

Ambiguous Grief

Research Findings Reveal a Unique Grief

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Grieving the loss of a living loved one is among the most difficult human emotions, and this experience has now been identified and named: **Ambiguous Grief**. With findings from a recent exploratory research survey, understanding and awareness of ambiguous grief are key for moving through this unique and little-known grief. Findings indicate over 94% of those surveyed have experienced ambiguous grief. Yet half of respondents never knew their feelings qualified as ambiguous grief, or could be named as such.

Dr. Sophia Caudle, LPC-S, CSAT-S of **Bull City Psychotherapy**, PLLC with offices in both Durham, North Carolina and Wilmington, NC, together with her research partner Stephanie Sarazin of Rise Up Rooted LLC, have studied ambiguous grief and defined this complicated emotion:

Ambiguous grief (AG) is a different kind of grief than you may be familiar with. It is the feeling experienced from the loss of a loved one who is still living, accompanied by a change in or death of the relationship. ©

Collecting data from over 400 participants, Caudle and Sarazin were able to analyze and report key findings, as well as author the Ambiguous Grief Process Model to better illustrate some of the activating events, and subsequent paths those in ambiguous grief may experience.

One client who is the partner of a sex addict, described ambiguous grief as,

‘My loss was so profound. My husband was still alive, walking and talking, but did not resemble the man I loved and married at all. I was forced to keep dealing with this person who I didn’t know, and I was always looking for my former husband, but he never came back, and I have missed him desperately ever since.’

-Anonymous Client

According to Robert Weiss, PhD., MSW., and the author of *[Prodependence: Moving Beyond Codependency](#)*:

As a clinician and author who sadly witnesses much pain and loss in those I treat, I am impressed by Dr. Caudle’s evolving concept of Ambiguous Grief. This new paradigm is a clinical gift to anyone confused by oft divergent feelings that loss can bring, while also helping the rest of us broaden our view of what it means to love, lose and heal.

The Ambiguous Grief Process Model, survey results, and an assessment tool can be found in detail at <http://www.ambiguousgrief.com/>

Bull City Psychotherapy and Wellness utilizes an integrative approach to treatment and specializes in treating sex and love addiction, attachment and intimacy disorders, sex therapy, as well as multiple chemical addictions. The therapists at Bull City Psychotherapy also work with adults and adolescents regarding a wide range of life’s emotional and behavioral challenges, providing services that treat depression, anxiety, bipolar, borderline, narcissism, trauma, sexual abuse, ambiguous grief, to recovery and mindfulness based living and beyond. Functional Nutrition, Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine are also offered at Bull City.

Bull City Psychotherapy has also expanded to include **The Center for Ambiguous Grief**, where research about ambiguous grief is being conducted as well as offering healing intensive workshops for female sex and love addicts as well as couples intensives that help couples move forward after extra marital affairs and sex addiction.

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