



# DOING IT ALONE WITH SUPPORT



## IN THIS ISSUE

by Bonda Zeller

### PAGE TWO

Three Trails Book Review,  
"Tear Soup"  
by Schwiebert and DeKlyen  
Review by Liz Kornven

### PAGE THREE

About Three Trails  
Upcoming Parenting With  
Love and Logic  
Browse our Self-Help Library

### PAGE FOUR

Continuation of the  
front page "Doing it Alone  
With Support" column  
by Bonda Zeller

Western culture is sometimes one of "Cowboy Up" or "just pull yourself up by the bootstrap". As I think of rodeo season and the athletes from the mutton busters to the team ropers, the riders get on and they may find success or failure in a few seconds. Yet they all share a team of folks, friends, and supporters cheering them on.

This summer, I too found myself caught in moments of the do it yourself "bootstrap" mentality. Work and home were as busy as ever. Taxi service was at an all time high. A few of our furry family members were hurt and healing. Time felt crunched already, and then a parent came to town for stroke rehab.

Here are some things I learned. I imagine they may be helpful to some of you also.

**Recognize when we may have just a little bit more or a lot more than we can handle on our own.** For me, that is usually not sleeping as well, less concentration, and some anxiety or

(continued on page 4)



[www.threetrailsefap.org](http://www.threetrailsefap.org)  
[threetrails@threetrailsefap.org](mailto:threetrails@threetrailsefap.org)



Three Trails EFAP  
812 South David Street  
Casper, WY 82601



P: 307.237.5750  
F: 307.237.5772

# Tear Soup

by Pat Schwiebert and Chuck DeKlyen  
Illustrated by Taylor Bills  
Book review by Liz Kornven

I love to learn so I am often reading about new topics of interest. Sometimes my reading is directed by the concerns my clients bring in for counseling. This was true recently when some of my clients were grieving various losses. I began looking in books I already own but then searched the internet for other recommendations. *Tear Soup*, authored by Pat Schwiebert and Chuck DeKlyen and illustrated by Taylor Bills was repeatedly mentioned. The Three Trails library has a copy so I was able to read and review this resource.

*Tear Soup* is written in an engaging way for younger audiences with meaningful illustrations but I don't think the content is only for children. Children could use this book alone but I believe it would be more helpful for caregivers and children/adolescents to read it together.

The book uses a story format to look at dealing with grief through the analogy of making soup. The story introduces Grandy, an old and somewhat wise woman, who first must choose a pot in which to create her soup. Each person's pot is unique to his or her grief. The pot may be hefty, average, or small depending upon the grief it needs to contain.

The next component is tears. Grandy began to cry. Sometimes, she wailed. Other times she wept quietly. At times, she cried with friends or family but often her grieving was done alone. Just as the pot is unique for each person, so is the preference of being with or without others.

Grandy seasoned her tear soup with memories. Her memories ranged from happy to sad; silly to serious; hurtful to healing. Some memories she never wanted to forget and others she wanted to bury.

Midge was Grandy's good friend. She came to Grandy as fast as she could after she heard the news. Midge didn't always know how to best comfort Grandy. Sometimes, Midge would just listen without offering advice. Other times, Midge would hug Grandy and that was enough. Midge helped Grandy walk through feelings of anger, confusion, indecisiveness, and sadness.

Grandy decided to add some comfort food to her tear soup. She added ice cream and chocolate, after all, it was her distinctive soup. Some people asked Grandy if the soup was finished cooking yet but Grandy didn't let them determine when the soup was ready.

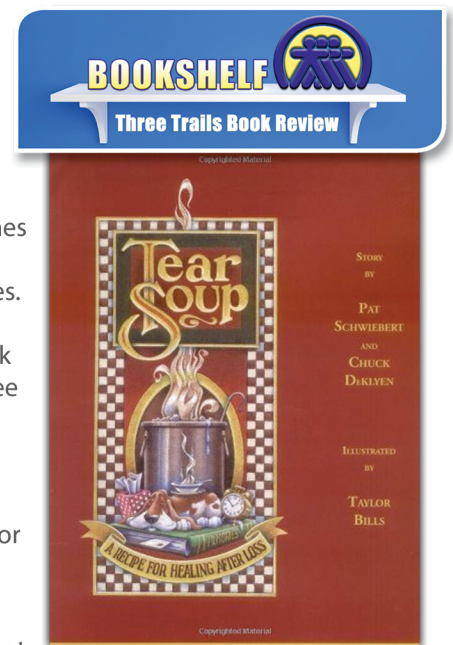
Grandy enjoyed receiving cards and emails from others even after many months had passed. She journaled what she was learning through her grieving process. From time to time, Grandy took a break from making tear soup. She would take a walk or go on a drive with her husband.

Grandy heard of a neighbor who began to make her own tear soup. Grandy invited her over to a group that met at Grandy's home. (If there was no one in Grandy's neighborhood who needed to make tear soup, she could have looked online for other grief groups.)

Grandy learned that grief is like making a pot of soup. It changes the longer it simmers as you add more ingredients. She learned that there's something down deep within each person that's ready to help us endure the things we think we can't survive. Sometimes people help and sometimes they're a hindrance. Each person's process is unique.

Some of the treasures outside of the story include information on the grieving process for someone who is experiencing grief firsthand (the "cook"), someone who has a friend who is grieving, the process of grieving, children who are grieving, grief from a male perspective and grief from a couple's experience. Also included at the end of the book are resources including websites of various groups from peri-natal loss, loss of a child, divorce care, pet loss, suicide prevention, and others.

*Tear Soup* is an informative book. Many of us have heard of the Stages of Grief, which include Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance. Grandy didn't move through the stages sequentially and she didn't experience each of the stages. Her grieving process was unique to herself. Each of us experience grief in unique ways, too. There is no wrong or right way to walk through the process of grief. However, some people experience complicated grief. This is when after a year, the person is still grieving and it's impacting their lives in such a way that it inhibits daily function, job performance, and social relationships. If someone is experiencing complicated grief, seeing a counselor is often beneficial. Even if a person isn't experiencing complicated grief, counselors can be helpful in navigating the grief process.



threetrailsefap.org



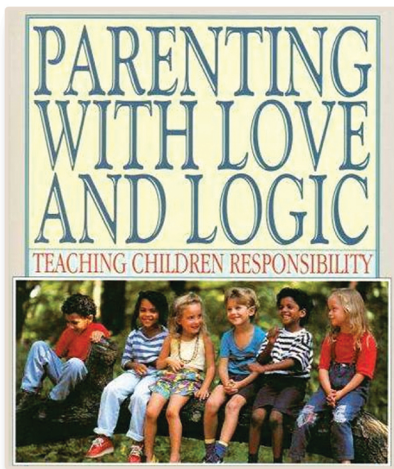
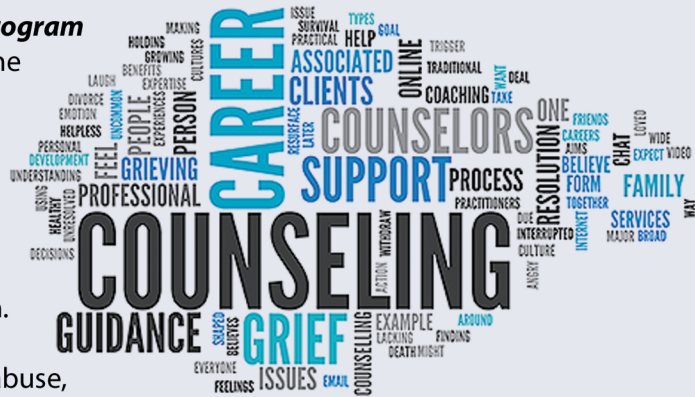
## About Three Trails . . .

### *Three Trails Employee and Family Assistance Program*

is a counseling agency designed to respond to the needs of employees, spouses, life partners and dependent family members ( ages 4 up to 21 ) of participating businesses and organizations.

### *Our Mission*

is to provide professional assistance early and in a timely manner so that problems do not worsen. Such concerns may include workplace stress, marriage and family tensions, alcohol and drug abuse, and other difficulties. Counselors at Three Trails assess the scope and nature of the presenting concerns and will provide counseling or refer the individuals to specialized services if appropriate.



### *Upcoming Parenting with Love and Logic Class*

For six Thursdays, Three Trails EFAP counselor Bonda Zeller will be teaching the annual Love and Logic class. The class starts on October 4th and ends on November 8th (full dates are October 4, 11, 18 and November 1st and 8th). The time for the class is 5:30pm – 7:00pm and will be at NCSF Central Services Facility, 970 North Glenn Road in Casper, Wyoming.

The six-week program is designed to help parents nurture responsible, respectful, fun to be around children who will learn how to make their own choices, own their problems, think critically and logically for themselves, while parents let empathy and consequences do the teaching. The course is appropriate for parents with any aged child and any situation: home, school or even work. The instructional

approach includes discussions, video clips presented by the facilitator, workbook exercises and homework to practice the "new" skills presented at each class.

Class is free to employees and their benefited family members. Workbooks are \$10.00 and may be shared. Class size is limited due to workbook availability. Please purchase workbooks at Three Trails EFAP (812 South David Street in Casper, Wyoming).

Register at the Three Trails office or online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/T82FNLL>.



### *Three Trails EFAP Self-Help Lending Library ~ Stop by and browse!*

Welcome to our Self Help Library page. Our self-help library is divided into sections according to topic. Included in our library is a wide variety of reading material along with audio material. All employees of our current clients are eligible to use our free library check out. Feel free to stop by our office any time during our business hours and browse.

To check out material, we simply ask you to fill out a form with your name and a contact telephone number. Currently you may check out 1 book for a maximum time of 2 weeks, and a CD for 1 week. We prefer you to return the materials on time so that others may utilize this service. The following is a list, by section, with links to the titles of the materials we currently have.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ABUSE</li> <li>ADHD</li> <li>ALCOHOL AND DRUGS</li> <li>ALCOHOL AND DRUGS / FAMILY ISSUES</li> <li>ANGER MANAGEMENT</li> <li>CHILDHOOD ISSUES</li> <li>EATING DISORDERS</li> <li>FINANCIAL / GAMBLING</li> <li>GENDER ISSUES</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRIEF / DEPRESSION</li> <li>INTERNET CONCERNS</li> <li>MISCELLANEOUS</li> <li>NICOTINE ADDICTION</li> <li>PARENTING</li> <li>PERSONAL GROWTH</li> <li>PHYSICAL PROBLEMS</li> <li>RELATIONSHIPS</li> <li>STRESS AND RELAXATION</li> </ul> |
|--|---|



(continued from page 1)

depression symptoms. For others it might include feelings of isolation, anger, or constant nervousness along with stress.

**Don't push others away, to show we can do it on our own.** I noticed that some people offered help without being asked. Allowing them to do a little thing can help lighten your load.

**Tell someone who you trust to be helpful.** I realized that I was so swamped, some of my closest friends hadn't heard from me for a while. So I made a few phone calls on my way to the rehab hospital. They went something like this, "Noticing I am swamped lately and just needed to tell you what is happening in my life right now. I thought you may understand and I'm wondering if I can call on you if it continues to be too much." A great friend responds with something like "Just tell me what I can do to help or feel free to drop the kids by". Yes, the cowboy up mentality tells me they may be crossing their fingers and wishing that I can handle it on my own, however sometimes the words are just right for the moment.

Knowing our support system is there helps us to feel connected and be able to confidently handle the hard stuff. As human beings, some of us need just a few loyal and trusted friends and others need many.

**Consider a local support group or counseling.** Not sure of what I would need to do for my parent's care, I asked about caregiver support groups. There are many types of groups available in Casper. I have decided to list a few just to give you an idea of the variety available:

- Suicide Prevention and Survivors Groups and family education through Mercer Family Resource Center
- Grief groups and camps through Hospice.
- Grief and Caregiver support through the Senior Center.
- Addiction and family groups through the 12-24 club and Highland Park Church.
- Mindfulness groups through Casper College Wellness Center.
- The Wyoming Medical Center has an extensive list of groups on their website at <https://wyomingmedicalcenter.org/results?keywords=support+group>.
- Counselors at Three Trails are available for individual, couples, and family counseling.

**Give back, when things calm down.** Most of the time, life events change and things slow down a little. Then it is time to change the "Cowboy Up" to "lift another Cowboy or Cowgirl Up". These are the times we get to respond with the helpful words and actions to those who trust us enough to share their struggles. Invest your time and energy in those who make you feel good about yourself.

