

Leading While Grieving
Through Uncertain Waters

EBB & FLOW



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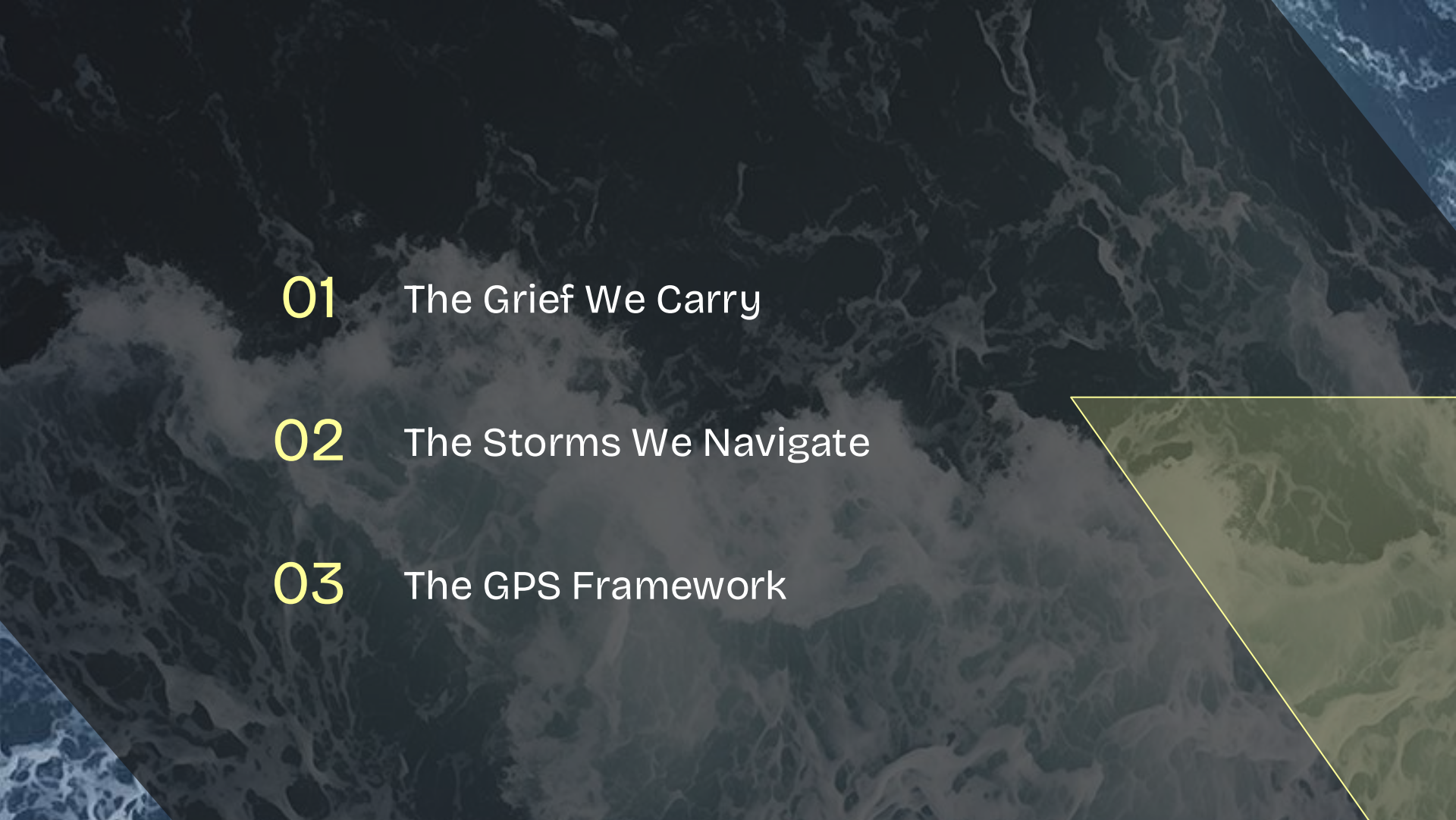
Former Chief Communications Officer
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (N.C.)

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An aerial photograph of a river delta, showing a complex network of channels and waterways. The water is a mix of dark blue and light grey/white, indicating varying depths and sediment. A large, semi-transparent green triangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, pointing downwards. The text 'Raise Your Hand' is written in white, sans-serif font on the left side of the image.

Raise Your Hand



An aerial photograph of a river delta, showing a complex network of water channels and land. The image is dark and has a high-contrast, almost abstract quality. On the right side, there is a large, semi-transparent green triangle pointing towards the center of the frame.

01 The Grief We Carry

02 The Storms We Navigate

03 The GPS Framework



*“Grief doesn’t
require a funeral”*



Personal

The loss of a person



Professional

The loss of
something you
believe in

What We've Lost

- The funding that used to make things possible.
- The autonomy to lead without looking over your shoulder.
- The schools that closed.
- The colleagues who burned out or walked away.
- The families who stopped believing the system would work for their children.
- The version of this work that made you say yes to it in the first place.

An aerial photograph of a river delta, showing a complex network of water channels and land. The water is a mix of dark blue and light grey, indicating varying depths and sediment. A large, semi-transparent green triangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, pointing downwards. The text 'Pair and Share' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Pair and Share

What is one thing about this work that you grieve? The thing you rarely say out loud.



FLORIDA KNOWS STORMS

Florida Knows Storms



Before the Storm

Prep. Communication.
Protect the vulnerable.



During the Storm

You don't fight the
weather.



After the Storm

Recovery is the hard part.



An aerial photograph of a river delta, showing a complex network of water channels and land. A large, semi-transparent green triangle is overlaid on the right side of the image, pointing downwards. The text "GPS Framework" is centered in the lower half of the image.

GPS Framework



Grieve Honestly

Give yourself (and your team) permission to name the loss without losing the ship.





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Plot Your Course

Clarity of purpose over certainty of conditions. You cannot control the weather. You can control your heading.





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Sail Together

No one leads a ship alone. Build crew trust, share the watch, and rest when you can.



Table Activity



Mid-Year
Budget
Collapse



School
Closure
Decision



Key
Leadership
Departure



Federal
Funding Cliff



State Mandate
Without
Funding




Apply Your GPS

Grieve Honestly	What is the real loss in this scenario; for your team, your community, your own sense of the work?
Plot Your Course	What is your heading? What is the one thing that cannot be compromised? What decisions need to be made, and in what order?
Sail Together	Who needs to be in the boat with you? Who are you checking on? What does it look like to share the weight of this storm?

An aerial photograph of a river with turbulent rapids. The water is dark and churning, with white foam from the rapids. A large, semi-transparent yellow triangle is overlaid on the left side of the image, pointing towards the center. The text 'We've Weathered Before' is written in white, sans-serif font on the right side of the image.

We've
Weathered
Before



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