

Professionally Speaking...

by Denise M. Paul MA, CT, CPLC

The Good Parts

Andy Grammer, the multi-platinum pop singer and songwriter inspires and empowers the world by communicating his truths through his music. His gold single, “Keep Your Head Up” is an example of the words of inspiration that he conveys to his fans. As a Perinatal Loss Grief Counselor, the song that resonates in my mind is entitled, “The Good Parts” which was released in 2017.

The Good Parts lyrics

*I'm sorry if I seem impatient
I'm not a fan of pleasantries
See, I get bored with the weather and what's in the news
The topics we all hide beneath
Could not care less about your day job
The gossip or ordinary stress
See, every relationship I've ever loved
It starts when someone says:*

*Show me where it hurts and give me something real
And lead me to the part of you that never really heals
And say the words that burn when they leave your mouth
Tell me your story, but don't leave the good parts out*

I have had the privilege of facilitating a UNITE, Inc. support group for the past 15 years, and over that time I have heard hundreds of parents voice their frustration about relating to family, co-workers, and friends following the loss of their baby.

We find that most people don't know what to say, so they often say the wrong things or they say nothing at all. My advice has always been to recognize that they mean well. Unfortunately, the loss of a baby is such a painful subject to talk about, and our society seems to keep it a secret.

Don't you wish that someone would say the words of this song to you? Don't you wish that someone would want to hear about the things that are real and that hurt you? Don't you wish that the story of your baby's brief life was the "good part" of who you are? I'm certainly not saying that your loss was a good thing, but it was real and it is what makes you who you are today. The day that your baby died was the day that you became a different person, and most people don't know how to relate to the new you.

Andy Grammer is suggesting that when you share that which is the deepest part of your soul, even if it is painful, a real loving and trusting relationship can be developed. The death of your precious baby is often the most prominent thing on your mind and in your heart, which makes everything else that people talk about seem meaningless. The loss of your baby has forced you to put everything in perspective. The things that most people worry about seem trivial and you want to shout, "My baby died! Does anyone care?" I will venture to say that people do care, but they either don't know how to show it or they don't realize how profound this loss is to you because you are trying to hide your pain. If you don't want to be vulnerable by telling people that you want to talk about your baby, then they will think that it's best to avoid the subject. Friends and family will think that you are "over it" and it will become a cycle of them not asking and you not telling.

Find the people in your life that are willing to say, *"Show me where it hurts and give me something real, and lead me to the part of you that never really heals...tell me your story, but don't leave the good parts out."* Those are the people who will support you on your grief journey.