

EXCERPT



Black Woman Grief *A Guide to Hope and Wholeness*

February 25, 2025 | \$18, 192 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-0964-2

In *Black Woman Grief*, Natasha Smith unearths a painful reality that is tangled within our nation's roots and DNA: trauma, loss, and grief are embedded in the lived experience of the Black woman in the United States. Smith talks about grief that is specifically applicable to Black women, providing them with affirmation and a safe place to exhale.

Dear Black Woman . . .

"Dear Black woman, you are not alone in feeling alone. You are not alone in wondering about the what ifs. You are not alone in grieving alongside every Black woman who has lost her child due to racial violence and injustice. You are not alone in feeling as if no one cares, as if things in our country and our world will never change, as if all hope is lost."

-introduction, "Momma! Momma!"

"Because of our village mentality as Black women, witnessing deaths due to unjust police brutality ignites grief among us. It feels as if we're drowning while everyone else is watching or even just going about daily life unbothered by the horrific scene happening in front of them. It's silenced grief, rarely seen by passersby. But from Black woman to Black woman, we know."

-introduction, "Momma! Momma!"

"At times, that is what life feels like as a Black woman: a fight. Wrestling over how to make life better for ourselves and our loved ones without losing ourselves in the process. Battling for equality in the workplace and in our homes. Fighting for all these things while trying to not look like the angry Black woman. Malcolm X said, 'The most disrespected person in America is the black woman. The most unprotected person in America is the black woman. The most neglected person in America is the black woman.'"

-chapter one, "Strong Black Woman"

"I've seen my mom cry at funerals, and I've heard her crying in the wee hours of the night while praying. I've done the same: tucked the grief away neatly to not make a scene in front of others—even my family. With the immensity of loss experienced, someone on the outside looking in would say, 'You're so strong.' But we carry these 'strong Black woman' labels because no one sees what happens when the mask is lowered in the shower or on the bathroom floor, when we can't see through the tears streaming down our faces. But I understand the importance of letting my kids see me cry. I need to let them know how important it is to process and express emotion. We don't have to hide behind masks because it's not healthy."

-chapter one, "Strong Black Woman"

"The Samaritan woman reminds me of Black women, perhaps because she was a minority. She was looked down upon by others, especially by the Jews. Her past may have influenced her relationships with men, how she viewed herself, and how she interacted with Jesus. When we meet her, she is alone with her thoughts. The location of her encounter with Jesus—Jacob's well in the middle of a desert—reminds us that this land was dry. The well was dug deep to get to the water. Sometimes we have to dig deep to reach the water to get to Jesus."

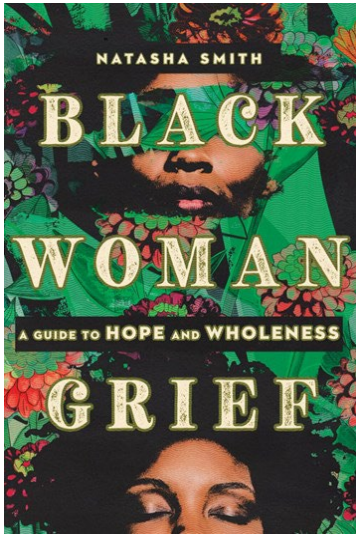
-chapter two, "Worthy of Love"



Krista Clayton, Director of Publicity
kclayton@ivpress.com



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"This book is a gift to Black women everywhere."

-Jacqueline Horbrook, founder and CEO of Black Christian Influencers

"Dear Black woman, you may long to see someone who looks just like you in all the places you aspire to be in. Or you may long to see another Black woman achieve new heights to inspire you and the next generation. You may long to be represented in your church and your circles of influence, yet you find yourself wanting. I encourage you to be the representation you want to see. I encourage you to be God's representation everywhere you go, pursuing his plan and purpose for you on earth. To use your unique qualities, gifts, and talents for God's glory. To help others see the goodness of God in and through you so they will know him for themselves. To influence those around you like Esther by simply representing Jesus wherever you go. Let your presence be his presence in the here and now."

-chapter three, "Representation Matters"

"As Black women, we are mourning either our own experience or something going on in the Black community. It's a constant resurgence of grief and pain. It's like navigating through broken glass or a fire. In these cases, we take precautions. We have to ask ourselves which way we're going and what we'll do to get out of it. We either call for help, wait for help to come, or try to make our way to safety. We actively search for ways to make it through as unscathed as possible."

-chapter five, "Courageous Faith"

"As Black women, trauma often involves confronting intersecting challenges of systemic racism, gender-based violence, and socioeconomic disparities, which leads to intense emotional and physical reactions. These stages allow us to mourn the collective traumas of our communities and ancestors as well as to integrate our traumatic experiences into our sense of self and identity, drawing on cultural practices, community support, and spiritual resilience to forge a path toward healing and liberation. This demonstrates the importance of acknowledging Black women's pain, honoring our resilience, and reclaiming our power in the face of adversity."

-chapter seven, "Unhinged Healing"

"Dear Black woman, take a deep breath. The pressure to perform and constantly do more is real. It is beyond exhausting. Even as you read this, you may be stressed about being stressed. Remember the Word of the Lord, which tells us there is a rest for the children of God (Hebrews 4:9). We don't have to live by the world's expectations of us or even the expectations we place on ourselves that push us to run ourselves into the ground. Instead, may we be kingdom-minded and allow ourselves the space to rest in God. Let us live a God-breathed life in which we prosper as our soul prospers—and not necessarily monetarily but primarily in peace, love, and sound mind and body."

-chapter nine, "The Softer Life"



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kclayton@ivpress.com



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BIO



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In *Black Woman Grief*, Natasha Smith

- takes readers through narrative and biblical truths
- provides a space made by and for Black women to be seen and understood by God
- encourages Black women to live a God-filled life in a grief-filled world

I Am Natasha Smith

I am a grief advocate, author, speaker, podcaster, content creative, and a certified grief educator.

I am a Certified Grief Educator committed to providing the highest level of grief support through education, experience, and insights into the often-unacknowledged rocky terrain of grief.

I love God and believe he has a heart for the hurting. I believe God sees, he knows, and he understands every single thing that we go through. I believe it is his will for us to be healed and whole. And I believe he works on our behalf in every circumstance when we call on him.

I have a heart for the hurting, for the grieving, for those experiencing and facing hard times in life. I have experienced God's love, sovereignty, power, healing, peace, and love in my life. Thus, I love sharing God's goodness with others. For those who are hurting there is Hope. Because Hope's name is Jesus.

I'm a North Carolina native and blessed to share home life with my husband, Clinton, and our four beautiful kiddos. We love God and strive to keep him at the center of our home.

I have been sharing on faith, family, and grief for more than twelve years at iamnatashasmith.com as well as through various publications. A few include: *Her View From Home*, *TODAY Parents*, *Guideposts*, *Propel Women*, *Influence* magazine, *her.BIBLE*, and *Focus on the Family*. I am also the author of *Can You Just Sit with Me? Healthy Grieving for the Losses of Life*, which released September 26, 2023 with InterVarsity Press (IVP)

In all I share, my heart for you is to see Jesus. To see his heart, love, care, and concern for you especially in grief. To experience his hope even in pain, suffering, hard times, and grief. And I pray that you will know you are not alone. I am sitting with you. And God is sitting with us.



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