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## Continuing Bonds Theory

### Quick Summary:

The continuing bonds theory moves away from the idea that we need to let go of the individual who is deceased. Instead, it proposes that we must go through a period of adjustment where we redefine our relationship with the person who has passed away.

### History:

Authors Klass, Silverman, and Nickman, published a book that ultimately proposed the idea of the continuing bonds theory in 1996. While other grief academics seemed to be focused on the ideas of closure, or moving on; the continuing bonds theory argues the opposite. There is no need to move on, the relationships with those who are deceased may change, but they are still present in our lives. Continuing bonds argues that keeping the relationship with the person who is deceased is a normal part of grief, and allows us to carry our attachment to the other person even through death.

Many cultures implement this theory as a normal part of life, we can think of this as being in touch with ancestors, remembering or taking inspiration from those who have passed, or even carrying on traditions that were started by family members who have died are all ways of continuing bonds.

Modern grief academics understand continuing bonds as a healthy part of grief, but understanding and thinking about how this theory can be applied is an important part of understanding how people grieve.

### Examples:

Here are some ways you might continue a bond to a loved one who has passed

Thinking about the person

Visiting their grave/ resting place

Continuing traditions or hobbies you did together

A symbolic tattoo

An object or piece of jewelry to remind you of them

Thinking about the advice they gave you, or advice they would have given you

Talking to them

Praying for them

Continuing on their legacy

And more!