

# **Homicide Grief**

As described by the Homicide Grief Group – Calgary AB October 30<sup>th</sup> 2006

## **Life's Road from Past to Future:**

### **1. Stepped off the cliff!**

Living through the experience and/or being told of “the murder”. Feeling like this can't be happening.

### **2. The fall down the cliff**

While dealing with the funeral/memorial, media, police; legal system, family obligations —Free fall, surreal, spiralling out of control, facing the unknown, experiencing the unexpected, disconcerting, fractioned, disbelief, flight syndrome, numb, floating, confusion, snowballing, survival skills surface, may be rational & cognitive, socially isolated, assumptions of death and scenarios of death re-play, protect and fight for lost loved one, may feel need to self medicate. May realize the need and seek professional help. Note: the length of fall from the cliff may depend on the relationship with the lost loved one.

### **3. Into the pit of despair**

Some of the same feelings and experiences as the cliff. May be dealing with potential court appearances or lack of justice — Crash, fractured, guilt, hurt, anger, hatred, despair, grief, overwhelmed, can't seem to function, nightmares, insomnia, can't get out of bed, tired, headaches, chest pain, stomach aches, many different physical symptoms, restricted abilities, confusion, void, don't think you can go any lower but then step into quicksand, immobilized, distracted, suicidal thoughts, emotional pain, isolated, may feel different than other people, changed, can't think, fog, memory loss, apathy, intolerance, feel like you're losing your mind, scenarios of death re-play. Eventually start to see the base of the mountain.

### **4. Base Camp**

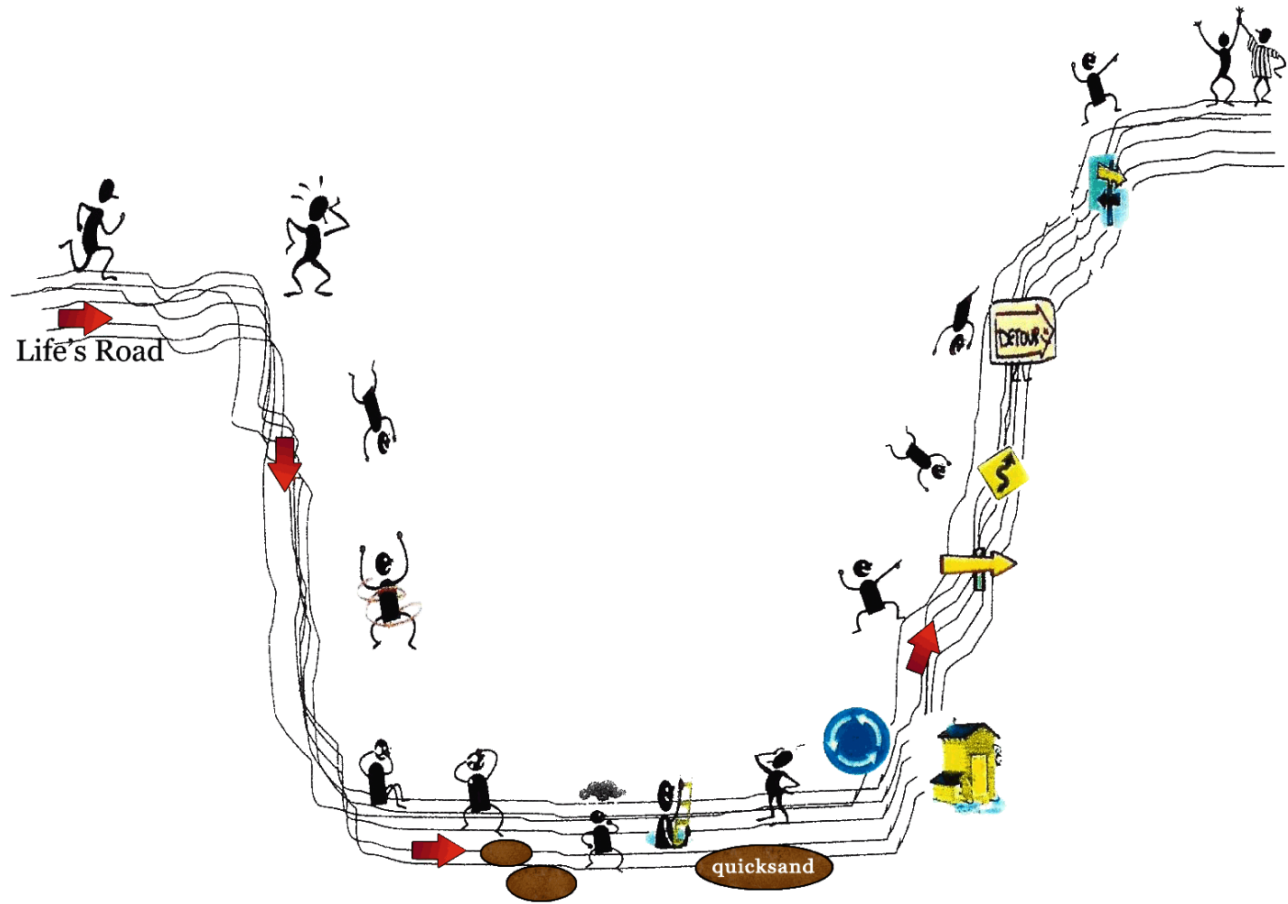
Realization. Can't stay in the pit anymore, too painful. Able to make the decision to climb the mountain. Seek help and guidance. Motivated to move forward by the negative emotions of the pit and encouragement from family and friends. Also motivated by our lost loved ones wish for us to live a good life and not letting the murderer take another life (ours). Wishing to keep our own power and public acknowledgement of justice and even injustice.

### **5. Climbing the mountain**

Many different roads. Often confusion on the best and shortest way to the top. Frequent down-slides often triggered by birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, court appearances, calls from lawyers, police or prosecutors office. Able to recognize the significant in seemingly insignificant acts (ie. getting out of bed). See ourselves moving forward.

## 6. The Summit

The “new normal”. Very different than before. Able to constructively co-exist with our loss. Perhaps partial or complete reconciliation of loved ones death. Able to feel joy and happiness again. Occasional back-sliding. Better coping abilities. Stronger. More resilient.



Adapted from:  
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CPOMC – Canadian Parents of Murdered Children and Survivors of Homicide Victims