

Core Concept of Tonkin's Model:

It was originally thought that grief was linear and as time passed grief would shrink over time.

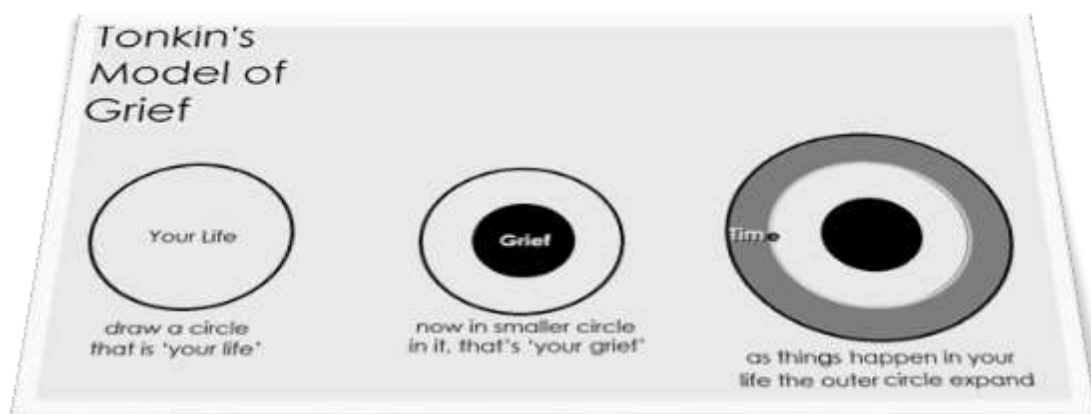


Tonkin instead, looked at this model and stated that

"The grief stays the same size, but your life grows bigger around it."

Visual Representation:

Tonkin illustrated her model with two circles:



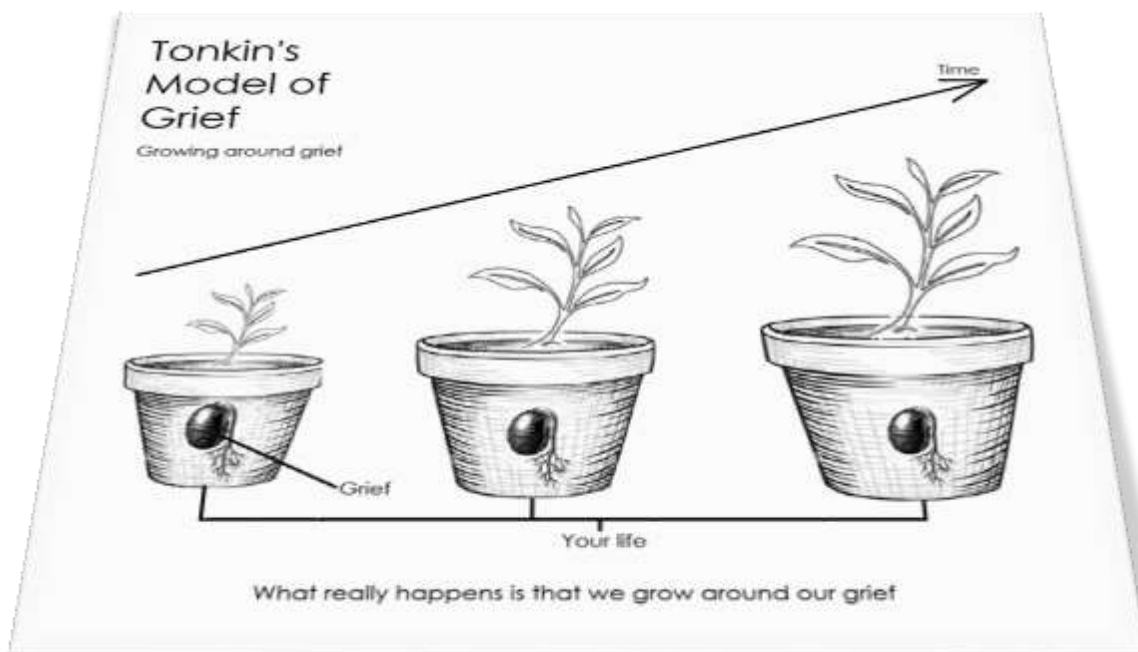
1. **At the time of loss:** A large circle represents grief, and a smaller one represents your life. Grief feels overwhelming and dominates your experience.
2. **Over time:** The grief circle remains the same size, but the life circle grows. Grief is still there, but it no longer consumes everything—you build a new life around it.

Key Takeaways:

- **Grief doesn't go away**; it becomes part of you.
- **Healing involves growth**, not erasure.
- It normalizes the ongoing presence of grief, even many years after the loss.
- It's a compassionate, non-linear way of understanding how people continue to live after loss.

This model resonates with many because it reflects the real, lasting impact of loss—while also validating personal growth and the development of a meaningful life alongside grief.

This perspective on grieving does not guarantee that a person's sorrow will eventually fade. You'll never truly be "over it." It recognises that there will be days when your grief is just as intense as it was when the individual passed away. On other days, however, you will be able to move on to other aspects of your life. This can occasionally make individuals feel the pain of loss as strong as before, as though it is a betrayal of the deceased.



The "growing around grief" paradigm demonstrates how we may continue to enjoy our lives while still grieving the loss of a loved one. It demonstrates that we are capable of growing up with the loss. If grief is becoming too much for you,