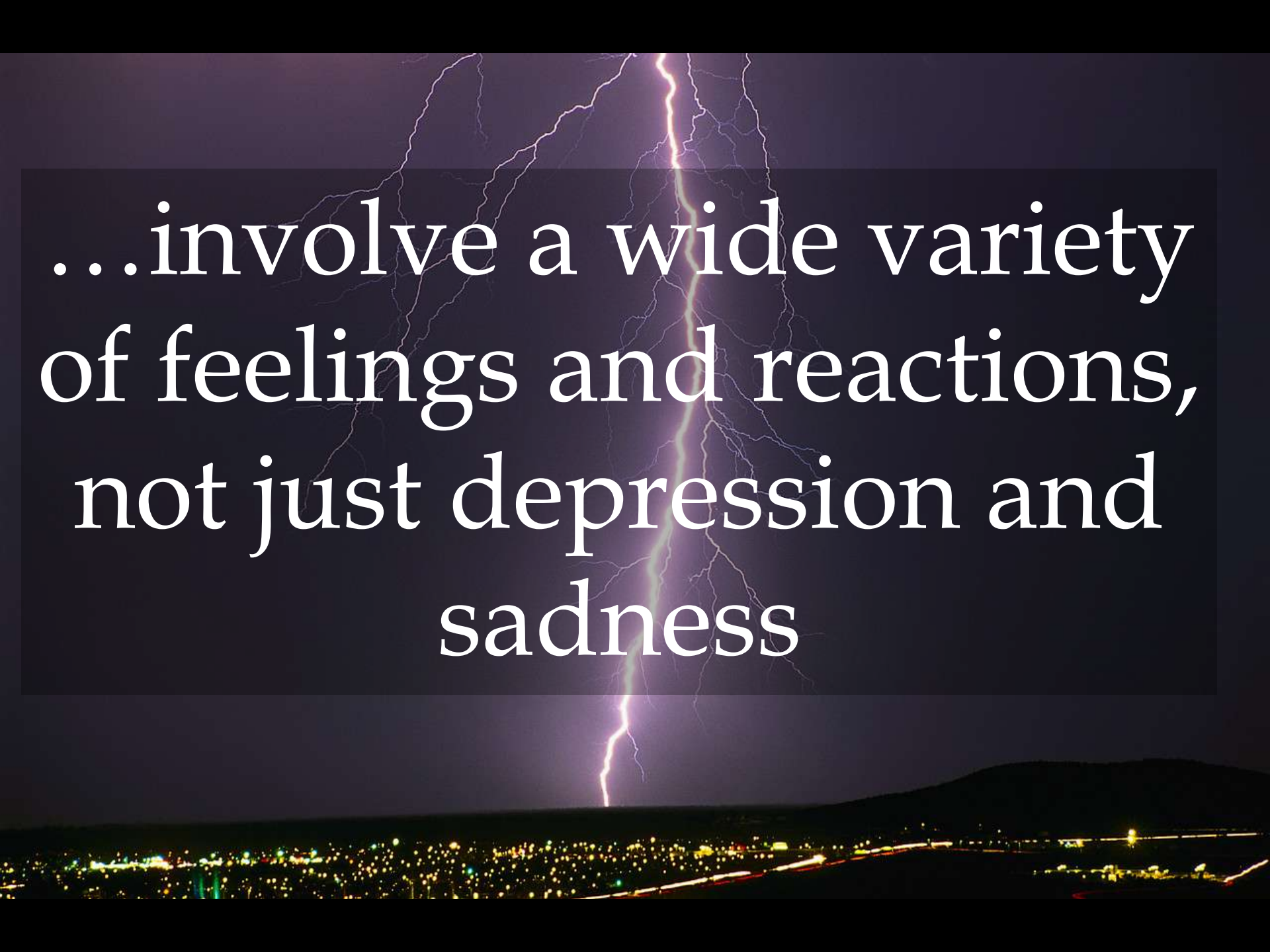
A night landscape featuring a city skyline with numerous lights at the bottom. A bright purple lightning bolt strikes down from a dark sky, illuminating the scene. The text is overlaid on a dark horizontal band across the middle of the image.

...show itself in all  
spheres of your life

A night landscape featuring a city skyline with numerous lights at the bottom. A bright purple lightning bolt strikes down from a dark sky, illuminating the scene. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent dark band across the middle of the image.

...depend upon how  
you perceive the loss



A night landscape featuring a city skyline with numerous lights at the bottom. A bright purple lightning bolt strikes down from a dark sky, illuminating the scene. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

...involve a wide variety  
of feelings and reactions,  
not just depression and  
sadness

# Stages of the Grief Cycle

## "NORMAL" FUNCTIONING



### Shock and Denial

- Avoidance
- Confusion
- Fear
- Numbness
- Blame

### Anger

- Frustration
- Anxiety
- Irritation
- Embarrassment
- Shame

### Depression and Detachment

- Overwhelmed
- Blahs
- Lack of energy
- Helplessness

- Empowerment
- Security
- Self-esteem
- Meaning

## RETURN TO MEANINGFUL LIFE

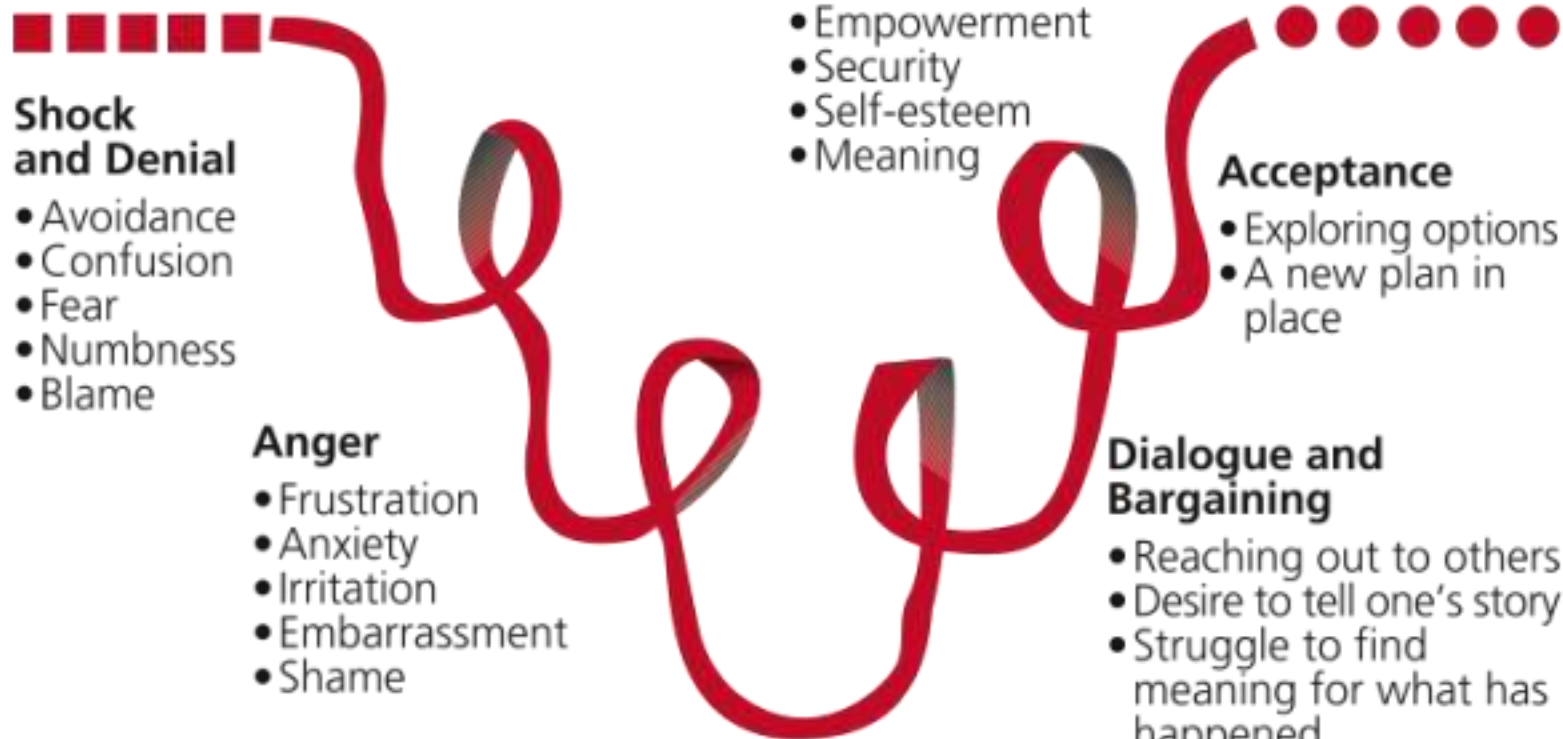


### Acceptance

- Exploring options
- A new plan in place

### Dialogue and Bargaining

- Reaching out to others
- Desire to tell one's story
- Struggle to find meaning for what has happened





# The journey of grief...

The journey of grief is taken best within the context of a caring community: family, friends and neighbors, faith group. **Grief is like a serious injury.** A person with whom I have a bond is gone. That bond has been severed, leaving a deep and tender wound. It hurts. It is sometimes hard to find relief. I have to do what I can to relieve the pain, clean and dress the wound, protect it, and give it time to heal. I must adjust my life to allow for it, and it is a huge inconvenience.

Grief is not selfish, but grief is about me.

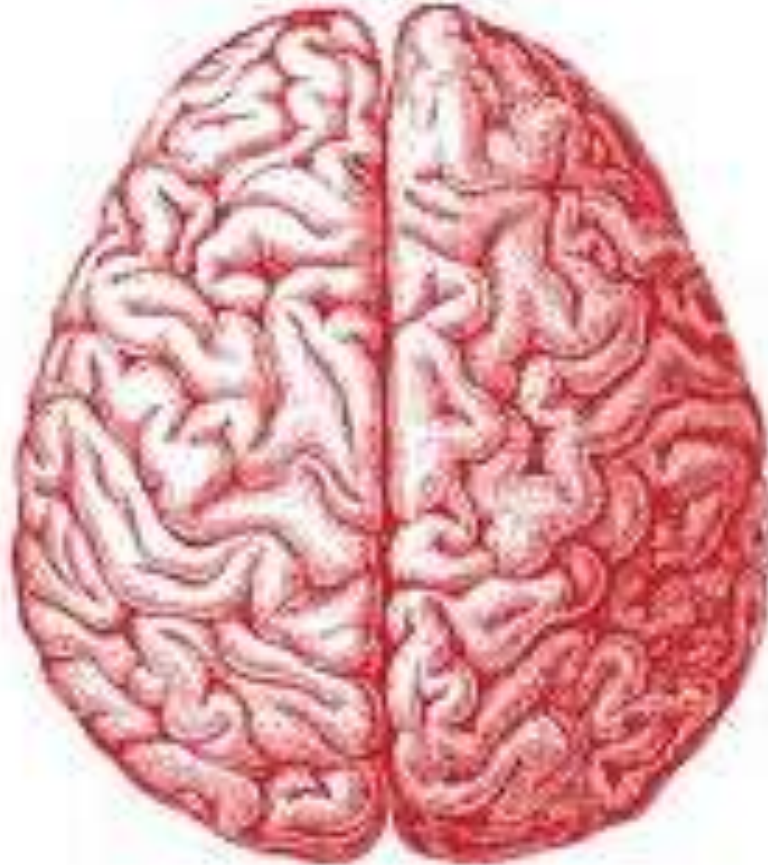
~Michael Spencer



# How does the brain work?

**Left**

Works like a  
computer



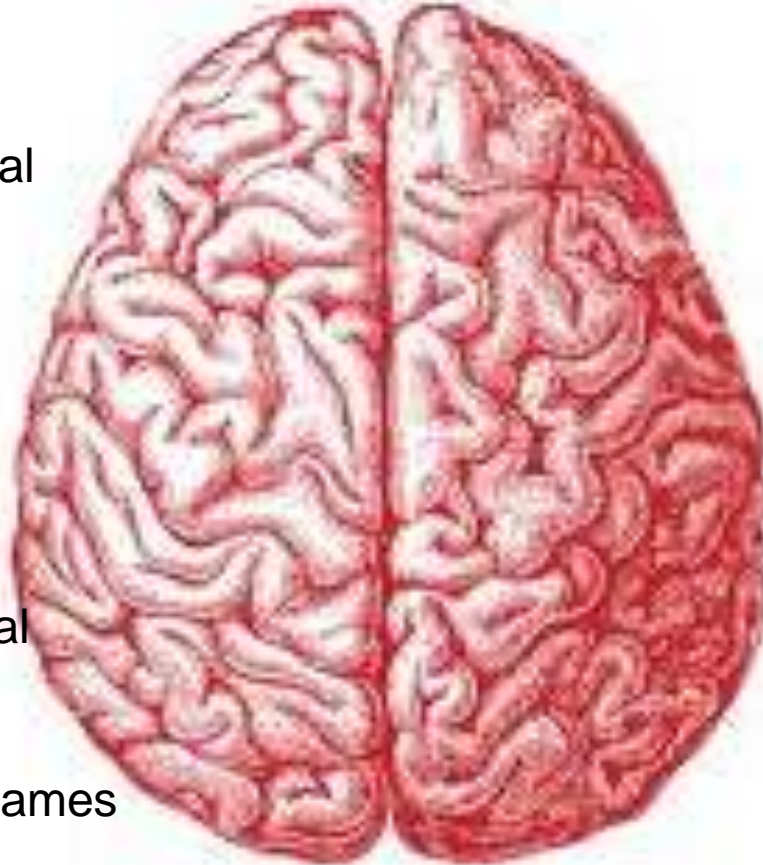
**Right**

Works like a  
Kaleidoscope

# How does the brain work?

## Left

- Factual
- Logical, rational
- Mathematical
- Sequential
- Directed
- Linear
- Objective
- Analysis
- Explicit
- Stores practical information
- Literal
- Remembers names

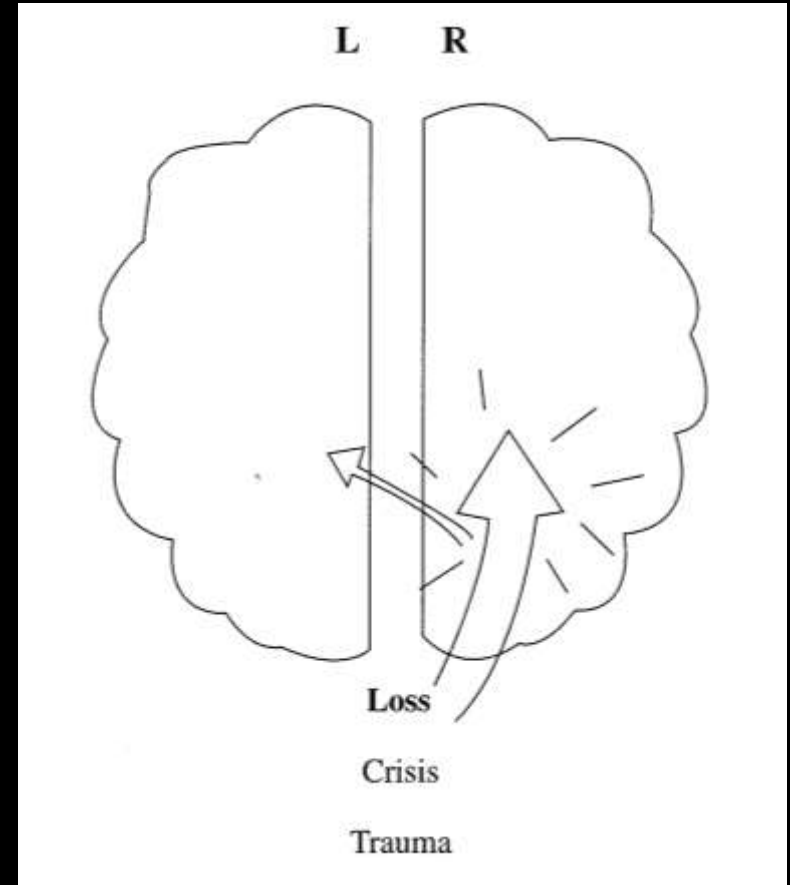


## Right

- Experiential
- Intuitive
- Patterns
- Simultaneous
- Spontaneous
- Spatial
- Subjective
- Synthesis
- Implicit
- Stores emotional info
- Figurative
- Remembers

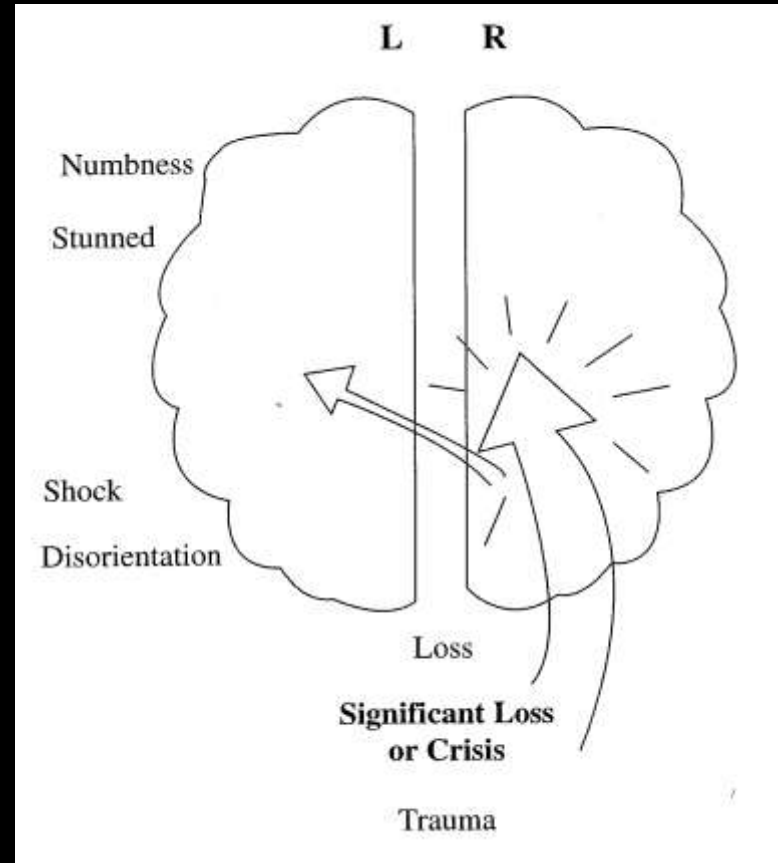
# What happens to the brain during loss?

- ▣ A picture is worth a thousand words



# What happens to the brain during crisis?

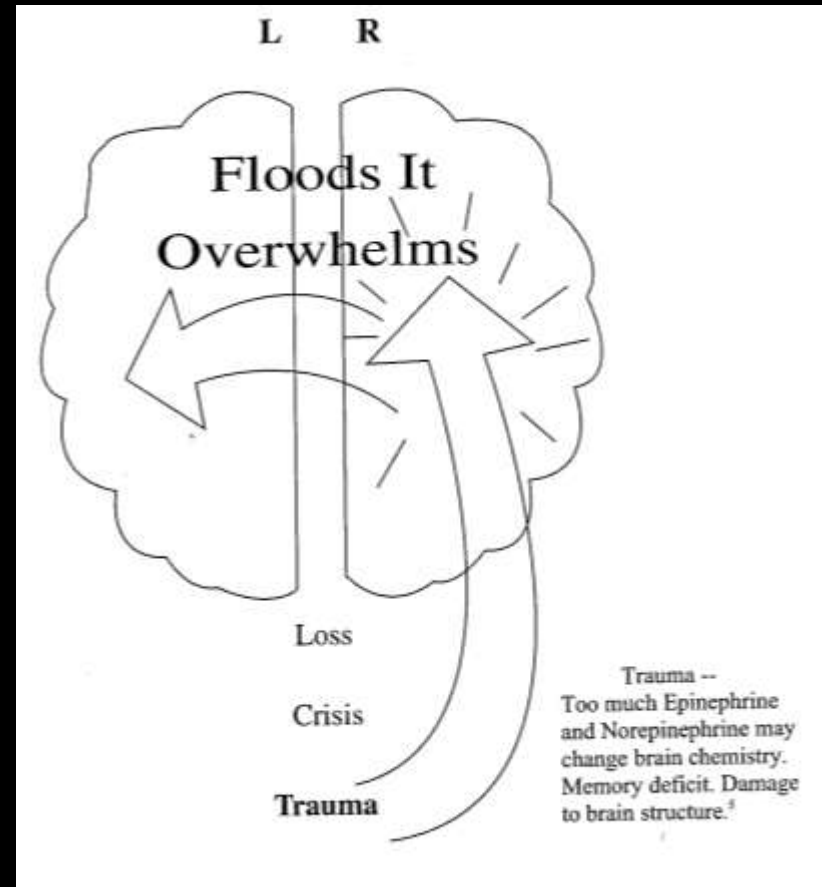
- ▣ Recovering means moving more to the left
- ▣ Recovering means making more sense of what happened cognitively





# What happens to the brain during trauma?

- ❑ Recovering means moving more to the left
- ❑ Recovering means making more sense of what happened cognitively
- ❑ Too much Epinephrine and Norepinephrine change brain chemistry
- ❑ Damage to brain structure



# Sympathy vs. Empathy

## □ Sympathy

Feel “for” someone

Drives disconnection

Serves self more than everyone else

## □ Empathy

Feel “with” someone

Drives connection

Serves everyone else and self equally

## Empathy involves 4 tasks:

1. Being able to take on another person’s perspective
2. Being non-judgmental
3. Being able to recognize emotions in our self and in others
4. Being able to communicate emotions with others



# Sympathy

- ▣ Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment together to come to **show him sympathy and comfort him**. 12 And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him. And they raised their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven. 13 And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great. (ESV)

# Failure of sympathy to comfort

1. Job's friends were not able to take on Job's perspective of his loss
2. Job's friends were very judgmental
3. Job's friends were all cognitive, failing to recognize Job's inner feelings (past their initial grief with him)
4. Job's friends couldn't share their **feelings**, only their **thoughts**

# Empathy

- ▣ 2 Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was **deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled**. 34 And he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” 35 Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

# Empathy provides comfort

1. Jesus was able to see Mary & Martha's loss through their eyes
2. Jesus did not judge, even though he did teach
3. Jesus felt his own emotions and could share what Mary & Martha felt
4. Jesus shared his **feelings** and his **thoughts**

# Grief is...

- ▣ ... a sacred place
- ▣ ...a journey
- ▣ ...a process
- ▣ ... how we experience the depth of God's redeeming Love for all of us