
Grievers Library

Madelynne Hatfield
Pilar Sandoval-Moberg

Project Team



Madelynne Hatfield

I am a firm believer that Western society needs to become more familiar with discussing death and grief. I worked on this project not just for the grievors of the world, but for the future of my loved ones and myself.



Pilar Sandoval-Moberg

Some of my earliest memories revolve around grief. As someone who has experienced her fair share of death at a young age, this project really emotionally connected with me.

Our Sponsor

Licensed architect and co-founder/director emerita of Seattle's Gage Academy of Art, Pamela Belyea added "griever" to her credentials after losing 6 family members in 15 months. In response, Pamela conceived of the Grievers Library as a free bibliotherapy resource for the bereaved, offering book boxes stocked with grief books around Seattle, as well as unique on-line resources. Pamela is committed to keeping the Grievers Library "refreshingly non-commercial" - the project is 100% volunteer-run and supported through the gifts and talents of many business owners and volunteers.



What is the Grievers Library?

The Grievers Library is a pilot project based in Seattle that provides free resources to grievers. They provide these resources through book boxes, grief book lists, and through the EZ Reads section of the website. EZ Reads are short excerpts from grief books that are handpicked by volunteers.

EZ reads has the ability to reach beyond Seattle. Through the website, people across the globe can use our resources.



Why this project?

Grief is something that every person will experience in their lifetime. It can be isolating, overwhelming, and hard to talk about. When people are going through the grieving process they might not always have the time and energy to find resources. The goal of the Grievors Library is to make resources more accessible for those grieving.

We chose to work with the Grievors Library for our capstone because:

- we have experience with grief
 - the project is incredibly meaningful
 - they are inherently community-oriented
 - they offered a unique opportunity
-

Project Objectives

Find Excerpts

Every two weeks each of us would be given a bag of books (15-20 books each) to go through to find excerpts. Each batch was focused on a different category on the EZ Reads page. We aimed to find around ten different excerpts for each category that we thought were good fits for our mission.

Reach out to Authors/Publishers

After collecting our excerpts and compiling them on a collaborative spreadsheet, we reached out to the author or publisher of each resource to request permission to post the excerpt online.

The Process

Tasks

January - May

Read through grief books, identify potential passages, ask for permission to use excerpt.

April - May

Post excerpts to the website.

Challenges

- Lack of response to emails
- Big name publishers
 - long turn-around time
 - permissions often required fees
- Finding people
 - older or self-published authors with no internet presence

Milestones

Every two weeks we would meet with our sponsor to discuss the last category we had done. We would report how many authors we had heard back from.

At the end of April, we began working with our sponsor to upload all excerpts to the website.

Finding Excerpts

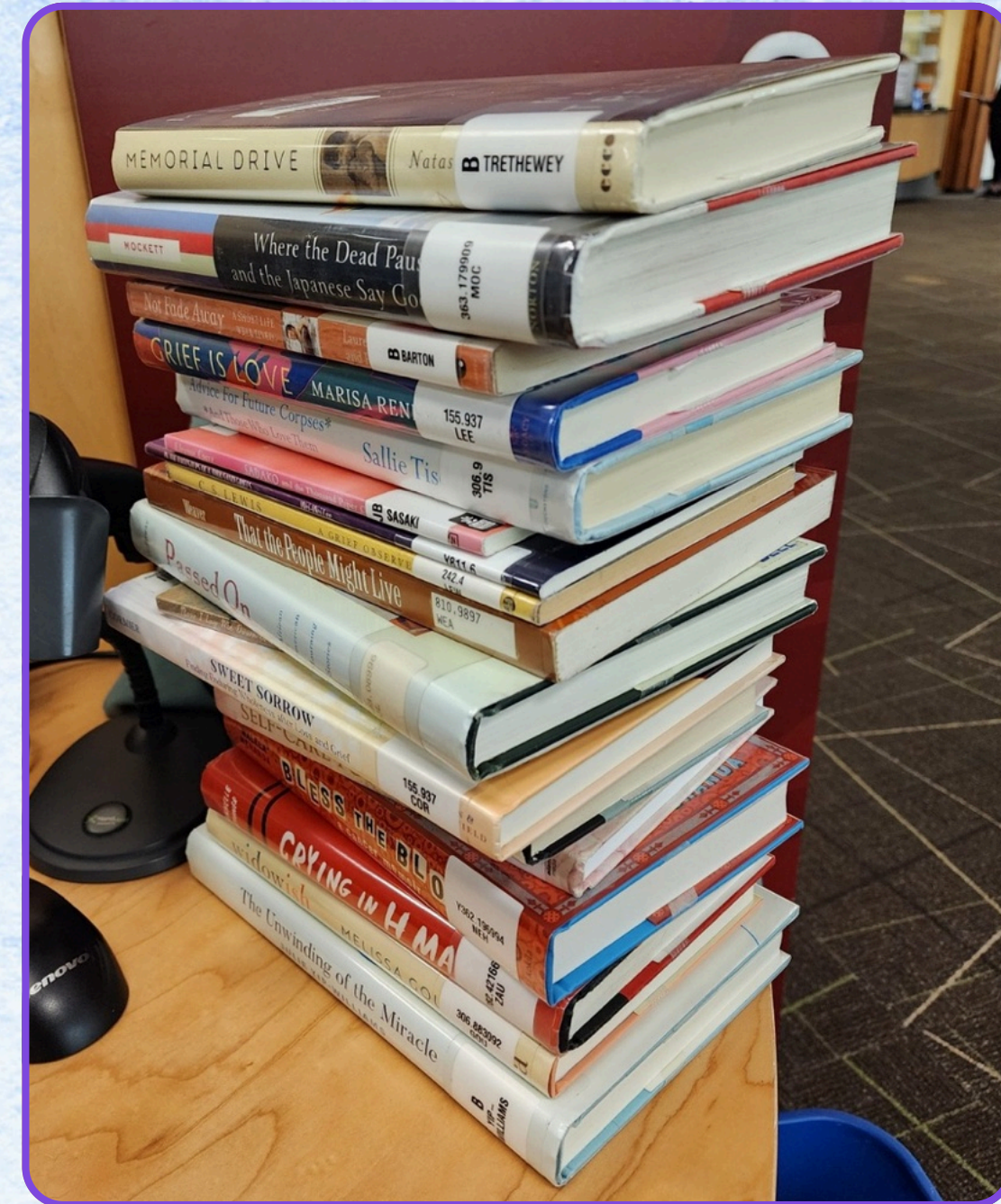
Our goal at the beginning of this project was to find 120 excerpts for the 12 categories. Out of those, we hoped to receive permission for 30-40 excerpts total.

Things we looked for in a good excerpt:

- empathetic wording
- message of understanding

Things we avoided in our excerpts:

- overly specific anecdotes that were not relatable
- “harsh” or “unsympathetic” messages
- medical text or explanations of types of deaths (i.e. cancer)



Reaching Out



3 Part Process

1. Research the author and/or publisher
2. Send emails reaching out and asking for permission to post the excerpts
3. Wait.

Challenges Encountered:

- Self-Published Works
 - no publisher to contact
 - difficult to find author
- Big Name Publishers
 - permissions fees
- Older Authors
 - no online presence

Author/Publisher Responses



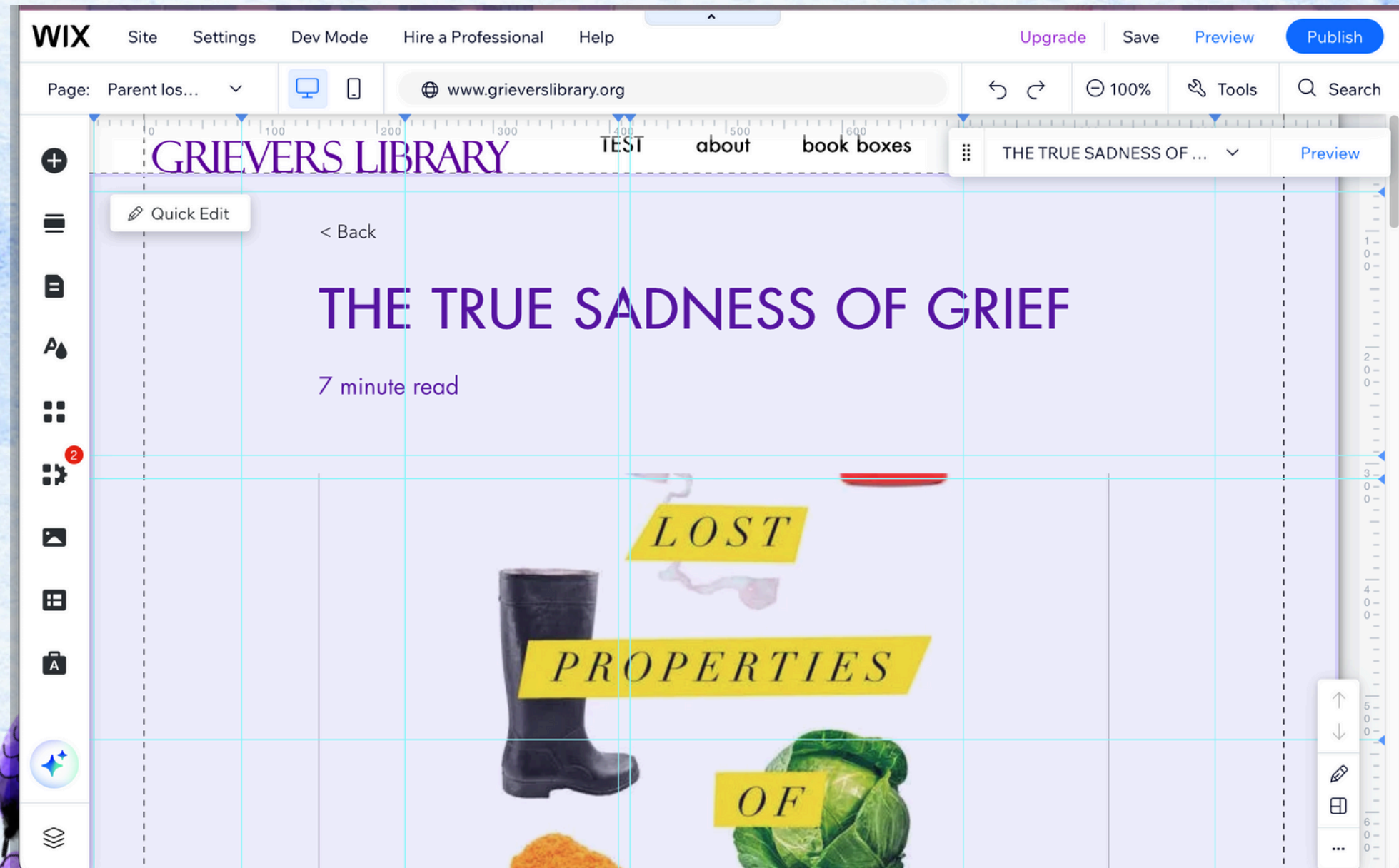
Most people we contacted did not respond. The majority who responded were excited about our project and gave us permission. Some people directed us to ask legal teams or to the publishers for permission. When we were lucky, authors would offer to donate books to us.



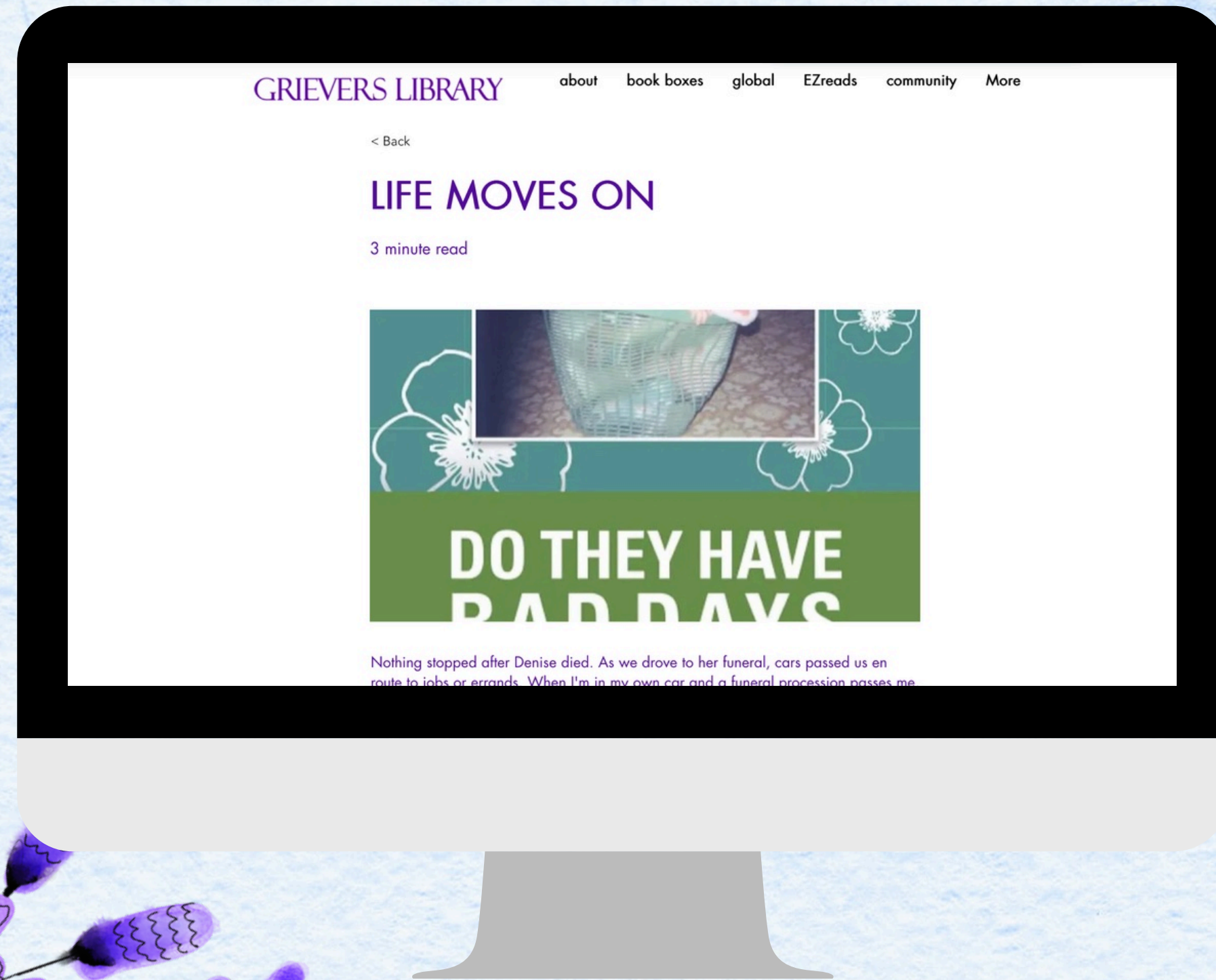
Updating the Website

Creating New Formats

The website is run through Wix. Our sponsor wanted to change the formatting for EZ Reads (so there was no template for us to use with the new content) and create a new index prior to publishing the new material.



Website and Collection Development



Wix: The Final Frontier

As the site had reached the limit for pages allowed, we had to create a new method to have less pages with more content.

Challenges Encountered:

- Neither of us had experience with Wix
 - incredibly unintuitive
 - multiple setbacks
- Limitations with non-Word formats

Achievements

29

Number of Excerpts

By the end of this project we were able to add 29 new excerpts to the website. Many authors were excited by our project and offered to donate books.

EZreads Excerpts

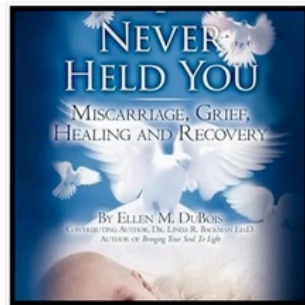
TOTAL Prior Posts On SITE: 45	GRIEF SUPPORT FOR ME PAMELA 9 Prior Posts: 9 Pending: 1 Capstone: 0	TOTAL POSTS on SITE: 74
GRIEF SUPPORT FOR OTHERS PAMELA 3 Prior Posts: 3 Pending: 0 Capstone: 0	BEREAVED PARENT: BABY LOSS MADELYNNE 8 Prior Posts: 1 Pending: 11 Capstone: 7	BEREAVED PARENT: CHILD LOSS PAMELA 4 Prior Posts: 4 Pending: 0 Capstone: 4
BEREAVED PARENT: ADULT CHILD LOSS - PAMELA 0 Prior Posts: 0 Pending: 0 Capstone: 0	BEREAVED SPOUSE PAMELA 3 Prior Posts: 3 Pending: 0 Capstone: 0	BEREAVED YOUTH PILAR 5 Prior Posts: 4 Pending: 10 Capstone: 1
SIBLING LOSS PILAR 6 Prior Posts: 2 Pending: 5 Capstone: 4	PARENT LOSS PILAR 6 Prior Posts: 3 Pending: 7 Capstone: 3	SPIRITUAL/RELIGIOUS PAMELA 3 Prior Posts: 3 Pending: 0 Capstone: 0
GRIEF SUPPORT FOR MEN PAMELA 1 Prior Posts: 1 Pending: 1 Capstone: 0	BIPOC-themed MADELYNNE 2 Prior Posts: 0 Pending: 18 Capstone: 2	LGBTQIA+ PAMELA 1 Prior Posts: 0 Pending: 0 Capstone: 1
DEATH + DYING PILAR 2 Prior Posts: 0 Pending: 10 Capstone: 2	CANCER + ILLNESS MADELYNNE 2 Prior Posts: 0 Pending: 11 Capstone: 2	DRUG OVERDOSE PILAR 3 Prior Posts: 1 Pending: 5 Capstone: 2
MILITARY DEATH MADELYNNE 3 Prior Posts: 0 Pending: 11 Capstone: 3	SUICIDE + MENTAL ILLNESS MADELYNNE 10 Prior Posts: 7 Pending: 6 Capstone: 3	TRAUMATIC SUDDEN DEATH PAMELA 3 Prior Posts: 3 Pending: 0 Capstone: 0
TOTAL: 95 pending Excerpts Requests		

Achievements

Final Website Design

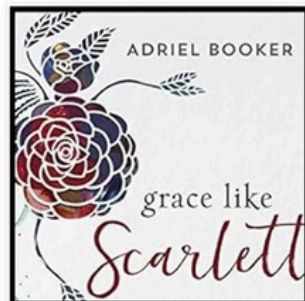
After we finished finding excerpts, we added to them to the website and created a new page layout.

bereaved parent: baby loss



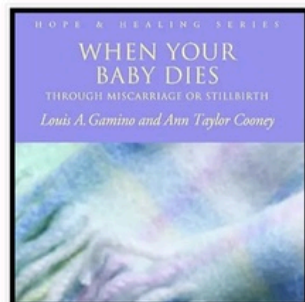
I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE
7 minute read
Excerpted from: "I Never Held You" by Ellen M. DuBois

[Read More](#)



PAIN AND HEALING
1 minute read
Excerpted from: "Grace Like Scarlett" by Adriel Booker

[Read More](#)



FOR THE FATHER
4 minute read
Excerpted from: "When Your Baby Dies" by Louis A. Gamino + Ann Taylor Cooney

[Read More](#)

GRIEVERS LIBRARY

[about](#) [book boxes](#) [global](#) [EZreads](#) [community](#) [More](#)

"EZ"reads



For fresh grievers, sometimes reading a book can seem overwhelming. Or, even getting up out of a chair. We understand this, so we have curated a collection of "EZ"reads – excerpts from books, blogs + research papers – that take 10 minutes or less of focus. These passages, generously shared by grief experts and grievers, have been chosen to provide you with insights into the grieving process.

[grief support for me](#)

[grief support for others](#)

[grief support for men](#)

[bereaved parent baby loss](#)

[bereaved parent child loss](#)

[bereaved youth](#)

[bereaved sibling](#)

[parent loss](#)

[bereaved spouse](#)

Evaluation

Evaluating a project like this is difficult, as many summative evaluations are. When a project is centered around emotions and a journey that is unique to each person, how do you measure that?

Ultimately, the true evaluation of the success of EZ Reads will come over time - and likely will be comprised more of anecdotal evidence than numerical or statistical.

In the time being, we can without a doubt confirm that we have achieved our capstone goals with EZ Reads. We have increased the number of excerpts from 45 to 74, we have obtained at least one excerpt for almost every single category, and, perhaps most importantly, we are satisfied with the quality and content of each excerpt.

Beyond Capstone: Next Steps

Archive Management

For her reference and files, all of our work will be passed on to Pamela:

- Spreadsheet of all resources “skimmed through”
- Document with all excerpts
- All email communication with authors and publishers

Forwarding Connections

It would not be unusual to potentially hear back from people after the conclusion of capstone, especially when it comes to large publishers with long turnaround times. Any responses that come in after capstone will be forwarded to Pamela so the Grievors Library volunteers can follow up with them.

Future Capstone?

The Grievors Library isn't done working with UW students. Over the next couple of years, Pamela hopes to partner with more students during capstone on adding excerpts in Spanish to EZ Reads.




Takeaways

Madelynne

This was a very emotionally difficult project for me. No matter how familiar with death and grief you are, it's different when you are saturating yourself with it over and over again. However, I had some great experiences with those I connected with, and the final result is rewarding. I feel this is a resource I will direct friends and family to, and turn to myself in the future.

Pilar

I found this project very cathartic, though difficult at times. I've experienced a lot of death in my lifetime, this project reminded me that tomorrow is not guaranteed. I only hope that through this resource people can find comfort. Grief is such a lonely experience, especially if we don't talk about it. This project has led me to having more conversations about grief.



Contact Information

www.grieverlibrary.org

+123-456-7890

5004 6th Avenue NW Seattle WA 98107-3511

mxlo386@uw.edu
and pjsandov@uw.edu
