



The Comeback by Patrick Coyle

Trainer's Guide

Trainer's Guide » The Comeback

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Address all inquiries to:

Star Thrower Distribution Corporation

26 East Exchange Street, Suite 600, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

PH: 800.242.3220 | EM: info@starthrower.com | Fax: 651.602.0037 | www.starthrower.com

About the Materials Included with 'The Comeback'

Because the fundamental purpose of training is learning, our materials are designed to make learning more effective. Our programs help viewers learn by understanding the topic, recalling the information, and applying it after the training has concluded.

Successful training means participants can use what they have learned and take action because of the experience.

Materials Included...

Trainer's Guide:

- This extensive training guide provides the leader with detailed information about types of grief, understanding grief, and dealing with grief.

Discussion Questions:

- These questions are best used in a group setting to help participants discuss and process what they have learned from the program.

PowerPoint™ Presentation:

- The PowerPoint™ presentation follows the Trainer's Guide and provides a foundation to have a successful and safe conversation about grief.

Transcript:

- For your reference, a complete transcript of the program is included with the materials.

'Understanding Grief' Interview:

- This 30 minute interview between Patrick Coyle and grief expert Paul Johnson, that offers trainers and viewers an in-depth analysis of grief, and offers further insights about coping with loss.

About 'The Comeback'

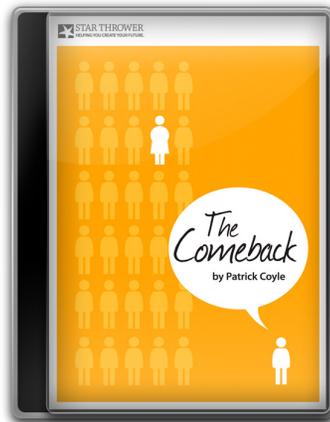
The Comeback discusses an important topic often lost or ignored in organizational settings: grief and loss.

The film is about a man who returns to work following an absence. His co-workers are uncomfortable and unsure how to interact with him, until a young employee from the mailroom takes the time to ask him what happened.

This program also features *Understanding Grief*, a 30-minute interview with grief expert Paul Johnson, that offers trainers and viewers an in-depth analysis of grief, and offers further insights about coping with loss.

This seven minute program will enable people and organizations to have honest conversations about loss and grief in a safe environment.

Program Information:



Available Formats:

DVD & Digital Stream

Length:

7 Minutes

Website:

starthrower.com/thecomeback.htm

Materials Included:

Provided on DVD and available for download on the website*.

(*Access restricted to those who have purchased the film. See login and password provided on the back of the DVD cover).

- *Understanding Grief*: A 30 minute interview with grief and loss expert Paul Johnson
- Trainer's Guide (PDF)
- Discussion Questions (PDF)
- Transcript (PDF)
- PowerPoint™ Presentation

About Patrick Coyle



Patrick Coyle, author of *The Comeback*, is a Minneapolis based writer, director, and producer.

He recently completed work on his second feature film, *Into Temptation*, starring Kristin Chenoweth, Jeremy Sisto, and Brian Baumgartner, which he wrote and directed. *Into Temptation* premiered at The Newport Beach Film Festival and has been released throughout North America by First Look Studios.

His first feature film, *Detective Fiction*, based on his award-winning stage play, premiered at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival and won awards at the Newport (RI) International Film Festival and the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Film Festival. Coyle wrote the screenplay, directed and co-produced. *Detective Fiction* was released theatrically by Landmark Theatres and played for two years on the Sundance Channel.

Coyle also acts in films and on stage, most recently in *Sweet Land*, opposite Ned Beatty and John Heard. He writes plays and screenplays, winning the McKnight Screenwriting Fellowship for his original script, *Half at Zero*, which is scheduled to begin shooting in the fall of 2011.

Coyle's film work is deeply influenced by his decade of social work. He has worked in Hospice Care, as a Counselor for Chronically Mentally Ill Adults, and with HIV/AIDS clients via Open Arms of Minnesota.

Coyle studied English Literature and Creative Writing at The University of Nebraska/Omaha and graduated with a BA in 1982. He lives in Minneapolis with his wife, playwright Lily Coyle, and their two daughters, Clara Rose and Ruby Sue.

What Is Grief?

Grief is a natural response to loss. It is the emotional suffering a person feels when something or someone they love is taken away. Grief can be caused by different kinds of loss.

Types of Grief Include:

Societal Grief

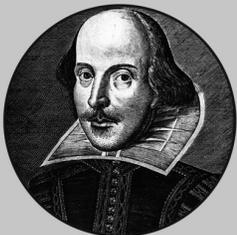
- Pearl Harbor
- Assassinations (John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King)
- September 11, 2001
- Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004
- Hurricane Katrina
- Tucson Shooting

Professional Grief

- Loss of job
- Loss of boss or valued employee
- An associate's loss of job
- Demotion
- Furlough
- Lack of promotion
- Loss of financial stability
- Loss of reputation over scandal or error

Personal Grief

- Loss of a loved one
- End of a relationship
- Divorce
- Miscarriage
- Death of a pet
- Serious illness
- Loss of a friendship
- Loss of safety after trauma



**"Grief hath twenty shadows...
and makes one hour ten."**

—William Shakespeare

What Is Grief? *(continued)*

The Five Stages of Grief

The Five Stages of Grief, also known as the Kübler-Ross model, was introduced in 1969 by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her book, *On Death and Dying*.

The book was based on her research with more than 500 dying patients, and describes in five stages, the process that people cope and deal with grief. This is especially relevant for those diagnosed with a terminal illness or have experienced a catastrophic loss.

The Five Stages of Grief is meant to be descriptive, as opposed to prescriptive. These stages are not necessarily chronological or linear, and not everyone who experiences a life-threatening/changing event will experience all five of the responses. Additionally, sometimes people get stuck in one of the first four stages. Their lives can be painful until they move to the fifth stage: acceptance.

Denial

"This can't be happening."

- Denial is usually a temporary defense, and the feeling is generally replaced with heightened awareness of positions and individuals that will be left behind after a loss.

Anger

"Why me? It's not fair."

- Once in the second stage, the individual recognizes denial cannot continue. Because of anger, the person can be difficult to care for due to misplaced feelings of rage and envy. Sometimes individuals who symbolize life or energy are subject to resentment and jealousy.

Bargaining

"I'd do anything for more time," "I'll give my life savings if..."

- The third stage involves the hope that the individual can somehow postpone or delay what is going on.

Depression

"I'm so sad, why bother?" "What's the point?"

- During the fourth stage, the person begins to understand the certainty of the situation. Because of this, the person may become silent, refuse visitors, and spend a lot of time crying or grieving. This is an important time for grieving that must be processed.

Acceptance

"It's going to be OK."

- In this last stage, the individual begins to come to terms with his mortality or that of his loved one.

What Is Grief? (continued)

Myths and Facts About Grief

Myths

- The pain will go away faster if you ignore it.
- It's important to be strong in the face of loss.
- If you don't cry, it means you aren't sorry about the loss.
- Grief should last about a year.

Facts

- Trying to ignore your pain or keep it from surfacing will only make it worse in the long run. For real healing, it is necessary to face your grief and actively deal with it.
- Feeling sad, frightened, or lonely is a normal reaction to loss. Crying doesn't signify weakness. You don't need to protect family or friends by putting on a brave front; showing true feelings can help.
- Crying is a normal response to sadness, but it's not the only one. Those who don't cry may feel the pain just as deeply as others. They may simply have other ways of showing it.
- There is no right or wrong time-frame for grieving. It differs from person to person.

What Is Grief? *(continued)*

Common Symptoms of Grief

While loss affects people in different ways, many people experience the following symptoms when they are grieving. Remember that almost anything you experience in the early stages of grief is normal; including feeling like you're going crazy, that you're in a bad dream, or questioning your long-held beliefs.

Shock and disbelief

Right after a loss, it can be hard to accept what happened. You may feel numb, have trouble believing that the loss really happened, or even deny the truth. If someone you love has died, you may keep expecting them to show up, even though you know they're gone.

Sadness

Profound sadness is probably the most universally experienced symptom of grief. You may have feelings of emptiness, despair, yearning, or deep loneliness. You may also cry a lot or feel emotionally unstable.

Guilt

You may regret or feel guilty about things you did or didn't say or do. You may also feel guilty about certain feelings (e.g. feeling relieved when the person died after a long, difficult illness). After a death, you may even feel guilty for not doing something to prevent the death, even if there was nothing more you could have done.

Anger

Even if the loss was nobody's fault, you may feel angry and resentful. If you lost a loved one, you may be angry at yourself, God, the doctors, or even the person who died for abandoning you. You may feel the need to blame someone for the injustice that was done to you.

Fear

A significant loss can trigger a host of worries and fears. You may feel anxious, helpless, or insecure. You may even have panic attacks. The death of a loved one can trigger fears about your own mortality, of facing life without that person, or the responsibilities you now face alone.

Physical symptoms

We often think of grief as a strictly emotional process, but grief often involves physical problems, including fatigue, nausea, lowered immunity, weight loss or weight gain, aches and pains, and insomnia.

Dealing With Grief

Who Will Experience Grief?

Loss is universal. At some point, everyone, including you will experience loss. Grief is the natural response to loss.

How Do You Grieve?

No one grieves in the same way and no one can tell you how to grieve. How you grieve depends on many factors including your personality, your life experiences, your faith, your family, and the nature of the loss. There is no normal or right way to grieve.

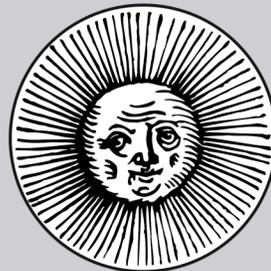
How Long Will I Grieve?

There is no timeline for grief. Some people may start to feel better in weeks or months. For others, the grieving process may take years and even longer. Whatever your experience, it is important to be patient.



**"Death leaves a
heartache no one
can heal, love
leaves a memory
no one can steal"**

—Irish Proverb



**"There is no way
out of the desert
except through it."**

—African Proverb



**"Time is a
physician that
heals every grief."**

—Diphilus

Dealing With Grief *(continued)*

How Can I Help Myself?

Talk About It

- Even if you are not comfortable discussing your feelings under normal circumstances, it is important to express them when you are grieving. Consider sharing your feelings with a family member, friend, or trusted colleague. Draw loved ones close, rather than avoiding them. Tell people what you need. Sharing your loss makes the burden of grief easier to carry. Accept the support, wherever it comes from.

Face Your Feelings

- Trying to avoid sadness only prolongs the grieving process. Unresolved grief can lead to complications such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and health problems.

Express Your Feelings

- Find a creative outlet to express how you feel. Journal, write a letter, make a scrapbook or photo album celebrating the person's life, get involved in a cause that was important to him/her.

Take Care of Yourself

- The mind and body are connected. When you feel good physically, you'll feel better emotionally. Try to combat stress and fatigue by getting enough sleep, eating well, and exercising. Don't use substances to numb the pain or lift your mood artificially.

Plan Ahead for Grief Triggers

- Anniversaries, holidays, and milestones can awaken memories and feelings. Be prepared for your emotions, and know it's completely normal. If you're sharing a holiday or lifecycle event with other family members, talk to them ahead of time about their expectations and agree on a way to honor the person you loved.

Join a Support Group

- Grief can feel very lonely, even when you have loved ones around. Sharing your sorrow with others who have experienced similar losses can help. To find a bereavement support group in your area, contact local hospitals, hospices, and counseling centers.



**“Give sorrow words;
the grief that does not speak
whispers to the o’er-fraught heart
and bids it break.”**

—William Shakespeare

Dealing With Grief (continued)

How Can You Help Others Through Grief?

The most important factor in healing from loss is the support of others. If someone you care about has suffered any kind of loss, you can help them heal by just being there. While difficult to do, asking about their feelings also helps. You may not know what to say to someone grieving, but ask them how they are doing anyway; you will be glad you did.

Listen to their response with compassion, empathy, and patience.

For more resources on grief and dealing with loss, please visit www.starthrower.com/thecomeback.htm for a list of resources and articles.



**“Repeat the most comforting words of all:
‘This too shall pass.’”**

—Ann Landers

Grief And Loss In The Workplace

Grief occurs both at home and in the workplace.

Personal Grief

If a person experiences a death in the family, a serious illness, a death in the workplace, or a traumatic or life-changing event, it is next to impossible to keep those feelings out of the workplace.

Instead of ignoring or avoiding the person experiencing a loss, it is important for them to feel supported by their colleagues and manager. This will aid in their recovery.

Tips for Returning to Work after Suffering a Loss/Death

- Understand that healing takes time
- Realize that not everyone will be able to respond well to your loss
- Seek out supportive people who are willing to listen
- Learn about the company's bereavement policy
- Ask for additional leave or negotiate an hours change if possible

Tips for Helping a Co-Worker Returning to Work after Suffering a Loss/Death

- Acknowledge their grief
- Listen to their story if they want to tell it
- Expect them to be different and sad
- Offer the appropriate assistance whether work related or personal
- Understand that their performance may be diminished temporarily

Tips for When a Co-Worker Dies

- Hold a company meeting to let employees grieve
- Bring in a grief counselor if needed
- Take time to grieve in whatever manner is best for your organization

Grief And Loss In The Workplace (continued)

Professional Grief

Significant changes occur in the workplace such as job restructuring and downsizing, lay-offs, or buy-outs, can also evoke a sense of grief or loss. While it is clear that those who are no longer with the organization must cope with these changes, those who remain at the company also experience loss and change.

Tips for Dealing with Organizational Loss

- Acknowledge feelings of remaining employees
- Address redistribution of work
- Discuss policies regarding replacements, future lay-offs, etc.
- Understand that employees will be angry and upset for a while

Societal Grief

Societal grief is another form of grief or loss experienced within organizations. This is a more collective type of loss, and occurs when there is a major event in the country or world. This type of loss often evokes a feeling of helplessness, sadness, and fear.

While the event may have not been directly personal, it will still affect workers.

Tips for Dealing with Societal Loss

- Give people time to discuss their concerns, fears, sadness, etc.
- Find a sense of community, as everyone is going through the same thing
- Understand that this type of loss will affect workplace productivity on a temporary basis
- Provide grief counselors if appropriate
- Find ways to help if applicable

Grief And Loss In The Workplace (continued)

Grief Journal*

*Information taken from the *Understanding Grief* Interview with Patrick Coyle and Paul Johnson

In *Understanding Grief*, Paul Johnson notes that he encourages individuals experiencing a loss to keep a journal to help them process their experience. In the journal, he asks them to answer the following three questions.

1. What have I lost?

- The immediate answer is the person they have lost; however, Paul encourages more specific answers. By being specific about the loss, it is easier to identify what, exactly, you are grieving.

2. What do I have left?

- People need to identify what they do have left in their life.
- Paul also notes that everyone experiencing grief needs a cheerleader, someone who can remind them of what they can do and what they still have.

3. What may still be possible?

- Even after experiencing a loss, there are still things a person can do. What are some of them?

These questions are not easy to answer, and can often take a lot of introspection; however, by keeping a grief journal and answering the provided questions, it will help the individual experiencing a loss have a better understanding of their grief, as well as help them process what they are going through.