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When They Are Gone: How We Grieve

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When They Are Gone: How We Grieve

JOHN CHOVAN



When They Are Gone: How We Grieve

JOHN CHOVAN

Trigger Warning – This presentation will discuss cultural aspects of rituals related to funerals. As such, some of the photographs or statements might trigger memories or emotions that might make the observer uncomfortable. *Please feel free to leave the room now if you do not wish to be exposed to these images or words, or at any time you may feel the need to leave.*



Why?

- ❖ My preparation.
- ❖ My practice.
- ❖ My personal observations.
- ❖ My family.
- ❖ My profession.





Death in America

- ❖ **Life is a terminal condition.**
- ❖ **Death has become taboo.**
- ❖ **Now have memorial services without the bodies.**
- ❖ **Cremation is on the upswing.**
- ❖ **It is the era of the antiseptic death.**



Grief – the emotional response to a loss

- ❖ Any kind of loss.
- ❖ Carl Jung: Loss of the presumptive world.
- ❖ Hope shifts.
- ❖ Biological component – Stress response, normal response
- ❖ Psychological component – Loss, not a mental illness
- ❖ Social component – Culture bound: values, resources, community, ethnic heritage, family traditions, link with the past

Bereavement – The process of grieving

- ❖ **Stages? Kübler-Ross' *On Death & Dying*.**
 - denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance
 - shock, denial, bargaining, guilt, anger, depression, and acceptance
- ❖ **Nonlinear, no set timeline, unique to each individual**
- ❖ **Funerals reflect cultural component to bereavement**



Where I'm From

"I am originally from Canton, Ohio."

"I am from Cleveland."

"I have lived in Columbus for the past 40 years."



Where I'm From: "I am a Chovan."



Laura D
Chovan

John D
Chovan

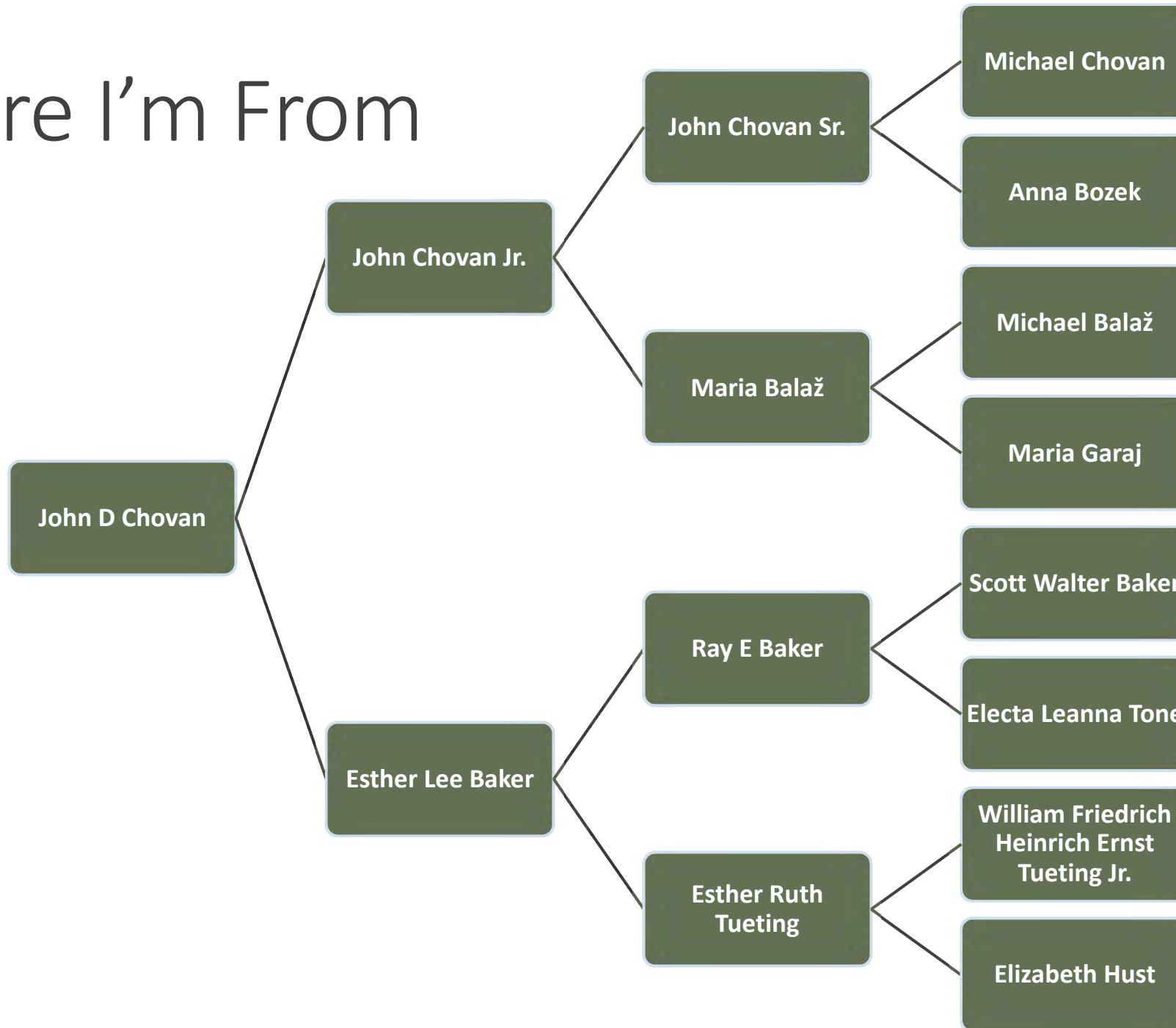
Cheryl A
Chovan

John
Chovan Jr.

Esther L
Chovan



Where I'm From

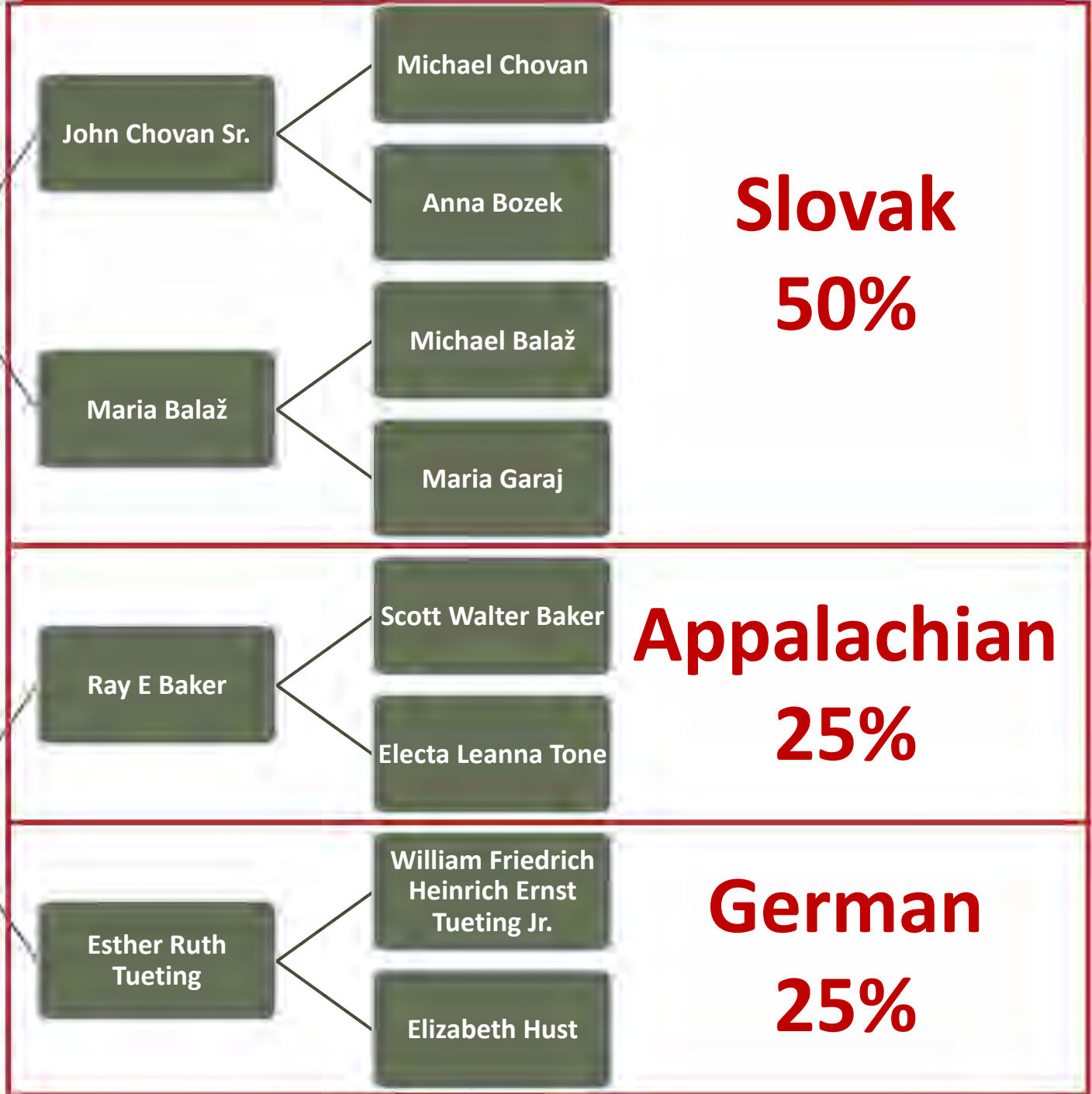
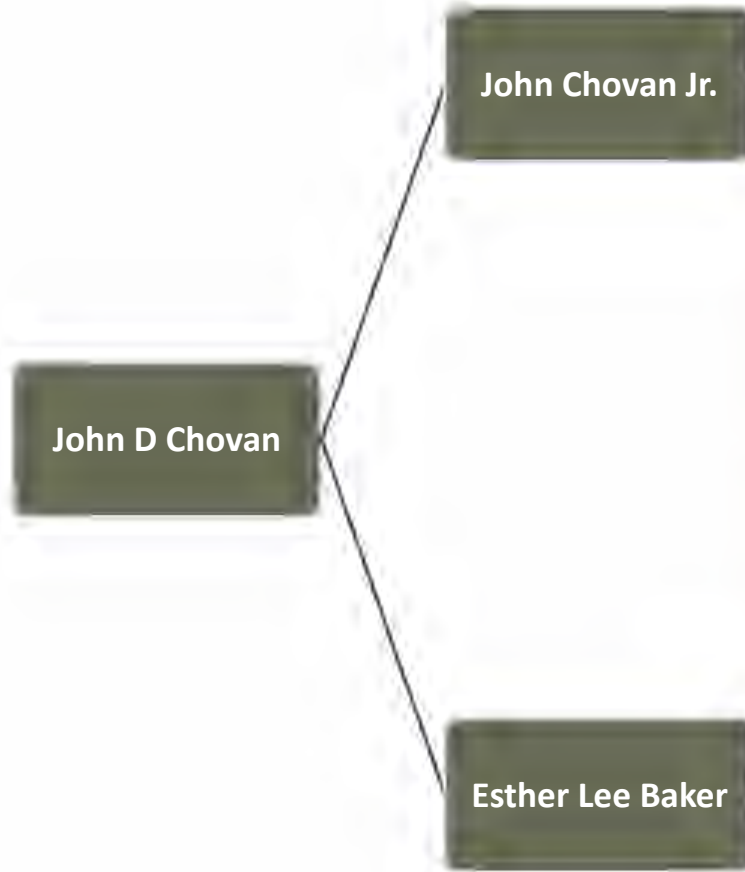


“I am a ...”

- ❖ Chovan
- ❖ Baker
- ❖ Balaž
- ❖ Tueting
- ❖ Bozek
- ❖ Garaj
- ❖ Tone
- ❖ Hust

...

Where I'm From





Grief in My Family

- ❖ Slovak Traditions
- ❖ Appalachian Traditions
- ❖ German Traditions

Bottom Line:

IMMIGRANT TRADITIONS





Grief in My Family – Slovak Traditions

- ❖ Grandpa Chovan immigrated in 1904.
- ❖ Grandma Chovan immigrated in 1921.
- ❖ Communication was via telegram (expensive) or airmail (slow).
- ❖ Person was dead and buried before the other continent knew anything had changed.
- ❖ Need to see a body → Photographs
- ❖ Need to link it to life → Photos include living members of the family.



Grief in My Family – Slovak Traditions





Grief in My Family – Appalachian Traditions

- ❖ **Maternal grandfather's family immigration records not located.**
- ❖ **Adversity is a community interest.**
- ❖ **Supporting one another is a community responsibility.**
- ❖ **Bodies “laid out” until burial possible.**
- ❖ ***Standing Room Only* at funerals.**
- ❖ **Resources should be spent on the living; unmarked graves.**
- ❖ **Family cemetery in Northern Kentucky.**



Grief in My Family – Appalachian Traditions





Grief in My Family – German Traditions

- ❖ **Great-great-grandparents immigrated from Germany**
- ❖ **Victorian philosophy of cemetery's as public parks.**
- ❖ **Patriarch purchased family plots to minimize searching during visitation.**
- ❖ **Family plot in Cincinnati, Ohio: Vine Street Hill Cemetery**
- ❖ **Very important for my grandmother to be buried nearby.**



Grief in My Family – German Traditions





Grief in My Family – New Traditions



Mark J Planovsky

Memorial Photos Flowers Share Edit

[Learn about sponsoring this memorial...](#)

Birth: Dec. 17, 1958
Death: Feb. 10, 2017



Added by: MJGoette

Mark J. Planovsky, 58, of North Olmsted, went home to be with the Lord on February 10, 2017.

Beloved husband of 35 years to Cheryl (nee Chovan); devoted father of Megan (Roc Patterson) and Evan (Claire McCabe); loving Papa of Nash and Niko Patterson; dear son of Eugene and Loreen (deceased); dear brother of Michael (Colleen), Denise (Rob) Berlan and Ross (Michelle); cherished uncle of 12; beloved son-in-law of Esther and John (deceased) Chovan and brother-in-law of Laura (John) Griffin and John D. Chovan; special friend and mentor of Jake Carlton. Mark enjoyed coaching his son and many others in rec and travel baseball. He was an avid hunter and fisherman.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, February 14, 2017 from 2-4 and 6-9PM in the Chapel at Sunset Memorial Park, 6245 Columbia Rd., North Olmsted 44070 and on Wednesday at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 27993 Detroit Rd., Westlake 44145 from 10AM until the time of funeral service at 11AM. Interment to follow at Sunset Memorial Park. dostalbokas.com

Burial:

[Sunset Memorial Park](#)
North Olmsted
Cuyahoga County
Ohio, USA

Created by: MJGoette
Record added: Feb 15, 2017
Find A Grave Memorial# 176370882



Cemetery Photo
Added by: Ragalvi-Hindle

Add a photo for this person Request A Photo

Photos may be scaled. Click on image for full size.

Leave flowers and a note



Cheryl (Sister) > 5/10/17

Thank you so much...I received these today 😊

+ Type a Message..



So What?

“I am more than these five stages and so are you.”

– Elizabeth Kübler-Ross

- ❖ Grief does not mean you are mentally ill.**
- ❖ Grief is as unique as you are.**
- ❖ Pain and grief are never completed.**
- ❖ Grief shifts and changes. Memories replace sadness**
- ❖ Anger will happen. Anger at “God.” Anger at deceased.**
- ❖ Grief has a rhythm of its own.**
- ❖ You cannot “do grief” incorrectly.**



The Importance of Where You're From

Rituals support processing grief. They combine your historical traditions with new traditions to link you with the past and to prepare you and your loved ones for the future.



Now that they're gone, we miss them and mourn them:
Our ancestors, kinfolk, our families of choice,
Our neighbors, our colleagues, the man at the park,
The dogs, cats, and fishes, iguana, and hamsters.
Our lives and our hearts filled with joy and despair.

Now that they're gone, we are sad and get angry.
Our feelings like waves crash hard and we're tired.
So why did you leave? We're too young to be widowed.
Thanks for asking, we're fine. No we're not. Please don't ask.
Hugs, flowers, and cards, and the food, sometimes help.

Now that they're gone, we partake in our rituals
Of hearses, and clergy, and wet, tear-soaked sleeves.
We go through the motions, they settle our spirits.
Yet when it's all done, when our loved ones are missing,
Now that they're gone, our journeys begin.

- JD Chovan, 2017