

# Sharing Grief Opening to Receiving Comfort

When we experience something that causes us to feel shock and sadness, we may feel the urge to withdraw from life. It may seem like remaining withdrawn will keep us protected from the world, but during these times it is important to reach out to those trusted and precious people who care about us the most. Even with our best information and reasoning, we never know when someone else's experience or perspective can give us additional information that we need. The universe speaks to us through many channels, and when we open ourselves up to receive its messages, we also receive nurturing care from a loving partner in life's journey.

Grief is part of the human experience, and sharing our vulnerability is what creates truly close bonds in our relationships. Opening ourselves up in this way gets to the core of our being, past all of our defenses and prejudices. When life seems to crack the outer shell of our world, we are both raw and fresh at the same time. It is then that we discover

who is truly willing to walk with us through life. We also see that some of those sent to us may not be the ones we expected to see. Regardless, we learn to trust in the universe, in others, in our own strength and resilience, and in the wisdom of life itself.

Sharing grief allows us to ease our burden by letting someone else help carry it. This helps us process our own inner thoughts and feelings through the filter of a trusted and beloved someone. We may feel guilty or selfish, as if we are unloading on someone who

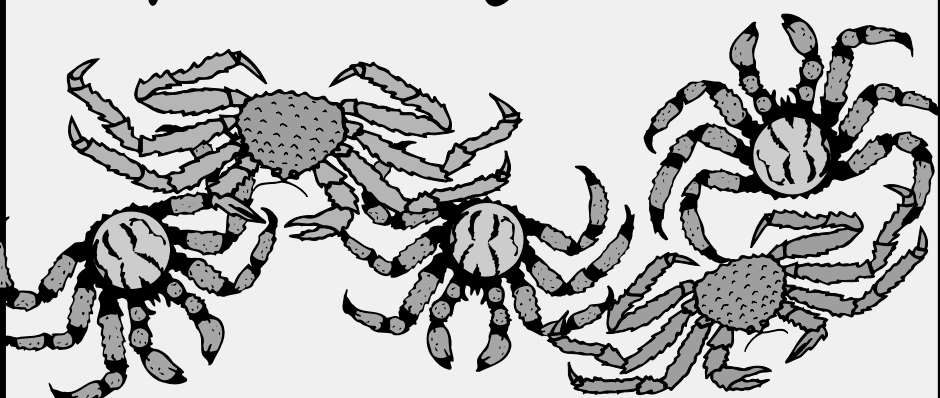
has their own challenges. Although, if we think about it, we know we would do the same for them, and their protests would seem pointless.

Remember that not sharing feelings with others denies them the opportunity to feel. We may be the messenger sent by the universe for their benefit, and it is on this mission that we have been sent. By sharing our hopes and fears, joys and pains with another person, we accept the universe's gifts of wisdom and loving care.



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# Tribute to Paul Moen, Entertainer and Friend

Paul Moen passed away suddenly on Wednesday, September 26. To pay tribute to the local musician, and former Keys Sanctuary officer, we are running excerpts from his Entertainer of the Month article published in the February 2008 Coconut Telegraph.

Paul Moen spent his childhood in Michigan, Missouri and Philadelphia, before attending high school in Tennessee, where he learned to play the guitar from his best friend Bruce.

"We were heavy into the Beatles back then," explained Moen. "We learned to play most of their stuff. We just couldn't get enough."

After high school, Moen wound up in college and then spent 23 years as an uniformed officer for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

"Few people realize that NOAA has a uniformed officer corps," said Moen.

He was stationed in Key Largo from 1994 through 1998 as the Officer in Charge of the Key Largo Marine Sanctuary (now the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary). He left Key

Largo for a new assignment in 1998, and at his own going away party he played the guitar. Someone who heard the music asked him if he ever played professionally. Until that point it was just a hobby, but it gave him pause to think, "Hey, maybe this could be a fun second career."

Moen retired and returned to Key Largo in 2003. He kept playing music for fun until one of the owners of Sharkey's offered him a gig, and that was when his second career as a sot-after local musician began.

Moen gave to the Upper Keys community in many ways and will be greatly missed. For information on a celebration of life for Paul Moen please call Sharkey's at 453-0999.

Original story by Rich Peine, printed Feb. 2008.





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