

TEN STEPS TO LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF - 'THE GOOD GRIEF' RECOVERY GUIDE

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WELCOME!

Firstly, let me just say whether your loss is recent or not, you are in the right place. Everyone grieves differently and there is little support for bereavement unless someone directs you to a service which may help you. The British public are shocking at talking about loss and bereavement and certainly aren't well educated about the emotional shock of it. It is likely that people haven't known what to say to you or how to support you or you may have shunned any help offered as you didn't want to bother anyone.

I've had a history of massive loss (as described in my book 'Are you worth it? a spiritual guide to managing your money mindset') and I tried to deal with my loss singlehandedly. Needless to say, that approach wasn't helpful and it led me to feeling worthless and alone and I almost took my own life. I threw myself into my work, buried my head in the sand and overworked. I didn't want to face my feelings and I now realise what I really should have done as it would have been easier. I took on too much work, worked silly hours and didn't take any time to grieve as I didn't see the importance of this.

I had experienced multiple traumas in my life which had accumulated loss in the forms of regret, sorrow, sadness and grief within me so when I then had further multiple traumas in a 3 year period (miscarriage, redundancy, two failed rounds of fertility treatment, my Mum dying, cat dying in the same week, sister in law dying and my husband leaving me with massive debt) I found it very challenging to cope with life despite having in depth therapeutic knowledge.

The good news is that it doesn't have to be this way for you. By following the 10 steps in this guide, you can make positive changes for the better and move forward day by day transitioning into your new life. Get the support you need now not later.

I now show others how to shine through their grief and to get back to a life of pleasure and fun without feeling guilty or lonely. Using a range of therapies and techniques, you can too I promise. You can either make your grief feel bad or transform your grief to be good. It really is your choice. I'm sure you will agree that you want your bad grief to be transformed into something which feels better.

I hope you find this guide useful and I get to meet you along your road to recovery and your new life. Much love to you all.

Liz xx

TEN STEPS TO LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF - 'GOOD GRIEF' RECOVERY GUIDE

Grief comes in many different shapes and sizes. It comes in waves and hits people in different ways. It is such an individual experience and it can be challenging not to compare your experience with someone else. At the end of the day, we have multiple different types of losses in life and it's important to recognise these will affect you and if you experience multiple losses close together in time, you may become traumatised and this can affect both your mental and emotional health and will also have an impact on your financial health. In time, if you become very stressed and don't take action, it will manifest as physical ailments for you to deal with too. Your body will indicate to you that it is not happy.

What is loss?

Losses come in different shapes and sizes and they need to be given more recognition than they actually are because if you ignore the loss you are feeling and bury it down deep inside you, it can make you feel very unwell mentally as well as physically. Holding in your emotion and trying to carry on can give you a catalogue of problems such as chronic pain, anxiety, depression, poor sleep patterns as well as general fatigue and a lack of motivation. The suppression of your emotional pain will manifest in weight gain and chronic pain.

The different types of losses are:

- Loss of a parent, sibling/child/grandchild including miscarriage and stillborn
- Loss of a beloved pet/animal
- Loss of not being able to have children including fertility issues
- Loss of not being able to say goodbye due to sudden death or not being allowed to say goodbye
- Loss of a job – redundancy/furloughed
- Loss due to separation/divorce
- Loss of not having grandchildren
- Loss of income/security
- Loss of ability – losing a limb or a sense e.g. going blind
- Loss of identity due to ill health
- Loss of freedom e.g. Covid-19 lockdown, prison, secure ward of mental health hospital
- Loss of your home – homelessness/house fire/ separation/divorce
- Loss of a childhood due to a challenging upbringing e.g. ill parents which meant you had to care for them
- Loss of no longer having your kids at home – empty nest syndrome
- Plus more.....

What is a trauma?

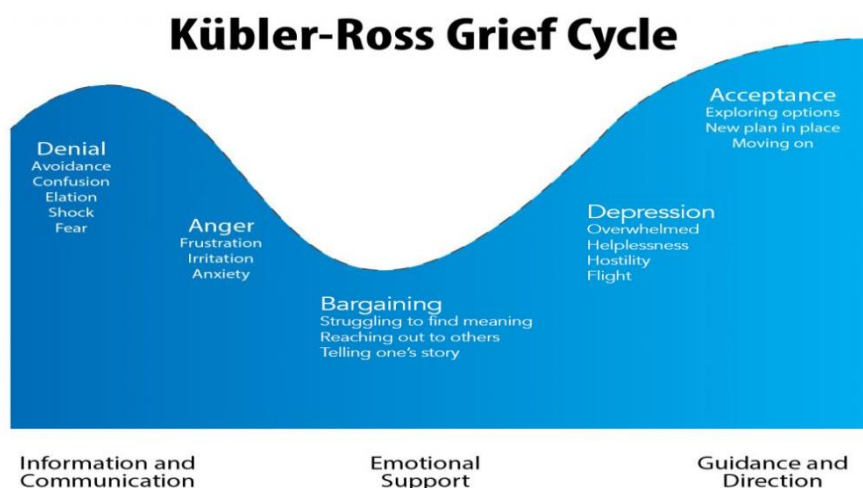
A trauma is something which affects you emotionally, mentally and sometimes physically too. A loss of some kind is often a trauma to you. Everyone is different. Losing a job to one person may be not a problem but to another person it may be the end of the world. The important thing is to recognise that you are traumatised in some way and to get some help. If you don't get some assistance with your trauma, you will get 'used to it' and will 'normalise' the emotional pain you are feeling. You may feel numb or 'box up' your feelings and convince yourself that you have dealt with everything.

By trapping the trauma in your body, you will feel worse and it will have other effects on you such as affecting your sleep pattern, leaving you potentially with insomnia if you don't take action. You may notice that your energy levels are affected and you feel more fatigued and lethargic. You may also start developing chronic pain in parts of your body too. Any pain your body is feeling is your body trying to give you a response to say 'please don't ignore me'. If you tackle the pain you are feeling, and release the negative emotion and energy, you will notice that your pain will reduce, you will have more energy and you will be happier. In time your sleep patterns will also improve.

You will also notice that self sabotaging behaviours like emotional eating or shopping or over reliance on alcohol, drugs, smoking will decrease too and your weight will stabilise and potentially go down too.

Understanding the cycle of your grief

There is an accepted model showing the cycle of grief that a person is going through which is useful to acknowledge and to help you understand your grief. It is called the Kubler Ross Grief Model created by Elisabeth Kubler Ross. There is however no 'set' way to go through grief, so you may experience something quite different and this is fine. This model does not allow for dealing with multiple bereavements either. For example, you may experience losing your job and losing a sibling to Cancer within months of each other. You may have been in the bargaining phase and been plunged back into denial again. Your ability to find a new job will be affected as you are demotivated and unhappy.



<https://www.psychom.net/depression.central.grief.html>

A helpful acronym to understand Bereavement

Breathing

Emotions

Reality

Evolving into a new life and something new

Acceptance of reality

Vulnerability

Energy

Management of money

Expansion

Nurture yourself

Time to heal

Breathe

When you are grieving, no matter for what reason, it can be so challenging to share how you are feeling emotionally. You bottle up your feelings as you want to make sure everyone else is ok, and it can be so easy not to breathe properly. If you are feeling anxiety and overthinking a little, then you may well be breathing from your upper torso which will make you feel worse and it is important to try to breathe from your diaphragm instead.



Diaphragm breathing is proven to help you relieve stress and tension naturally. Breathing is also linked to mindfulness meditation which is fantastic for your mental health. When we are tense, we can 'forget' to breathe as we are fearful of what is happening to us and this tension needs to be released. If you don't release it, overtime you will start to feel worse and it will have a negative impact on your mental and physical health.

The best way to breathe is low down in your torso and you want to practice deliberately breathing in positive thoughts in through your nose and negative thoughts and emotions out through your mouth. This conscious release will help you expel in a deliberate way negative feelings and you will start to feel better if you practice this regularly and make it a part of your routine.

Breathing will also link together your mind, body and spirit too. The vagus nerve runs from the brain through the face and thorax to the abdomen. The vagus nerve directly relates into your Parasympathetic and Sympathic nervous system. If you are stressed, you will trigger the 'fight or flight stress response' and trigger your Sympathic nervous system. By being calm by breathing deeply when you feel a wave of emotion, you will link more into the Parasympathetic nervous system which is what you want to happen.

A key thing also to ask yourself is – Are you putting yourself under too much pressure? It can be easy to try to take on too much when you are grieving and you often do this to cover up the feelings of loss and loneliness and the need to be needed. Before you say yes to volunteering your time to a good cause, ask yourself – Do I really want to do this activity or am I trying to replace what I had? If asking yourself brings up negative emotions such as grief, then breathe those emotions out of you and say no to the activity. Emotions are just energy in motion and breathing helps expel the negative energy out of the body.

E motions

Suffering a loss will bring up a whole wave of emotions you may have never experienced before such as sadness, sorrow, grief, regret, guilt, anger, fear, shame, disappointment and loads more. It can be like being on a rollercoaster of emotions. As you hear, see, feel, taste or smell something which reminds you of your loss, you can get triggered again. For this reason is it really helpful to have tools/techniques to hand to help you manage your emotions but also to allow you to release the negative energy attached to them rather than you burying your emotions as you don't want to face them.



To feel better and to reduce your likelihood of developing depression, it is worth knowing how to stay positive and of a high vibration. Of course you will have emotional dips but if you are consciously doing your best to stay feeling positive emotions and being balanced, you will find life is easier and your transition into your new life will be smoother. To illustrate this point, you can either allow your life to feel dreadful, dull or magical. As you regain your life following loss and create your new life, you always want to be heading towards and hopefully staying within the magical zone and achieving your goals and dreams.



There are several techniques/tools you can use to get you into the Magical level and to be able to maintain this feeling.

- Breathing deeply
- Mindfulness meditation and movement
- Looking after your diet and eating healthily
- Taking regular exercise
- Introduce a relaxing activity – e.g. sewing, baking, gardening, card making
- Incorporating a morning routine into your day
- Journaling your feelings
- Walking in nature regularly
- Daily practice of gratitude
- Picking an angel card to gain spiritual guidance and reassurance



Therapies to help you

- Emotional freedom technique (tapping)
- The Balance Procedure- using your cards and book to help relax you
- Reiki if you are empowered yourself – use Hatsu Rei Ho daily or see a practitioner
- Self hypnosis or see a practitioner
- Yoga/Pilates
- Neuro Linguistic Programming

The key thing to remember is that you want to try to live in the present. As soon as you find you are living in the past and feeling something negative, it is wise to use a technique or tool to help you shift the emotion and how you are feeling to help you get back into the present. If you are feeling anxiety at all, you will be living in the future. Breath work can be incredibly helpful to get you back into the present. Where possible, it is important to remember that whilst you may feel a little helpless, you always have a choice about what you feel and if you consciously decide to take action to reduce that feeling, you will start to feel better and avoid getting into a more depressed state.

Your aim is to try to stay as balanced as you can, staying in the present, day by day and seeing little wins about your movement forward into your new life. There is no judgement about how long this takes, but moving forward is the best course of action, rather than getting stuck with anxiety or depression.

Reality

The reality of what is going on for you may seem too hard to look at and this is completely understandable. Depending on your type of loss or trauma experienced, it can be very challenging to take a full look at your reality and to acknowledge what exactly is going on for you. When you look, you won't like everything you see, however you will be able to identify what you would like to change. If it is too scary to look at alone, then ask a friend to help you or take advantage of my Befriending Service and we can look at it together.



It is important to look at what you do have rather than what you don't have. If you start wishing someone was still here, you might start filling yourself up with the emotion of regret, guilt, anger, sorrow, etc which is not helpful and this is a sign that you are living in the past. Always remember you want to be living in the present moment. Appreciate what you did have with this person, animal or situation rather than getting over emotional.

Depending on whether your loss is new or old, try to be realistic about setting goals and what you expect to get done. Often we don't set goals or we set unrealistic ones and set ourselves up to fail or we put too much in our lives to keep ourselves busy and to not face how we are feeling.

Create a new reality going forward about what you do want in your life and how you want your life to be. This is where Bereavement Coaching can be really useful to help you design the life you want as well as dispelling negative energy from the past. If you feel you would like to work with me on this, then email me at liz@insightfulminds.co.uk.

Evolving into a new life and something new

Life can be a rollercoaster of ups and downs and where possible you want to try to keep the ride as positive and as even as possible. With a loss though, emotions can come out of nowhere which can knock you and throw you off course. Dealing with those emotions as you go along, will allow the Universe to bring you something better. It can be so



challenging to accept this when we are angry, upset, disappointed, etc. Emotions are 'Energy in Motion' and therefore by deliberately getting rid of the negative emotions linked to our thoughts means that we are evolving and moving into new energy and new beginnings. A great day to set new intentions and to create new goals is on a new moon.

Setting goals as mentioned above is really useful. Set goals about what you want to achieve and by when. Where possible make sure that they are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound. Make sure your goals are realistic especially if your loss is still very raw for you. There may be pressing matters which need to be dealt with first such as the funeral or probate or finding yourself a new home to live. Prioritise your goals too.

New beginnings are positive and will allow you to have a magical life. Step forward into your new life with joy. We can't bring back what we have lost, it is just our heads believing it is possible. Believe that every moment is magical and life will be a lot brighter for you.

A cceptance of reality

As discussed above in the Kurler Ross grief cycle, acceptance is at the end of the cycle. Acceptance is linked to closure. It doesn't mean that you will forget a special person or animal, but that you are moving on. The absolute aim is that you accept the reality of what is going on and this can be tough especially if you loved your life but living in past is not good for you. As soon as you say to yourself, 'I wish I could see them one more time', you have put yourself back a bit. The sooner you are able to let go of the person or situation that has left and accept in your heart that they/it is gone, the better.

If it is a person or animal that you have lost, accepting that they have gone in your heart, doesn't mean that you can't still chat to them and ask them for guidance if this is something that you used to do. Spiritual guidance is always all around you and you can always link in with a loved one who has passed by sitting quietly, meditating and asking them to step forward to you to give you guidance.

Celebrating an anniversary of a death/loss can also rake up and retrigger you each year which is very unhealthy. If you do feel the need to 'mark' the date, then celebrate and feel only joyful and grateful memories of them. If any sadness/sorrow/grief/anger, etc come to the surface, it is essential that you use a technique to learn what you can from this emotion and to let it go.

After a loss or trauma, your mental health will be affected and you may well be guided to practice a more 'spiritual' way of life. This is a good thing. There are four elements to your health – spiritual, mental, emotional and physical and they are all connected. By honouring your spiritual health, you will find closure, although other people around you may feel that you are unwell, depending on your use of language and what you



are talking about. You might experience a new love of Angels or see a robin visiting you regularly or seeing white feathers whilst out on walks in the countryside. If you are concerned in any way, you may like to have a Reiki healing session or a spiritual reading, so that we can look more deeply at what you are experiencing. Book by emailing me at liz@insightfulminds.co.uk.

If appropriate, I may suggest that you have some Energise coaching sessions with me to help you understand your spiritual journey more and to help you with negative thoughts, feelings and emotions, so that you can release anger, anxiety, hopelessness, etc and to get you on the right path. This will help you relieve any emotional pain or fatigue that you are suffering from.

Vulnerability

Showing your vulnerability can be really tough, especially when you have experienced loss and other traumas as it means you have to trust others. Anxiety and distrust tend to go hand in hand. You may even be feeling broken hearted. This will make you feel worse as you will feel unbalanced, limited, disconnected, fatigued and unhappy.

Now is the time when you need to try to open your heart and ask for help. Friends/neighbours/social media/charities/therapists are all there ready and waiting to help you but you may need to learn the valuable lessons in life about asking for help when you need it and graciously receiving it too. By asking for help and challenging yourself by stepping out of your comfort zone, you will transform your heart and heal your pain. It is a choice though. You can wallow in your misery or you can surround yourself with people who want to help you and support you like you have supported them.

Whether you like it or not, you aren't going to be able to do everything yourself especially if it is a person you have lost. For example, you may have had a DIY friendly husband who fixed everything in sight for you. With them gone, you may feel helpless/powerless when you can't fix things and this can affect your confidence if you let it. Rather than feeling these negative emotions, think about what you can do to fix what you need fixing. You may be able to have a go yourself if it is safe to do so or take action and call a handyman or ask a neighbour to help you.

Vulnerability is a good thing. It shows you are real and being authentic and people will want to help you.

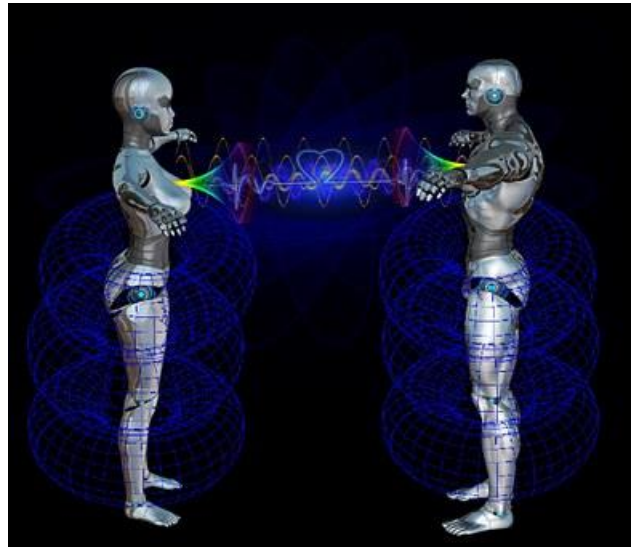


Eⁿergy

Unsurprisingly when you have had one or more losses recently or in the past, you will find that your energy drops and you will feel demotivated and potentially fatigued. You may feel low and depressed and anxious. These are normal emotions to be experiencing, however you do want to deal with these emotions positively to release them as quickly as you can, so that you don't accumulate toxic energy within which will make you feel worse.

As mentioned before, Energy is 'Energy in Motion (E-Motion)'. You want to live your life from a positive vibration and therefore remember that you are (if put under a microscope) energy and therefore you are moving constantly. Positive emotions – joy, happiness, contentment, enthusiasm, excitement, etc are all going to raise your vibration and movement forward in life but negative emotions like sadness, anger, shame, guilt, disappointment will lower it as these emotions are heavier in weight than the positive ones. You want to feel 'in flow' not resisting energy or 'going against the flow'.

What you might not realise is the energetic cords that we 'attach' to people who we meet in person and online. From our energy to theirs, we transmit either a love vibe or something less good like anger, frustration, hatred, judgement, etc. During this grieving time in your life, you may blame others or be angry, but what you need to know is that negative energy from you, actually rebounds due to the Law of Attraction and hurts you instead and gives you more pain.



See www.heartmath.org for more details

You may also be picking up on the pain and negative energy of friend's and family who are also bereaved through these cords. Therefore it is necessary for you to start noticing are you feeling pain for another especially if you know you are an empath. If you are taking on others pain, you need to stop this behaviour as it will make you feel worse and make your pain increase. Taking on another person's pain does not help them learn their lessons about looking after themselves and self love and only harms you and your health.

Your energy will also flow better if you are doing what you love rather than what you don't love doing, so do your best to do activities which honour what you love doing and are good at. This will also honour your life purpose too.

If you have had a series of losses and traumas and you are already stuck in depression and anxiety, then you may also have a long term chronic health issue too such as ME, Fibromyalgia, Diabetes, Cancer or Heart disease. It would be well worth you reading my book *Are you worth it?* a spiritual guide to managing your money mindset to learn more about how to transform your energy by using the Love Game within it and to manifest a happier life and to move on from your bereavements.

Your energy and the energy surrounding you in your aura, is connected to your mind, body and spirit. It is important to keep this energy as cleansed as possible. Trying drinking more water and deliberately detoxing your diet of unhealthy foods as you will be tempted to emotionally eat during this time and you may then gain weight if you do.

Money

Your health is your wealth but undoubted if you are feeling down, less confident and unhappy, you may well also have money worries too. Health, Wealth and Happiness is hard wired into your mind, so if you start having an issue with one element, you will potentially have a problem with another, that is why balance is so important.



If you have lost someone close to you who took care of all your finances, this can put you into a tail spin which is a normal reaction. The most important thing at this time is to gain support and guidance. Whilst we never want to be in debt or have money worries, the paradox is that if we do, there is help and support to get you back on track again, even if we don't want to use the services available. The more you worry about money, the more it will affect your health such as giving you a bad night's sleep and you might start eating more to deal with the stress you are feeling or start shopping and buying things that you want rather than what you need.

If money is a stressor for you, make sure that you focus on getting a list of what you owe together and what you need to pay out for and create a budget. Ask yourself what different ways could you earn more money to get yourself back on track. You may be able to rent out a room, sell some items on ebay or at a boot fair? Talk to anyone you owe money to and sort out an arrangement. Being an ostrich is not the right approach. Get support and use it. It is nothing to be ashamed about.

Money is a very emotional topic and you may find it challenging to talk about it/deal with it. This is understandable. More money will flow when you appreciate money and are happy about it, so it is important that when you think about money, you think about it in a positive way.

Expansion

Without knowing it, you will have been limiting yourself and now is the time not to limit yourself and to expand into who you really are. Sometimes the person you have lost has been limiting you and you hadn't realised this or if you did, you chose



not to do anything about it. You may have done what made them happy instead of yourself so that you had an easier life.

The good news is that you can now tackle any self limiting beliefs which have stopped you from having your best life. e.g. you maybe had the belief that you were fearful of traveling to new countries. Remove it and you could travel the globe and be excited by expanding your knowledge of world culture and travel.

It is also a time to expanding your energy. When you have lost someone or something, it will affect your heart. You may have protected yourself so that your heart didn't get hurt or been too vulnerable and allowed people to hurt you or take advantage and therefore you have closed your heart chakra. It is a time now to learn how to open up your heart again and to learn to love you and everything around you so that you appreciate your life.

Expand into who you are meant to be and go and fulfil your dreams and goals. It is so easy to feel that you can't because that special person isn't there to share it with you, but life goes on and it isn't wrong to want to have happiness. Be careful not to allow your grieving to take over and to stop you having fun and getting on with your life again.

It is also important not to just 'replace' how you feel about the loss you have experienced e.g. getting a replacement dog as soon as your old beloved dog dies. This just buries the negative emotion of grief, sorrow and sadness within you.

Nurture yourself

Whilst it might seem like a time to let things go and that's how you feel, this is actually a time for you to start loving yourself more. Self care and self love is very important. You may have already stopped looking after yourself, if it isn't a person that you are grieving for. You may have lost your identity to ill health or lost your job for example. When we become disengaged or disinterested in a job or in looking after ourselves, our health usually suffers. It might just start with you beating yourself up or eating the wrong things but this behaviour can soon spiral. It can show up as over eating, putting on weight but can also show up in other ways such as items around your house not working, clutter and your need to hoard items rather than decluttering.



Take the time to look after yourself and breathe. Decide how you want your life to be. Nurture yourself and love yourself one day at a time. Do nice things for yourself. Give yourself a manicure or treat yourself to afternoon tea and enjoy it without feeling guilty.

For more information about loving yourself and nurturing yourself back to full power again, do take a look at the Love Game in my book Are you worth it? The Love Game can be found under Freebies on www.insightfulminds.co.uk.

Time to heal

It can sound like a cliché but it does take time to heal and it is a different time scale for everyone. Someone else might decide to do the 'stiff upper lip' and get back to work immediately after losing a loved one and you can't bear the thought of doing so and feel so guilty. Everyone will go at their own pace through the grief cycle. There is no set time for dealing with grief and sadness and if you are holding on to too much pain for too long (over 2 years) then it is essential to have some therapy to help move you on quicker. You may well be 'stuck' in grief.

For example, you may have lost a child at 1 month old. Of course you need to grieve for this loss, but if 15 years later you are still feeling the sadness and sorrow of losing this baby, you need to work on this emotional issue. It will be deeply embedded in you and will be contributing to health concerns such as Diabetes, Heart Disease, Depression and Cancer. You will need to heal that item in the past and live in the present. It is about you learning lessons and new behaviours to move into your new life.



You only have a certain amount of time on this earth, so if you waste your time feeling bad for too long, you will waste the opportunities available to you. Your loved ones if they were here today, would not want you to be unhappy. It is the total opposite. They want you to live your life and learn from their mistakes. They want you to have fun. Your time for having fun is NOW!

If you would like to know more about working with Liz, she offers a number of services online (and will be face to face again) when appropriate. All designed to help you have more time for you, inner calm, peace and serenity and more importantly to empower, relax and energise you to be able to feel reconnected with yourself and to get your life back.

- Tarot and Angel Card Readings
- Remote Reiki/Angelic Reiki Healing
- Energise Coaching sessions – using combined approach of The Balance Procedure Neuro Linguistic Programming, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Hypnotherapy, Emotional Freedom Technique, Time Line Therapy, Coaching
- The Balance Procedure, Reiki and Mindfulness Meditation training

Contact Liz at liz@insightfulminds.co.uk or ring 07815 904848 for more information. Full information about most services is available at www.insightfulminds.co.uk