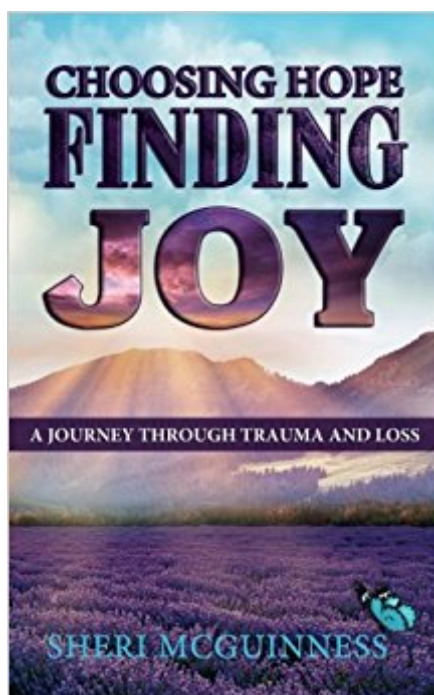


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# Choosing Hope, Finding Joy: A Journey Through Trauma And Loss



## Synopsis

Choosing Hope, Finding Joy is a true story of a family's account of trauma and resilience as one mom fights to help her family survive, thrive and even flourish after repeated significant losses. It is the story of Sheri McGuinness and her children as they found themselves on a journey to heal the wounds of horrible losses that devastated their lives, and what helped them to find their way out of the wreckage in the face of overwhelming circumstances. Her inspiring first book, Choosing Hope, Finding Joy, chronicles the journey navigating through her own childhood and adult traumas, a suicide, losing her child, and recognizing the impact that they each had on her life. This compelling book shines a light on the toll of grief, trauma and loss, and how even the strongest of people sometimes need support to overcome the fallout. It is a story that will make you cry, warm your heart and give you hope.

## Book Information

Paperback: 191 pages

Publisher: Sojourn Publishing (May 28, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1627472169

ISBN-13: 978-1627472166

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.5 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,581,354 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in Books > Teens > Social Issues > Suicide #98 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Medicine & Psychology

## Customer Reviews

Somewhere along the way, my mind had decided that there was a direct link between recovery and purpose, so I continued to search for what that could possibly be. Day after day, I sat in faith that it would be revealed to me if I just hung on. But Bobby's death had been so senseless that I just couldn't find a purpose, because there was none to be drawn - or so I thought. I had found my way to therapy, and I knew that was a big step. But it certainly wasn't an instant fix. As a matter of fact, I was in such pain those first months and that first year, I couldn't imagine help or relief arriving soon enough. I thought many times about dying. I never had a plan, but if a car had run me over or if I just didn't wake up it would have been okay. The hole I was in was so

big and so dark that I couldn't see many possibilities. I felt such guilt. I didn't want to leave my other kids, but Bobby's death was so immense that it consumed my thinking. I couldn't see anything else; I couldn't seem to get perspective. I am a smart woman but I couldn't sort this out. I didn't see an end to this pain - ever. And it was greater and darker than any pain I had ever felt. Starting therapy didn't mean that all of a sudden all was right with the world, but it was a huge step. Just having a safe place to cry for an hour was a good start, and then slowly becoming an active partner in my grief and recovery. I began to see that although I did know a lot about grief, trauma was another story. And I really needed to understand how it was manifesting in my life. Therapy was helping me see the bigger picture, and begin to recognize it. One of the greatest things that losing Joe had taught me was to trust the path. We certainly need to call on our wisdom to make decisions in life, but when circumstances put us in a position where wisdom is challenged, sometimes we just have to trust. My sanity clung to my confidence, determined that no matter what, we were going to be okay. And that confidence didn't let me down. It actually fortified my resilience and kept me going. I think they call it "blind faith." And it was all I had to hold on to. Looking back, I can see that without really even acknowledging it, somewhere along this journey I chose hope. Even though I couldn't see it, maybe didn't even want it, I chose hope - and I continue to choose hope.

Sheri McGuinness is CEO of a statewide non-profit organization, Suicide Prevention Action Network, Georgia. She is an inspirational author, consultant, speaker and presenter; and has spent 35 years writing in the business arena as well as experience in non-profit/ project/ personnel/ data management, administration, program content development and marketing. She is a Survivor Services Specialist and has created strategies to develop services and support for survivors of a suicide loss in communities throughout Georgia. She has been a leader and played an integral role in the suicide prevention community creating education, awareness, advocacy, resources and support statewide. Through her consulting firm, Mending Hearts Consulting, Ms. McGuinness is guiding, advising, and training individuals, organizations and communities in developing strategies to support families and individuals that are dealing with loss, grief and trauma. She has a dedicated, unyielding spirit with a heart for serving her fellow survivors and those at risk throughout Georgia and nationwide.

Sheri has written an honest and vulnerable book about overcoming loss and tragedy. It is inspirational to see someone overcome the darkness that loss, tragedy, and trauma can bring into

your life. Even if your personal loss is not from suicide, this book is very helpful to anyone who has suffered any loss--expected or sudden. I've read many books since I lost someone close to me, and this book is the first to articulate the feelings I have experienced and continue to experience. I am encouraged by Sheri's journey, and I am humbled to know she has shared her story to both find her way and help others. Her writing is genuine and authentic. This book is a fast read, but it does force you to reflect as you read. Have your bookmark ready--there are many powerful passages worth revisiting in tough times.

I have read over 20 books on grief and/or trauma and I highly recommend this one. It is very well written while at the same time being easy to follow if you are in the fog of grief or trauma when it is hard to focus. I had several cries reading it and ended it feeling hopeful. I will definitely buy other copies in the future for gifts to friends/family as needed.

It's a gift to have Sheri's presence and story available through her first book. Her honesty and courage in sharing her story, where her enduring love of family shines through, will help others struggling with loss see that hope is a choice. Sheri is a friend and valued colleague and I have heard her tell her story, always captivating her audience. This morning I read this eagerly awaited book in one sitting and was once again captivated myself at this story of resilience and Sheri's willingness to share for the sake of healing and hope.

While this is a very personal story it is valuable to anyone who has lost a loved one, survived a tragedy, or has lost hope. Sheri McGuinness takes us through the tragedies of her life and shares her struggle with loss, pain, darkness and her walk close to the very edge. Yet through her faith and love for her family, friends, and other survivors she takes the difficult steps back from the edge and into hope and joy. I will purchase more copies of this small and impactful book to share.

What courage. What honesty. This book will offer hope to so many who have gone through so much. It is certain to touch many lives.

I found myself smiling, crying, and sometimes both at once, as I read from one paragraph to the next. The story that Sheri shares with us is one of inspiration for anyone who opens the cover of this wonderful book. I recommend this read for anyone anywhere.

Sheri has shared the grief journeys her family has traveled, the honest emotions, and the strategies that were most helpful. I encourage others, especially those who have lost loved ones to suicide, to read this book.

Sheri McGuinness bravely shares her story of heartbreak and tragedy and her choice to not just survive but to thrive. Sheri is a beacon of hope to survivors of suicide and traumatic loss. Well done!

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