

# Refire

A SIX WEEK SERIES



## Workbook

Refire, a six-week speaker series in the spring of 2021, gathered six experts in their chosen fields to talk about making meaningful changes to the systemic issues that plague hospitality. Each speaker brought their unique experiences from outside of our industry and applied them to problems we encounter at our workplaces everyday. We asked them all to supply actionable steps we might take as individuals and as a community to make a kinder, more equitable future. This workbook is a collection of resources in one centralized location for you to make notes, add your thoughts, and refer back to whenever you might need a refresher. We also will be sifting out important concepts and defining and delving into the words that are the foundation to transformation. We encourage you to flesh out your own reflections, and challenge you to use these conversations as the jumping off point for creating change within your own sphere.

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# Refire

A SIX WEEK SERIES

X Paper  
X Pencil  
X Open Mind

THE BLEND  
by Beam Suntory

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## WORKBOOK CHECKLIST

Now it's up to all of us! Our Refire speakers asked us a lot of questions and called out some important actions we can take to build a better future in our workplaces and communities. So let's strategize! This workbook was created as a space for reflection. The last page is great to print out and write on, or you can grab your favorite pen and notebook to journal your thoughts. Our hope was that bringing all of the information together might help build a guide to plan out the meaningful changes we all want to make. We can't wait to see what this community can do.

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# Grief Recovery

WITH MICHAEL SMITH

While speaking to Robin Nance, Michael Smith, **Grief Recovery Specialist**, addressed the many facets of significant loss, showed us some of the ways we all cope, and shared the journey one might take to unlock the years of accumulated emotional baggage and begin the healing process.

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## WHAT IS A **GRIEF RECOVERY SPECIALIST**?

A Grief Recovery Specialist is a profession within the counseling field designed to help patients cope with grief associated with a significant loss or trauma. Using some of the tools that Michael supplied, let's take a look at ways we might move forward in working through our own losses and supporting others along their path to recovery.

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*How do you unpack the baggage that you've accumulated over the course of your years so that you can look at it and heal from it properly?*

MICHAEL SMITH



## WHAT IS GRIEF?

Grief is a normal and natural emotional response to a **loss\***, but most of the information we've learned about dealing with loss is intellectual. Grief is the conflicting feelings caused by the end of, or change in, a familiar pattern of behavior. While we find similarities in how people cope with grief, everyone has a different reaction.

*\*Loss is the catalyst for the grieving process, often caused by a significant life change.*

## LET'S IDENTIFY **TYPES OF LOSS** YOU MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED IN YOUR LIFE

Restaurant Closure

Change in Working Hours or Conditions

Dismissal from Work or Career Shift

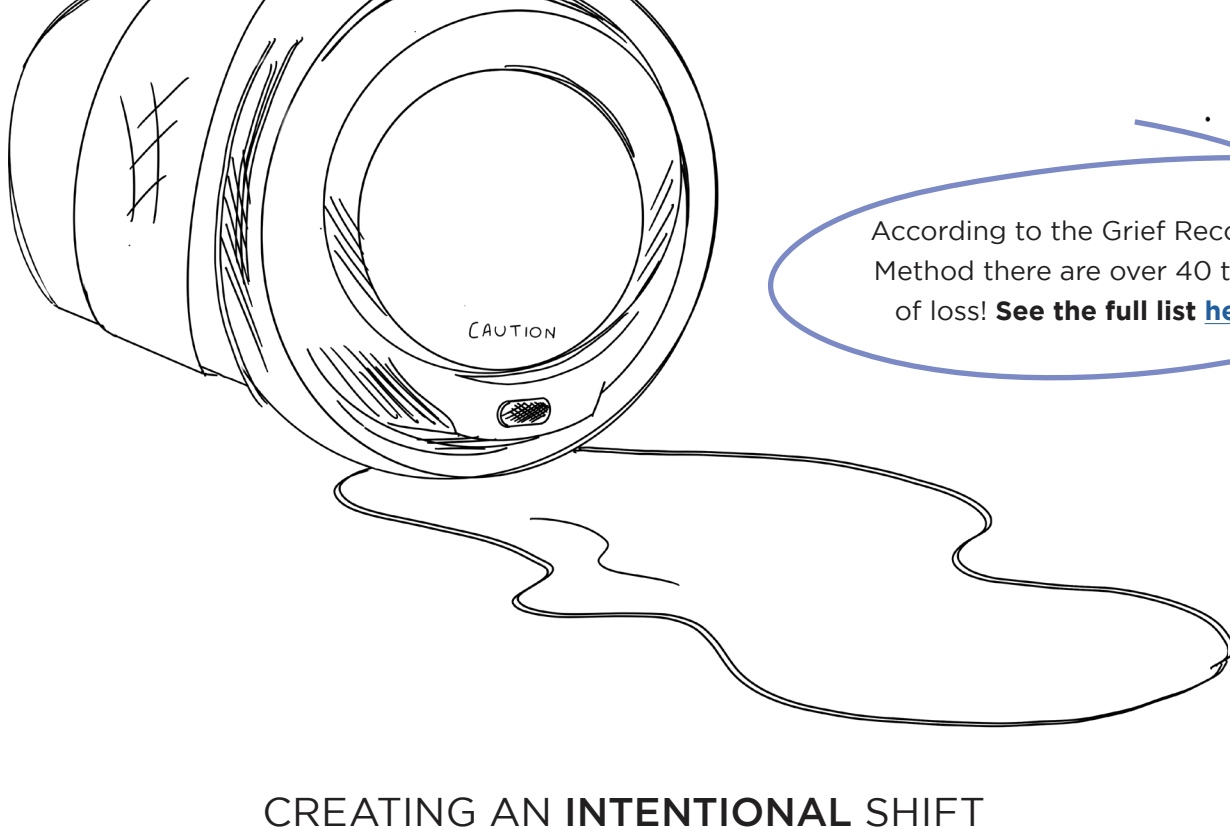
Workplace Mistreatment or Violence

Cancellation of Events or Plans

Change in Job Description or Responsibilities

Business Readjustment

Closure of Safe Spaces for Marginalized Communities



According to the Grief Recovery Method there are over 40 types of loss! **See the full list [here](#).**

## CREATING AN INTENTIONAL SHIFT

### UNDERSTANDING & ACCEPTANCE

The first step in overcoming or recovering from grief is to understand that grief is the natural, normal, emotional reaction to a loss. Every human experiences grief multiple times during their lifetime with different levels of impact.

### IDENTIFYING MYTHS

After accepting the emotions you are feeling as grief, the next step is identifying the things that you've done to cope with those losses. Usually this comes in the form of coping mechanisms called **Recovery Myths** and **Short-Term Energy Releasing Behaviors (STERBs)**. STERBs are coping mechanisms that people use when trying to move past emotion. Everyone uses coping mechanisms—they are the behaviors and strategies of people, both conscious and subconscious, used to manage the negative emotions and conflict caused by a stressful loss.

*"I can always find another job to make up the income from my reduced hours."*

*"My restaurant closed, but that's okay, there will always be somewhere to work."*

*"I know I'm not making cocktails but I should be grateful to have a job. I'll pack all the take-out containers needed."*

We've been taught to use **toxic positivity**, a coping mechanism that suppresses or redirects our emotions by putting a positive spin on a situation, to deal with our emotions. This STERB prevents someone from truly moving forward with recovering from grief. Identifying the myths or STERBs you have used in the past to cope will aid in your personal process of recovery. Once we understand that these reactionary processes are temporary, we can begin to do the work towards recovery.

### REACTIONARY RESPONSES

*No one will understand.*

*I deserve this.*

*It can be replaced.*

*I can fill my time with distractions.*

*It's better this way.*

*I just need to be alone.*

*There's no use crying about it.*

### NEW PERSPECTIVE

**I need to acknowledge and embrace my emotions** when they arise to move past them properly.

Dwelling on wrongful actions of the past will not help me move forward.

**Accepting help** from others is not a sign of weakness.

**I am accountable** for how I react to all situations in my life.

## BUILDING YOUR Recovery Toolkit

Recovery is the process of identifying and resolving the negative feelings surrounding a loss by becoming more emotionally open and working toward acceptance. While the details of the steps may look different to each of us, we all share the goal of moving forward into the next phase of our lives, free of the burden of unresolved grief. Some of the tools we can use to explore acceptance include:

### HONESTY

Allowing ourselves to be emotionally vulnerable can help us identify our losses and recognize the grief we have suffered.

### FORGIVENESS

Releasing blame and finding the space to forgive others (and ourselves) can help us move on from loss and grief.

### HUMAN CONNECTION

Finding someone to share our feelings with can help us see our coping mechanisms for what they are and get us out of our own head. We don't have to go through this journey alone.

### TAKING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

We may not be in control of what's happening in the world, but we do have the ability to control our own reactions to events and circumstances. We can ask ourselves: how does this affect me? What can I do about it? When we investigate our actions and reactions, we have more insight into ourselves and can move forward.

### CHOOSING A DIFFERENT VIEW

Positive and negative emotions are part of everyday life, and each of us suffers from our own losses and grief. Looking at how we felt in the past, really exploring those emotions, and then making the choice to see it through a new lens can enhance the healing process.

### BEING THERE FOR OTHERS

An instrumental part of the recovery process is being able to express your emotions. All people go through grief, so it's important to recognize when a family member, friend or co-worker is suffering. You can help by practicing empathy, which is approaching someone's struggle from a place of genuine understanding and openness by listening to their troubles. Listening is defined as actively hearing and attending to the information that is being conveyed. Empathy and listening go hand in hand when supporting others. It is not required to have any answers, just an open mind. By taking the time to listen, you are showing this person that you understand their feelings, and that they are heard and valid.

### PRACTICING EMPATHY

Offer **emotional support** without making assumptions.

**Listen**, rather than *fix*.

**Practice compassion** and understanding.

**Nurture** the conversation and keep the door open.

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*My dream for the hospitality industry is helping people understand that the human connection is the most important thing that we can garner from our industry.*

MICHAEL SMITH





EPISODE ONE

# Grief Recovery

WORKSHEET

Identify any recovery myths that you have used in the past when grieving.

Taking into account the losses you've suffered and myths you may have used to cope, how could your workplace have supported you better? Did you feel like you could tell them what you needed?

According to Michael, "You don't know how to support someone unless they tell you how to support them." How do you support others (or your staff) in a healthy grieving process?

What has this talk taught you about supporting your coworkers or staff and about asking for support you might need?

