# Grief Expert Behind 7,000+ Clients Unveils Proprietary Controlled Grief Practice

*Mentally STRONG founder Dr. Cristi Bundukamara reveals the scheduled grief practice inside her method.*


Cristi Bundukamara, Founder, Mentally STRONG

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO, UNITED STATES, September 3, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Mentally STRONG, the Colorado Springs practice founded by grief expert and psychiatric nurse practitioner Dr. Cristi Bundukamara, has unveiled Controlled Grief, the scheduled practice inside the Mentally STRONG Method that asks a person to sit with the pain of a loss on purpose. Bundukamara detailed the practice during a recent appearance on The Wholeness Network podcast with host Mechelle Wingle. Bundukamara has taught the method to more than 7,000 clients in the seven years since opening the practice.

Most grief advice comes down to waiting. Time heals, give it a year, stay busy and it will fade on its own.

Bundukamara, a grief expert with more than 20 years of clinical practice, says waiting is not a plan. The people who wait longest are often the ones still carrying the loss a decade later, and they usually end up blaming themselves for it.

Controlled Grief is the opposite of waiting: a person picks a window of time, sits down, deliberately feels the pain of what was lost, then closes the window and goes back to the day. Inside the Mentally STRONG Method, the pain is not the problem to be removed. Avoiding it is.

"Take actual time to sit in that pain and you feel it and it's uncomfortable," Bundukamara said of Controlled Grief during her appearance on The Wholeness Network podcast. "But you feel the pain of the grief, not the trauma."

That last line carries the whole practice. Grief and trauma feel identical from the inside and move in opposite directions, and sitting in the wrong one causes damage.

"If you continue to refeel the trauma, you're creating more negative neural pathways and you're

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solidifying that trauma in the body," Bundukamara said on the show.

The other thing Controlled Grief keeps out is self-blame. Dr. Cristi Bundukamara says most people sit down to grieve and spend the time prosecuting themselves instead, replaying what they should have done differently. That is negative thinking wearing grief's clothing, and it belongs in its own category with its own assignment.

Which is why the practice does not stand on its own. Controlled Grief runs on top of the Mentally STRONG Method, the think, organize and choose system Bundukamara built during her son Reggie's 10-year illness.

Think slows a thought down long enough to see it. Organize sorts it, splitting grief from trauma, anxiety, triggers and negative thinking, because each one runs on different rules. Choose is where a person decides to take the time rather than wait for the pain to pass.

None of this came out of a textbook. Bundukamara lost her son Johnny in a 2005 drowning accident, her son Reggie in 2016 after a rare neurodegenerative condition took 10 years and her daughter Miah with no warning in 2021.

She enlisted in the Army at 17, later served in the Navy Reserve and retired, and she already held a doctorate and a psychiatric nurse practitioner license when the losses started. Her book "Pain & Purpose: My Journey to Mental Strength" and the documentary "Strength in Vulnerability" cover that stretch. She opened the Colorado Springs practice in 2019 and now teaches the Mentally STRONG Method largely to elite performers, the clients least willing to look backward.

Dr. Cristi Bundukamara says that group carries the most and notices the least.

"It's an invisible weight because you've been carrying it so long that you don't realize that you're carrying it," she said on the show.

Those clients are capable adults who can explain their own patterns in detail and still cannot change them. Mentally STRONG has passed $15 million in revenue over seven years selling them a system instead of one more insight.

Bundukamara teaches Controlled Grief and the rest of the framework live at Mentally STRONG Reset Live, the practice's in-person event, and inside the 90-Day Mentally STRONG Mindset program.

Anyone carrying a loss they have been told to wait out can learn the Controlled Grief practice

and the wider Mentally STRONG Method with grief expert Dr. Cristi Bundukamara at www.mentallystrong.com.

About Mentally STRONG

Founded by Dr. Cristi Bundukamara, Mentally STRONG is a mental strength practice in Colorado Springs, Colorado that treats grief, burnout and major life change as skills a person can be taught rather than conditions to wait out. Bundukamara is a grief expert, a psychiatric nurse practitioner and a retired military veteran who created the Mentally STRONG Method while losing three of her own children. Its offerings include one-on-one coaching with Dr. B, the 90-Day Mentally STRONG Mindset program, the Mentally STRONG Reset Live event and a curriculum for raising mentally strong kids.

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