



Dragonfly Wisdom

~A Holistic Approach to Grief Support~

What is Dragonfly Wisdom?

Dragonfly Wisdom is an innovative support system designed to help guide those who are actively grieving through the painful journey of loss in a constructive and empowering way. This book is formatted as a step-by-step instruction manual for those individuals and groups interested in facilitating much needed community grief support groups and implements a holistic healing approach with a focus on *self-healing* and *soul growth*, typically resulting in a gentler and more meaningful grieving experience for those who participate.

Where did it come from?

Vicky Edgerly, author of Dragonfly Wisdom, developed this comprehensive program after spending over a decade studying the effects acute and/or prolonged Grief can have on an individual or family unit. Her passion for this work surfaced after her 18 year old son took his own life on Mother's Day of 2002 when, after seeking solace within a local grief support group she discovered a 'blind-leading-the-blind' process that left her feeling hopeless inside. She knew there was a better way and she vowed to find it.

Edgerly went on to experience two more traumatic losses when her 30 year old daughter succumbed to cancer in 2010, followed by her husband's dramatic suicide on their property in 2012. These experiences were put to good use as she was able to bring her growing knowledge into those successive grief journeys and test her theories on herself before compiling all her wisdom (knowledge gained through personal experience) into this gentle yet powerful system for traversing the grief journey.

What makes this system 'innovative'?

The Dragonfly Wisdom method helps folks no matter where they are on their grief journey in ways that leave attendees feeling supported and less fearful about what they are going through, which can significantly lessen the severe anxiety often associated with the grief journey. Unlike traditional support groups, where all attendees are grouped together, the DFW way separates the healing journey into *two distinct phases*.

Why two phases?

Edgerly recognized early on that placing folks experiencing acute grief in the same room with folks who are consciously engaged in using the grief experience as an invitation to grow and expand, both personally and spiritually, is not a very productive way to facilitate effective self-healing.

When someone in extreme pain encounters others who seem to be past the early stages of grief they can be inspired, yes, but they may also feel intimidated and even ashamed of their own emotional reactions, which can result in a new habit of stuffing or hiding their true feelings.

Likewise, bringing the newly bereaved into a group that engages in lively discussions about ethereal messages they believe they've received from their deceased loved ones or actively celebrating the day they died as their 'Spirit Birthday' can hinder the group's freedom to fully explore the riches and 'gifts' a life-altering experience like significant loss can bring. The group naturally feels '*self-conscious*' and a little '*guilty*' about flaunting their ability to experience joy in the face of their grief when in the presence of those in profound pain.

Think of it like triage when your body has suffered life-threatening injuries and you seek emergency treatment at your local hospital. First, you are accessed (Intake interview) before going to the ICU (Phase One of DFW) where you receive critical care-staunching the 'blood flow' (calming the fear and cooling the nervous system).

Next, you attend PT, (Phase Two of the DFW system) where it still 'hurts' to do the work but you are strong enough and ready to engage in a deeper healing experience and exploration of the *Self* with the intention of learning and growing from your painful experience.

How does it work?

There are three basic principles that are employed throughout this method and they are:

1. Decide to survive (We *do* have a choice)
2. Attend to one sore spot at a time (focus on where you are *now*, not looking back or ahead)
3. Digging up bones (Replace old and damaging beliefs with more empowering ones)

Phase One, also known as the '*Story Tending Phase*' focuses on supporting the newly bereaved or those who cannot move past the acute stages of grief by creating a safe and sacred space to share and explore their story of loss. This is a judgement-free environment where the pain of grief is allowed to be expressed freely and openly without shame. Our main goal here is to establish a supportive 'community' environment and introduce exercises designed to lessen anxiety and calm the nervous system like mudras (a symbolic or ritualistic hand position used to open energy flow within the body/mind/spirit), breathing techniques or even certain physical exercises and yoga poses.

Through the use of a helpful flow-chart, facilitators who have been coached to listen for and identify common beliefs that hold a person trapped in a repeating pain pattern, can begin to introduce thought provoking questions that gently guide attendees to discover new ways to think about their experience. Understanding that they do, indeed have a choice in how they perceive what has happened will gently guide them into a place of acceptance where they begin to feel hopeful that healing is possible.

With the facilitators help, the decision to move into a **Phase Two** group is made by the bereaved when they feel ready to engage in group discussions without encountering severe emotional responses. The goals for Phase Two are to build upon the community ties created in Phase One, consciously work on identifying and rooting out old believe systems that are keeping

folks attached to their pain and introduce candid discussions around the subject of death and the possibility of the existence of an afterlife.

Meetings in Phase Two groups utilize a variety of methods to keep folks consciously aware of how their grief story is playing out in their lives and what their own role is in how they are feeling about the process. The DFW manual offers examples of thought-provoking questions to lead empowering discussions as well as stretching and breathing exercises for calming the ‘panic’ response that can arise when touching on a particularly difficult area of their story.

Additionally, guided meditations using ‘suggestive imagery’ serve to gently train the mind to look at things from different angles....change your perception and your whole life changes!

What if I don't feel comfortable in a Phase Two group?

The Dragonfly Wisdom method is designed to work with folks from all walks of life, all cultures and all religious beliefs no matter where they are in their grief journey. While Phase Two gives folks who wish to ‘*grow from grief*’ a wonderful opportunity to work on rebuilding themselves within the comfort and security of the group setting, something no other community grief support program offers, others may simply want help getting past the worst of it and phase one is perfect for just that reason.

Since grief is a very personal experience, facilitators of the DFW program are taught to take their cues from each bereaved individual. When their curiosity begins to override their pain they are welcome to attend a Phase Two meeting. Likewise, if at any time things become too difficult or intense for an individual they are welcome to move back into Phase One meetings for as long as needed.

Dragonfly Wisdom was developed and written by Vicky Edgerly

Copyright 2025

All Rights Reserved

For more information or to obtain your copy of the manual, contact Vicky directly at:

vickyafterlife@gmail.com

or visit: whiteelephantwisdom.com