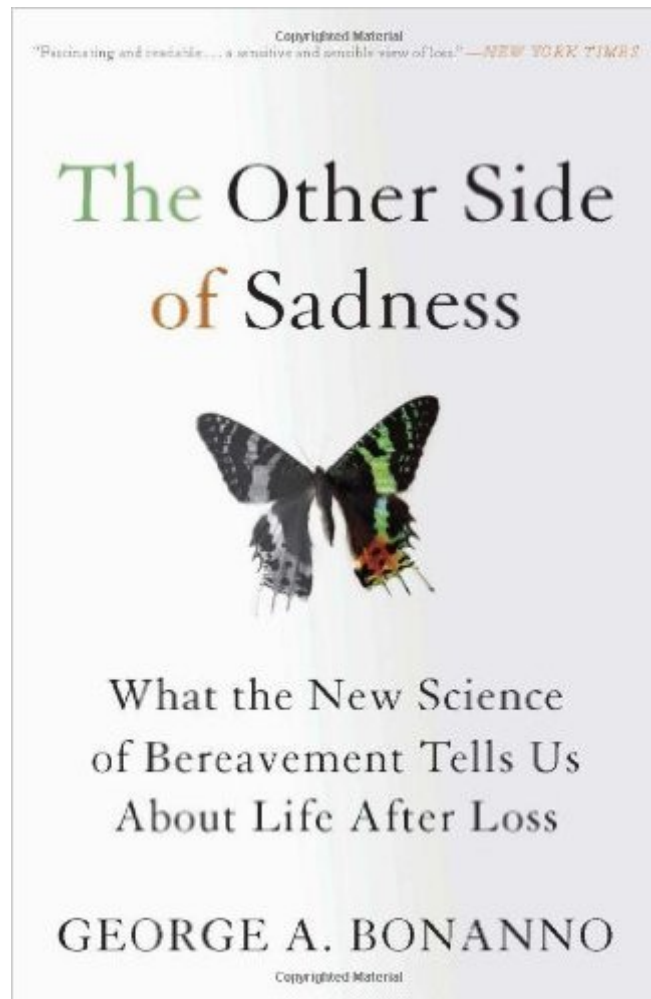


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The Other Side Of Sadness: What The New Science Of Bereavement Tells Us About Life After Loss



Synopsis

We tend to understand grief as a predictable five-stage process of denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. But in *The Other Side of Sadness*, George Bonanno shows that our conventional model discounts our capacity for resilience. In fact, he reveals that we are already hardwired to deal with our losses efficiently—not by graduating through static phases. Weaving in explorations of mourning rituals and the universal experiences of the death of a parent or child, Bonanno examines how our inborn emotions—anger and denial, but also relief and joy—help us deal effectively with loss. And grieving goes beyond mere sadness: it can deepen interpersonal connections and often involves positive experiences. In the end, mourning is not predictable, but incredibly sophisticated. Combining personal anecdotes and original research, *The Other Side of Sadness* is a must-read for those going through the death of a loved one, mental health professionals, and readers interested in neuroscience and positive psychology.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When a colleague described trying to read this book by saying "I began reading the book over the weekend and became so aggravated that I kept putting it down. Your concerns echo my concerns" I realized I was ready to post my review. George Bonanno's new book is heralded as presenting the best and latest in bereavement research. I am concerned that individuals who read this book will believe it to be fact simply because it is in black and white and especially because of the misleading subtitle referencing the "New Science of Bereavement." The opposite of a scientific contribution to

the field, I see this book as unscientific and subjective, illustrating how wide the gap is between armchair academics and clinical reality. Bonanno's representation of recent developments in research does a great disservice to both bereavement counselors and bereaved individuals. Those grieving a significant loss will wonder whether they are resilient; and if they feel they need help from anyone, not just professionals, they will think it is because they are not resilient and thus inadequate in some way. A July 2007 press release by the American Psychological Association ([...]) opposed the primary theme of Bonanno's book. They stated that people suffering from grief can be helped and that flawed science led to unsupported negative reviews of grief counseling. They concluded that "there is no empirical or statistical evidence to suggest that grief counseling is harmful to clients or that clients who are "normally" bereaved are at special risk if they receive grief counseling." The APA press release described the statistical analysis forming the basis for Bonanno's stance as "fatally flawed." No grief counselor would disagree the bereaved are more resilient than they realize.

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