



Wellbeing Tips

Understanding resentment for wellbeing



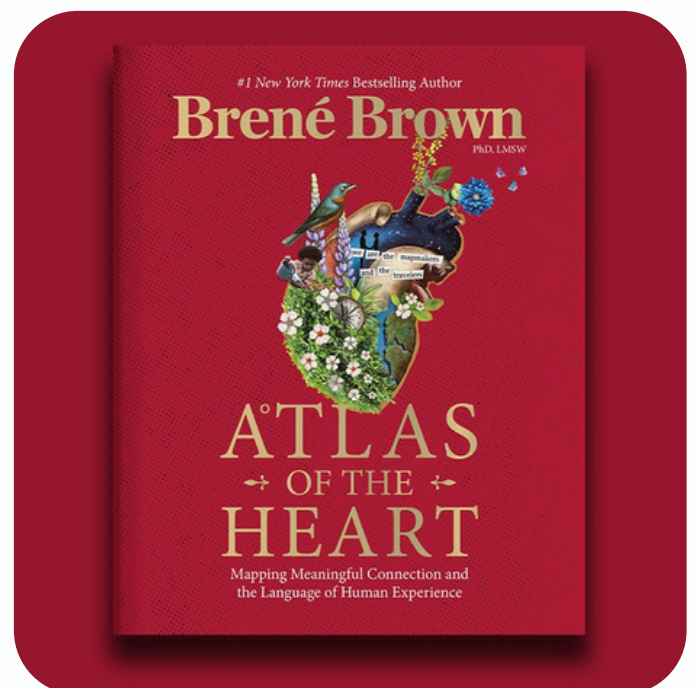
Resentment as a signal: listening to what it teaches

Resentment isn't "bad." It's a signal, a message that says, I'm giving more than I can. I said yes when I meant no. I'm exhausted from being brave. It often points to crossed boundaries, unmet needs, or parts of ourselves we've quieted for too long leading to emotional and physical depletion.

In *Atlas of the Heart*, Brené Brown reframes resentment as a strong response to unmet needs, compromised boundaries, or being prevented from living your truth and is not simply a byproduct of anger. She describes resentment as a buildup of pain, fatigue, and loss of agency that accumulates when we keep giving beyond our capacity, often hoping for acknowledgment that never comes.

For war widows and the families of veterans, resentment can also feel protective. It can keep the bond with your loved one alive and hold space for pain that has nowhere else to go. Listening to resentment with kindness can reveal what it's trying to teach you. This resentment may be directed at systems that

glorified sacrifice but failed to offer support, at a partner who is gone, at themselves for not "moving on," or at cultural expectations of strength that silence grief. These pressures create dissonance, isolation, and a shared identity around unspoken hurt, preserving connection to what was lost while preventing healing and growth.





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This is why noticing and engaging with resentment matters. When explored with curiosity, it can become a pathway to establishing safety, boundaries, self-compassion, and post-traumatic growth. If you'd like to explore this through guided reflection, you're welcome to join our Writing Through Grief wellbeing activities. To find out more, scan the QR code on this page or visit:

familiesofveterans.org.au/project/defence-families-wellbeing-events/



How do we work through resentment: from pain to self-reclamation

- Name the source.
- Notice resentment without judgment. What is it asking you to know?
- Shift from passive acceptance "This is just how it is" to active choice and accountability "I can change how I respond and won't silence my truth."
- Somatic therapies, ritual mourning, and other embodied practices can help your body learn that releasing grief does not betray loyalty.
- Move from holding onto loss to nurturing the life growing around your grief. Explore what was missing.
- Seek connection rooted in creativity, advocacy, or new community roles where you can express your needs to move forward
- Practice embodied boundaries.
- Rewrite your narrative.
- Connect through hope, not only grief.
- Reclaim agency.