

HEALING GRIEF & LOSS



COPING WITH LOSS WORKBOOK



CASSIE JEWELL, LPC, LSATP

COPING WITH LOSS **WORKBOOK**

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Coping with Loss Workbook

Produced in the United States

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For Eden





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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cassie Jewell is a mental health clinician and the creator of Mind ReMake Project (www.mindremakeproject.org), a site she developed for posting free self-help resources and information for consumers and other mental health professionals. Cassie has a Master's degree in Community Counseling from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (with a Bachelor's in psychology). Cassie is a licensed professional counselor (LPC), a licensed substance abuse treatment practitioner (LSATP), and a board-approved clinical supervisor in Virginia.

I developed this workbook in response to a personal loss as I processed it, learned to cope, and found a way to move forward. I welcome questions and comments. Please feel free to email me.

Cassie Jewell

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“If there ever comes a day when we
can’t be together, keep me in your
heart, I’ll stay there forever.”

WINNIE THE POOH



INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS GRIEF?

Simply put, grief is a reaction to loss. Grief may be experienced as sadness, numbness, or even physical pain. Grief is unique to the person experiencing loss. It rarely progresses through linear phases. The experience of grief may be brief or long-lasting.

WHAT IS MOURNING?

Mourning is the expression of grief. In comparison to grief, which is **felt** or **experienced**, mourning is **conveyed** or **communicated**. For example, to cry is to mourn.

GRIEF & LOSS EVENTS

The experience of grief is not limited to the death of a loved one. On the following pages is a list of events that may lead to grief. Check the boxes that apply to you currently and/or in the past.

**"WHAT WE HAVE ONCE ENJOYED DEEPLY WE
CAN NEVER LOSE. ALL THAT WE LOVE
DEEPLY BECOMES A PART OF US."**

Helen Keller

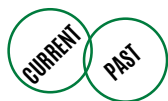


EXERCISE: CHECKLIST OF GRIEF & LOSS EVENTS



<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Death of a loved one
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Divorce or marital separation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Infidelity
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ending of friendship or romantic relationship
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of virginity
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dismissal from work or school
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of professional license
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Retirement
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Graduation from high school or college
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serious illness
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serious injury or loss of a limb
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of safety after trauma
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of driver's license or vehicle
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A family member's illness or injury
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of a living parent to Alzheimer's or dementia
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Entering addiction recovery (loss of a coping mechanism)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Incarceration
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Incarceration of a loved one
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Significant move
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Significant financial loss
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Estrangement from family
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of closeness in a relationship
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Birth of first child
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Young child starting school
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult child leaving home
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Miscarriage or abortion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A child born with birth defects or a disability
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Infertility
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Death of a pet

EXERCISE: CHECKLIST OF GRIEF & LOSS EVENTS (CONT.)



<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Aging
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss related to a traumatic event
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of home to fire or natural disaster
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss or destruction of sentimental possessions
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of a personal dream or goal
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of reputation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of credit
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Uncovering a devastating secret
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of an important role
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Personality changes due to illness (self or loved ones)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of intellect
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of belief in God or religion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of hope
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

"We are all dealing with a challenge of some kind. Some of us are just better at hiding it than others."

KAREN SALMANSOHN (AUTHOR)

EXERCISE: PAST GRIEF & LOSS EVENTS

Select three events from your past that you checked off in the previous exercise. In the following boxes, briefly describe each event. Write about what happened, when it happened (year, season, your age at the time, etc.), and how you reacted to the loss.

Event 1:

Event 2:

Event 3:

GRIEF REACTIONS

Grief reactions vary, and different people grieve differently. Some of the most common grief emotions and experiences are listed on the next few pages. You may notice that you had similar reactions in the three loss events you just reflected on.

Exercise: Check off the reactions that you are currently experiencing (or have experienced in the past week). Circle or highlight ones that are particularly strong or that you experience the most frequently.

FEELINGS & EMOTIONS

- ☐ AGGRESSION
- ☐ ANGER
- ☐ ANXIETY
- ☐ APATHY
- ☐ BITTERNESS
- ☐ DESPAIR
- ☐ EMPTINESS
- ☐ FATIGUE
- ☐ FEAR
- ☐ GUILT
- ☐ HELPLESSNESS
- ☐ IRRITABILITY
- ☐ LONELINESS
- ☐ NUMBNESS
- ☐ REGRET
- ☐ RELIEF
- ☐ SADNESS
- ☐ SELF-PITY
- ☐ SHOCK
- ☐ YEARNING

THOUGHTS

- ☐ CONFUSED THINKING
- ☐ DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING
- ☐ DIFFICULTY MAKING DECISIONS
- ☐ DISBELIEF
- ☐ DISSOCIATION
- ☐ FORGETFULNESS
- ☐ HALLUCINATIONS, SEEING &/OR HEARING THE DECEASED
- ☐ HAVING OBSESSIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT THE DECEASED
- ☐ SELF-BLAME
- ☐ SENSING THE PRESENCE OF THE DECEASED
- ☐ THINKING THE DECEASED IS STILL ALIVE
- ☐ TIME DISTORTIONS

ACTIONS & BEHAVIORS

- ☐ ABSENT-MINDEDNESS
- ☐ ACCIDENT-PRONE BEHAVIOR
- ☐ AVOIDING REMINDERS OF THE DECEASED
- ☐ AVOIDING TALKING ABOUT THE DECEASED
- ☐ CRYING
- ☐ DREAMING ABOUT THE DECEASED
- ☐ EATING TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE
- ☐ DECREASED INTEREST IN ACTIVITIES THAT USED TO BRING PLEASURE
- ☐ MOOD SWINGS
- ☐ PASSIVENESS
- ☐ RECKLESS OR SELF-DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR
- ☐ RESTLESSNESS
- ☐ SCREAMING
- ☐ SEARCHING & CALLING FOR THE DECEASED
- ☐ SIGHING
- ☐ TREASURING OBJECTS THAT BELONGED TO THE DECEASED
- ☐ TROUBLE SLEEPING
- ☐ VISITING PLACES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DECEASED
- ☐ WITHDRAWAL

PHYSICAL SENSATIONS

- ☐ BODY ACHES & PAINS
- ☐ BREATHLESSNESS OR SHORTNESS OF BREATH
- ☐ DRY MOUTH
- ☐ EXHAUSTION
- ☐ FEELING THAT NOTHING IS REAL
- ☐ SPASMS OF GRIEF
- ☐ HOLLOWNESS IN THE STOMACH
- ☐ LACK OF ENERGY
- ☐ LOSS OF APPETITE
- ☐ MUSCLE WEAKNESS
- ☐ NAUSEA OR UPSET STOMACH
- ☐ OVERSENSITIVITY TO NOISE & LIGHT
- ☐ TIGHTNESS IN THE CHEST
- ☐ TIGHTNESS IN THE THROAT

SPIRITUAL RESPONSES

- ☐ ANGER AIMED AT GOD
- ☐ CONSIDERING OR QUESTIONING THE MEANING OF LIFE
- ☐ SEEKING MEANING IN THE LOSS
- ☐ STRENGTHENED BELIEFS

List any additional grief reactions you are experiencing:

[illegible]

Exercise: Development of Bereavement & Mourning Norms

As a child, what grief reactions were modeled in your family?

As an adult, do you react to grief the way your family did? What's similar and what's different?

What grief reactions are the most uncomfortable for you? Why?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Are you letting yourself experience your emotions, thoughts, etc. freely as they come? Why or why not?

[illegible]

Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong ways to experience grief. (However, there are healthy and unhealthy ways to *manage* grief.)

Exercise: My Grief

Describe your current situation. (Who are you grieving? What happened? When?)

What are your thoughts and feelings surrounding the loss?

How have you been coping with the loss?

[illegible]

Are there any complicated or unresolved issues related to your loss? Explain.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

What do you hope to gain from this workbook?

CHAPTER TWO

THE PROCESS OF GRIEF

"Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing.

Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim."

VICKI HARRISON



THE PROCESS OF GRIEF

It is theorized that people process their grief in different stages. One of the best-known models for bereavement is Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' 5 stages of grief theory. She hypothesized that grief is experienced in five stages:

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining
4. Depression
5. Acceptance

However, not everyone who grieves goes through all five stages, nor is it a linear process.

Prior to the development of the 5 stage model, in 1944, Erich Lindemann proposed that acute grief was predictable and was characterized by the following:

- Physical reactions (such as choking, shortness of breath, etc.)
- Preoccupation with the loss
- Guilt
- Hostility
- Disorganization in daily life and functioning

More recently, the attachment model of bereavement (proposed by John Bowlby) suggested that grief is experienced in four overlapping phases:

- Shock
- Yearning and protest
- Despair
- Recovery

Exercise: The five stages of grief are portrayed on the next five pages. For each stage, circle and/or color in the feeling words you relate to most. Draw on or color the faces to represent your corresponding emotions.



STAGE OF GRIEF DENIAL

"This isn't really happening."

Confused

No

Refusing

SHOCKED

Disbelieving

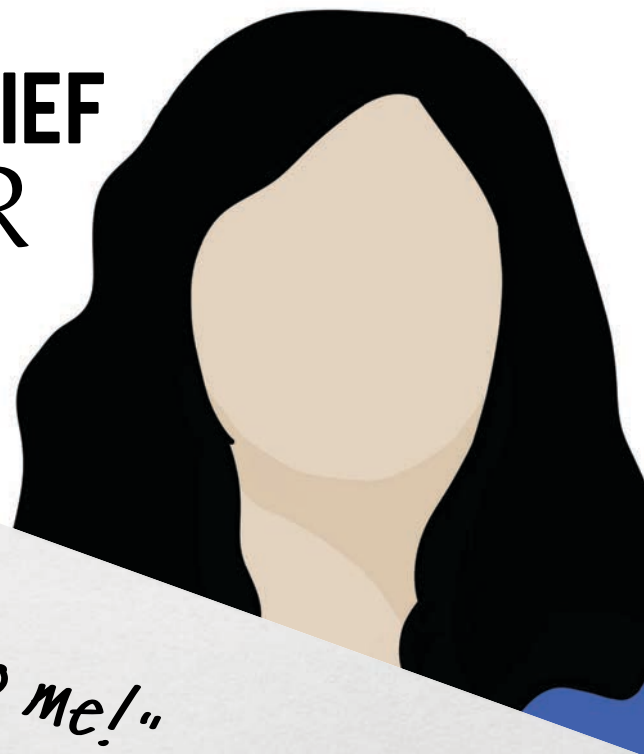
DISCREDITING

OMG

Disputing



STAGE OF GRIEF ANGER



"This shouldn't be happening to me!"

FURIOUS

Enraged

Disappointed

OUTRAGED

DISTRESSED
Bitter

INFURIATED

Disillusioned

UPSET

Livid

Horrificed

Hostile

RESENTFUL

Spiteful

Disturbed

Irritated

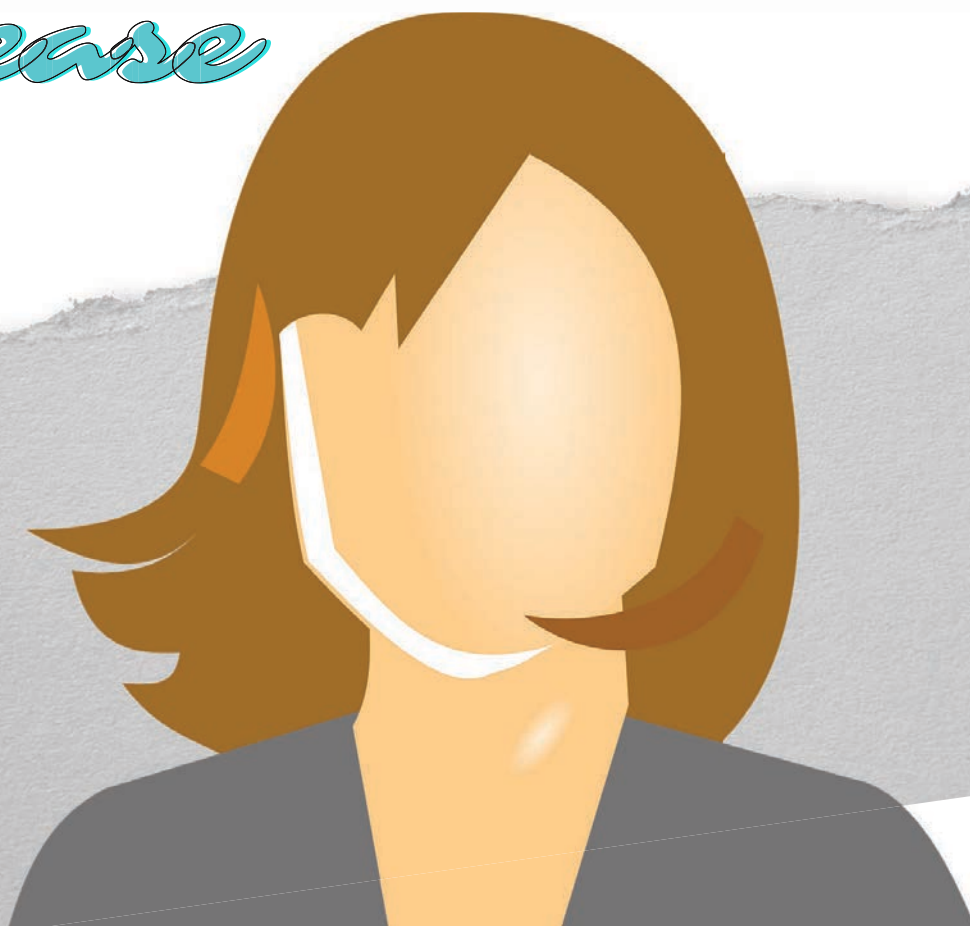


STAGE OF GRIEF BARGAINING

"I'll do anything!"

PLEASE

please



STAGE OF GRIEF DEPRESSION

"Everything is hopeless."

SAD

Mournful

Heartsick

Inconsolable

HEARTBROKEN

Cynical

Morbid

SOMBER

DEVESTATED

HOPELESS

DESPONDANT

Crushed

MELANCHOLY

BEREAVED

GRIM

Despairing

Dejected

Grief-stricken

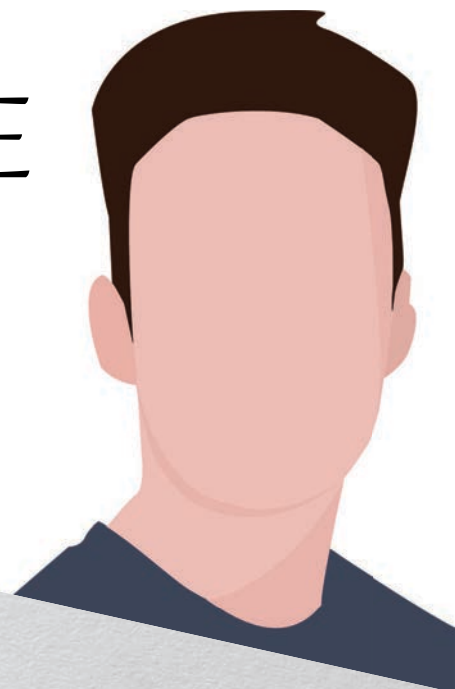
Troubled

Sorrowful

SHAKEN



STAGE OF GRIEF ACCEPTANCE



"This is my reality. I choose to accept it and
move forward."

peace

serenity

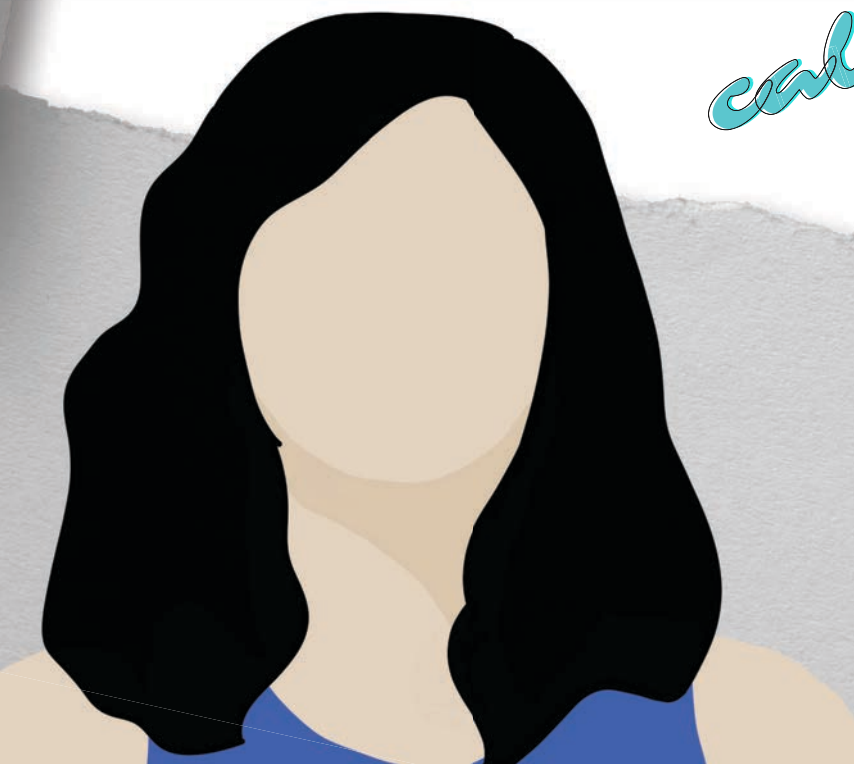
breathe

QUIET

ACCEPTANCE

calm

→ believe →



5 STAGES OF GRIEF

“The five stages - denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance - are a part of the framework that makes up our learning to live with the one(s) we lost. They are tools to help us frame and identify what we may be feeling. But they are not stops on some linear timeline in grief.”

-Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

- ☐ DENIAL
- ☐ ANGER
- ☐ BARGAINING
- ☐ DEPRESSION
- ☐ ACCEPTANCE

Exercise: Which of the 5 stages of grief have you experienced? Check off each applicable stage on the left and then write about it below and on the following page.

DENIAL:

ANGER:

BARGAINING:

DEPRESSION:

ACCEPTANCE:

FOUR TASKS OF MOURNING

Psychologist William Worden proposed that grief does not progress through stages. He suggested that in order for someone to go through the grieving process, they must engage in four tasks.

1. ACCEPT the reality of the loss
2. EXPERIENCE and PROCESS the grief and pain
3. ADJUST to a world without the deceased
4. Find a way to MAINTAIN A CONNECTION to the person who died and MOVE FORWARD with your life

Exercise: Write about what each of the tasks might look like for you.

Accepting the reality of the loss

Experiencing and processing the loss

Adjusting to the loss

Maintaining a connection to the deceased while moving forward with your life

UNCOMMON GRIEF EXPERIENCES

It has been suggested that there are different categories of atypical or uncommon grief reactions.

ANTICIPATORY

Grief that occurs prior to the eventual (anticipated) death of a loved one or other significant loss.

Example: A woman who mourns for the inevitable death of her husband who is living, but terminally ill.

ABBREVIATED

Brief or shortened grief that passes on more quickly than anticipated or expected.

Example: A man shattered by divorce, but who quickly bounces back and finds that he enjoys being single and dating different women.

DELAYED

Grief that is postponed or suppressed. This may occur when a person ignores their grief to maintain control ("stay strong") for a period of time.

Example: An individual who holds it all together in order to make necessary funeral arrangements, but breaks down when there is nothing left to keep them busy.

INHIBITED

Internalized grief that is experienced without obvious signs of mourning in persons who attempt to suppress it indefinitely.

Example: A woman who doesn't acknowledge the devastation she feels after a miscarriage. She acts like it didn't happen, never speaking of it, but starts drinking a 12-pack of beer and smoking a joint every night to numb her pain.

DISENFRANCHISED

Grief that is minimized or taken less seriously by others (i.e., mourning the loss of mobility), leading to feelings of invalidation and loneliness.

Example: An individual who grieves for their beloved dog, but is told it's "just a dog" and to get a new puppy.

TRAUMATIC

Intense grief in response to significant loss that's violent, sudden, and/or accidental, leading to increased distress and strong grief reactions.

Example: A woman who experiences symptoms of both post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and grief after she witnesses her child getting hit and killed by a car.

PROLONGED

Lasting grief that leads to significant distress and impairment at work/school and/or in relationships.

Example: A man who continues to grieve for his deceased husband years after his death. He feels depressed most days and his performance at work has deteriorated significantly.

GRIEF MISCONCEPTIONS

Myth #1: Grief progresses in linear stages.

Reality: While it's sometimes true that we progress through stages as we grieve, this is not always the case. Grief is a unique process and is experienced as so.

Myth #2: There are "right" and "wrong" ways to grieve.

Reality: There are many, many different ways to grieve. Grief experiences vary, and there isn't a single right or wrong way to grieve. However, there is a difference between normal or common grief and atypical grief. Also, there are healthy and unhealthy ways to cope.

Myth #3: Time heals all wounds.

Reality: Grief is not bound by the parameters of time; it changes, but doesn't disappear. We adjust and carry on, but the grief (less raw now) remains as it becomes a part of us.

Myth #4: Everything happens for a reason.

Reality: This may be your personal belief, but it is not everyone's truth. Saying this to a person who is grieving, especially when the loss is senseless or particularly horrific, may undermine their grief.

Myth #5: "Don't cry, you need to be strong for [the deceased/your kids/mom, etc.]"

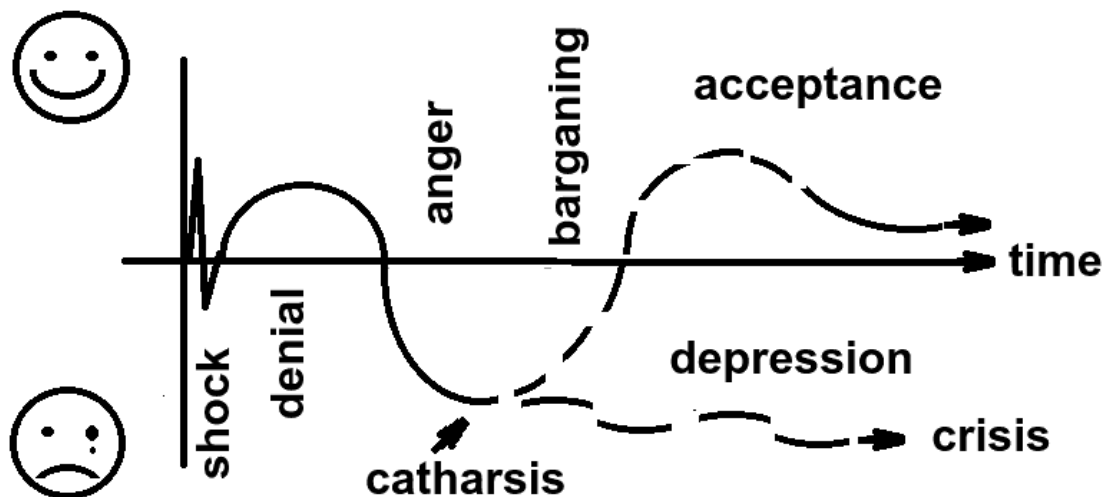
Reality: Not only do you *not* have to be "strong," the idea that mental "strength" is a measure of how well a person suppresses or ignores their emotions is **false**. If anything, it's *more* difficult to go through the process of grief and feel the pain. To share your suffering with another is to be human... and two humans together are stronger than one. Not allowing yourself to grieve is harmful, not strong.

GRIEF IS UNIQUE

The experience of grief is highly unique to the individual grieving. Responses to grief are diverse. Your grief may look completely different from someone else's, but that doesn't mean you're doing it wrong.

"THE PROCESS OF GRIEF AND LOSS IS AS UNIQUE AS YOUR PERSONAL DNA (DEOXYRIBONUCLEIC ACID); NO TWO INDIVIDUALS WILL HAVE THE SAME EXPERIENCES OR RELATIONSHIP TO GRIEF."

Asa Don Brown



Source: Kübler Ross's stages of grief.png. (2020, November 23). *Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository*. Retrieved July 14, 2021 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:K%C3%BCbler_Ross%27s_stages_of_grief.png&oldid=514545088.

CHAPTER THREE

EXERCISES, ACTIVITIES, & TIPS

"Hope
Smiles from the threshold of the year
to come,
Whispering 'it will be happier'..."

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON



EXERCISES, ACTIVITIES, & TIPS

GRIEF SELF-CARE ASSESSMENT

To assess for self-care deficiencies in four areas: **physical**, **emotional/social**, **intellectual**, and **spiritual**, read each statement and mark the option that is the most accurate. Your answers should reflect *your current* state (the present or within the past week), **not previous or typical functioning**. This is important to understand the impact of your grief and to determine what actions to take.

Score your answer: Almost Always = 3 Usually = 2 Sometimes = 1 Rarely or Never = 0
--

PHYSICAL

1) I exercise for 30 minutes or longer at least five days a week.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

2) I avoid fast food restaurants.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

3) I drink plenty of water (about half an ounce per pound of body weight) throughout the day.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

4) I avoid foods and beverages with added sugar (including soda).

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

5) I don't smoke cigarettes or use tobacco products.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

6) I avoid alcohol or drink moderately (one or fewer drinks per day).

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

*Grief Self-Care Assessment***PHYSICAL (CONT.)**

7) I don't use drugs recreationally.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

8) I eat multiple servings of fruits and vegetables most days.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

9) I avoid processed foods.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

10) I avoid red meat.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

11) I avoid fried foods.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

12) I eat moderate portions and don't overindulge.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

13) I drink black coffee and/or unsweetened tea.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

14) When taking medication, I take as prescribed (or as directed).

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

15) I see a medical provider for an annual physical exam or as recommended.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

16) I go to bed and get up around the same time every day.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

*Grief Self-Care Assessment***PHYSICAL (CONT.)**

17) I have enough energy to complete daily tasks and duties.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

18) I take care of myself when ill (i.e., staying home from work/school, getting plenty of rest, going to the doctor, etc.)

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

Total Score for Physical: _____

EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL

19) I trust and can count on close friends and family members.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

20) I talk about the things that are bothering me.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

21) I have healthy coping skills to manage stress.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

22) I am honest and authentic.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

23) I treat others with courtesy and respect.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

24) I am optimistic.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

25) I feel good about myself.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

*Grief Self-Care Assessment***EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL (CONT.)**

26) I know what my values are and I live my life accordingly.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

27) I communicate assertively (not aggressively, passively, or passive aggressively).

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

28) I (respectfully) express my wants and needs in relationships.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

29) I am flexible and adapt in new situations.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

30) I can be alone without feeling lonely and I take time to myself when needed.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

31) I am able to problem-solve and make effective decisions.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

32) I accept feedback in a non-defensive manner.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

33) I experience a wide range of emotions, but am not controlled by them.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

34) It's okay when others disagree with me.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

35) I am not defeated by my mistakes and am able to learn from them.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

*Grief Self-Care Assessment***EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL (CONT.)**

36) I set and manage realistic expectations for myself and others.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

Total Score for Emotional/Social: _____

INTELLECTUAL

37) I spend less than one hour per day watching television.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

38) I take on tasks that challenge me.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

39) I enjoy my work, a hobby, and/or classes at school.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

40) I am open to trying new things.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

41) I am open to learning new skills.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

42) I read for leisure.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

43) I engage in meaningful activities.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

44) I have a variety of interests.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

Grief Self-Care Assessment

INTELLECTUAL (CONT.)

45) When given the opportunity, I volunteer to take the lead or work with a group.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

46) I keep up with local and/or world news.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

47) I am open to traveling to different countries and/or learning about different cultures.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

48) I single-task (as opposed to giving divided attention to multiple things).

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

49) I have short-term educational, vocational, or intellectual goals.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

50) I have long-term educational, vocational, or intellectual goals.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

51) I am able to learn and grow from different perspectives.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

52) I am able to form my own opinions about things.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

53) I use critical thinking skills when faced with a dilemma.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

*Grief Self-Care Assessment***INTELLECTUAL (CONT.)**

54) I am curious about many things.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

Total Score for Intellectual: _____

SPIRITUAL

55) I believe in something greater than myself.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

56) I meditate or practice mindfulness on a daily basis.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

57) I regularly spend time outside, in nature, or in green spaces.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

58) I feel a sense of connection to others, the world, and/or a higher power.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

59) I engage in religious or spiritual services or practices (including creative expression through art, poetry, dance, music, etc.)

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

60) I pray or journal.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

61) I believe life is meaningful.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

62) I believe I have a purpose.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

*Grief Self-Care Assessment***SPIRITUAL (CONT.)**

63) I enjoy contributing and helping others.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

64) I hope to leave the world a better place.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

65) I practice gratitude.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

66) I am compassionate and empathetic.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

67) I feel in tune with my body, emotions, desires, and needs.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

68) I have personal standards and morals in life.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

69) I am generous.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

70) I take regular breaks from social media and electronic devices.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

71) I practice self-compassion and kindness.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

72) I have a desire to live up to my full potential in life.

___ Almost Always ___ Usually ___ Sometimes ___ Rarely or Never

Total Score for Spiritual: _____

Grief Self-Care Assessment

SCORING:

Almost Always = 3 Usually = 2 Sometimes = 1 Rarely or Never = 0

Add up the points in each section for 4 separate scores, specific to life area, and record them below. The highest you can score for any individual section is 54.

Physical: _____ Emotional/Social: _____ Intellectual: _____ Spiritual: _____

46 or higher = Excellent self-care

31-45 = Above average self-care with some inconsistencies

16-30 = Limited to average self-care with some inconsistencies or deficits

15 or lower = Poor self-care with severe deficits

Which area(s) did you score high? _____

Low? _____

For areas you scored low, consider increasing self-care practices and/or engaging in them more regularly. (To determine *specific* behaviors to modify/eliminate, refer to any "Rarely" or "Never" responses on the assessment.)

Are there patterns in your self-care habits? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, what are they? (For example, you may consistently exercise and eat well, but ignore medical advice, or you may address emotional needs while neglecting your potential for intellectual growth.) _____

Next, for your overall self-care score, add the totals from each section together and record the number below. A higher score indicates better self-care.

(Additional scoring information is provided on the following page.)

My Overall Self-Care Score: _____

*Grief Self-Care Assessment***SCORING (CONT.)****180 or Higher**

You have an advanced awareness of and engage in regular self-care, even as you grieve. Overall, you strive to make healthy choices for yourself to increase your capacity to heal, although it's not always easy. You generally have a positive regard for yourself and others, along with a desire to thrive and grow. Although at times you feel overwhelmed with grief and despair, you consciously choose not to give in to or suppress negative emotions.

135-179

Your self-care is above average. However, there may be one or more areas in which you do not engage in self-care or a single area with severe deficits. In your grief, you have given up on some of the things you used to do to take care of yourself. This limits your capacity to process your grief and heal. While you sometimes make healthy choices for yourself, there is room for improvement.

90-134

You sometimes practice self-care in some areas, but are not taking care of yourself in other ways. There may be one or more areas with severe deficits. Strive to take better care of yourself and to be more consistent.

45-89

You are not taking care of yourself or may be causing harm in most areas. You have unmet or unrecognized needs and wants. There are severe deficits in all or most life areas. When you ignore your self-care needs, you deter the process of healing grief.

44 or Lower

Your self-care is lacking severely. Some of your most basic needs are going unmet and you're causing yourself harm. You may be overwhelmed with grief and feel as though things will never get better. If you find you are unable to implement better self-care as time goes on, seek outside support. You won't be able to heal from your grief until basic needs are met.

BASIC SELF-CARE

Basic self-care is especially important when you're grieving, but not always easy. For example, it's easy to skip meals when you have no appetite or to omit exercise when you lack the energy.

Simple, everyday tasks can feel overwhelming. In the very least, focus on staying well/avoiding illness.

At a minimum:

- ☐ **DRINK ADEQUATE WATER**
 - ☐ **EAT NUTRITIOUS MEALS**
 - ☐ **GET ADEQUATE SLEEP**
 - ☐ **EXERCISE**
 - ☐ **SEEK MEDICAL TREATMENT WHEN ILL**
-

Once you have the basics down, consider additional ways to self-soothe, indulge, and treat yourself with kindness.

Exercise: On the next page, check off self-care ideas that you've tried and that you would like to try (or want to do more of).

Be mindful that when grieving, it can be difficult to experience pleasure or it may arouse guilt when you do - these are common experiences. If this happens to you, remind yourself that you're working towards normalcy as you adjust to this loss. Enjoyment/leisure is essential for a balanced life. And know that your joy will return **gradually** (and sneakily - you won't realize it's back until you're immersed in the moment!)

SELF-CARE IDEAS

- ☐ = I've tried it
☐ = I want to try it

QUICK TIPS	SENSATIONS & SELF-SOOTHING	INDULGE
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Scroll through photos of happy memories on social media <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Step outside and spend a few moments in nature <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Complete a (not-too-difficult) task that you've been putting off <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Tell someone how you're <i>actually</i> feeling instead of saying "fine" <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Do something playful <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Stretch <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Replace self-defeating thoughts with optimistic reframes <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Wink at someone <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Keep fresh flowers in your office/home or wear them in your hair <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Use your favorite pens to write <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Share your self-care plans with someone and brainstorm new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Use scented oils, lotions, candles, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Put on fuzzy socks <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Apply a heating pad to your neck <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Heat your towels or bathrobe in the dryer <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Use shower steamers (alternative to bath bombs!) <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Chill your face lotions/products in the fridge before using <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Repetitively tap chest or shoulders <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Walk with a book balanced on your head <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Drink cucumber or fruit-infused water <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Put something cold on your forehead <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Go to an aquarium and watch the fish <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Relax in a sauna <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Go an entire day without speaking <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Buy and use colored lightbulbs in different rooms	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Send yourself a bouquet at work <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Plan (and take!) a vacation <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Buy yourself that thing you've been wanting, but that's not something you would normally buy for yourself <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Redecorate your workspace <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Spend a night at a hotel, order room service, and relax! <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Take the day off work or school and spend it in a park <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Upgrade your cell to the latest model <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Buy a piece of furniture that makes you happy <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Declutter your life or hire someone to haul junk that's taking up space <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Treat yourself to a facial, massage, or other relaxing spa treatment <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Buy yourself a new outfit

REMEMBERING YOUR LOVED ONE

Letter to the Departed

Exercise: Write a letter to your loved one. Include in the letter anything you wish you could have said while they were here. Express lingering emotions, including anger or hurt. Indicate how you will cope with these negative emotions as you seek closure. Lastly, write about any regrets.

Additional Ideas for a letter:

- Your grief experience
- What you wish you could talk about this very moment
- Significant events that occurred since the loss/death
- Things that happened at their funeral or memorial service
- Your response to things left unsettled
- A secret
- How much they meant to you
- Apologies for past hurtful behavior
- Your plan for a life without them
- Something they would find amusing
- How you will honor their memory
- Something sentimental or meaningful (photos, magazine articles, a poem, pressed leaves/flowers, art, a recipe card, etc.)

When you are finished with the letter, you can:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Throw it away <input type="checkbox"/> Do nothing <input type="checkbox"/> Read it aloud <input type="checkbox"/> Burn it <input type="checkbox"/> Give it to a friend or family member, stamped and addressed with your address, and ask them to mail it to you in a year <input type="checkbox"/> Leave it in a public space <input type="checkbox"/> Shred it and place the shreds in a pot and then add soil and grow a plant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Put it in an unaddressed envelope and drop it in a mailbox <input type="checkbox"/> Share it in a support group <input type="checkbox"/> Frame it <input type="checkbox"/> Save it to read in the future (holiday, anniversary of death, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Bury it <input type="checkbox"/> Post it to social media <input type="checkbox"/> Read it to a therapist or trusted person <input type="checkbox"/> Keep it in a scrapbook |
|--|--|

REMEMBERING YOUR LOVED ONE

Letter to the Departed

[illegible]

Letter to the Departed (Cont.)

[illegible]

Letter to the Departed (Cont.)

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Exercise: Honor your loved one with poetry. Use expressive words and descriptive imagery to commemorate them and the relationship you had.

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for handwriting practice or general writing. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

REMEMBERING YOUR LOVED ONE

Living Memorial or Memorial Garden

Plant a flower or tree in honor of your loved one as a living memorial. You could also plant a small garden or flower bed to commemorate them.

"Celebration of Life" Scrapbook or Collage

Create a scrapbook or collage to celebrate and honor your loved one. Include relevant photos, letters, poems, a short bio, a list of their greatest achievements, a story, sentimental items, etc. You may also want to ask others to write a sentence or two about them for the scrapbook/collage.

Memory Box or Jar

Ask family members and close friends of the deceased to write down a few memories of them on pieces of paper or little scrolls. Place the papers in a decorated box or jar. Read one or more on special occasions. Add to the box/jar whenever a forgotten memory arises.

Memorial Website

Design a memorial website to honor the deceased. Alternatively, you could turn their social media profile into a memorial site. Ask family/friends to post a happy memory, a screenshot of a funny or touching text conversation with them, or a photo with them on their page.

Rituals

Create rituals to celebrate/honor the deceased and stay connected, such as lighting a candle for them on the anniversary of their death, traveling to a place they loved once a year on their birthday, wearing their favorite color for an entire week the week of your wedding anniversary, or placing something sentimental on their gravesite on a holiday they cherished.

Preserving Keepsakes

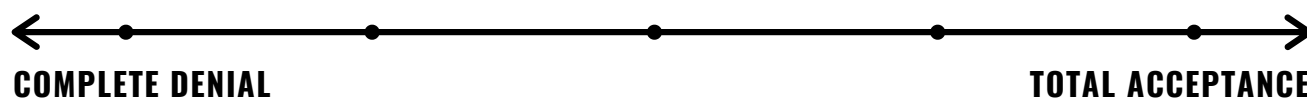
Preserve keepsakes and sentimental items. Use a glass case to display a meaningful item, frame pressed flowers from the memorial service, and/or have photos, videos, and letters digitalized or professionally printed in an photo album.

EMBRACING YOUR PAIN

Working Towards Acceptance

What does acceptance mean to you?

Where are you in your acceptance? Draw a line or **X** below.



Acceptance doesn't mean you're okay with the loss, but that you're choosing to face the truth and remain in reality.

How can you find acceptance in the face of loss?

FINDING MEANING

Enhanced Spirituality

What is your personal definition of spirituality?

Spirituality refers to the “higher self.” It involves your values and morals. It also involves the relationships and activities in your life that bring you meaning, purpose, and direction. Additionally, spirituality involves your belief in a higher power and may include your religious practices.

What relationships or activities bring you meaning and purpose?

Further Questions for Developing & Exploring Spirituality:

- How do I want to be remembered?
- What morals guide my life?
- Who am I?
- What is the meaning of life?
- What lessons is life teaching me?
- What does spiritual growth look like?
- How can I connect more deeply with others and the world?

FINDING MEANING

Post-Traumatic Growth

Post-traumatic growth (PTG) is the experience of finding new meaning and a deeper appreciation for life in the aftermath of trauma. This transformation yields newfound personal strength while fostering the desire to help others.

PTG differs from resilience in that resilience is the ability to quickly bounce back; PTG, on the other hand, happens when you struggle to survive and as a result, find new meaning and enthusiasm for life, beyond what existed prior to the loss.

An individual who is resilient is less likely to experience PTG because they're not as profoundly impacted by trauma. PTG is what occurs when a person is essentially forced to reevaluate their core beliefs as they try to make sense of what happened.

PTG has a significant positive impact on:

- Appreciation of life
- Relationships with others
- Believing in new possibilities in life
- Personal strength
- Spirituality

Factors that contribute to PTG include:

(Check the ones that you want to develop or improve)

- ☐ Social support
- ☐ Self-efficacy (believing in your own abilities)
- ☐ Deliberate reflection
- ☐ Forgiveness
- ☐ Religion/spirituality
- ☐ Optimism
- ☐ Ability to regulate emotions
- ☐ Good health and wellness practices

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH

How can I utilize my social supports?

How can I develop or enhance self-efficacy?

How can I practice meaningful reflection?

Who do I need to forgive? Why? How?

What can I do to feel connected to a higher power?

How can I develop a more optimistic worldview?

What are some ways to manage intense emotions without being ruled by them?

What health (mental or physical) issues am I struggling with now and what steps must I take to improve my health?

How can I achieve optimal wellness?

FINDING MEANING

Helping Others

In what ways can I be of service to others?

It's okay if you don't have a lot of time or energy to help others right now. The little things can be just as effective and rewarding.

Exercise: See below for a list of ideas for helping. Mark the ones you'd like to try and then create your own list on the next page.

Ideas for Helping Others

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> Donate blood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donate to charity | <input type="checkbox"/> Help a friend or loved one pack and/or move |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help an elderly or disabled neighbor with chores or errands | <input type="checkbox"/> Give up your seat on the bus or subway |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foster a pet | <input type="checkbox"/> Hold the elevator door |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leave a large tip | <input type="checkbox"/> Help a mother carry a stroller up or down the stairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Join a bone marrow registry | <input type="checkbox"/> Offer to babysit for free for a night |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer to take a photo for a stranger | <input type="checkbox"/> Buy coffee for your colleagues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help someone with their groceries | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Add coins to an expired meter | |

FINDING MEANING

Helping Others

My List for Helping Others

WHO

People I Will Help

<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
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<input type="checkbox"/>	
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HOW

Things I Will Do

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FINDING MEANING

Prayer & Meditation

Prayer and meditation can be powerful sources of connection, comfort, meaning, and hope. Prayer and meditation are also outlets for emotional pain and can ease loneliness.

WHEN PRAYING, PRAY FOR:

Comfort Hope Peace Strength to Endure Healing Love

Note: If you're not religious or do not believe in a god, try directing your prayers towards the deceased or to humanity.

To meditate, you can practice simple breath meditations or try a guided script for grief. There are many sites, apps, and podcasts that offer free meditations like the one below, which is from The Daily Meditation.

GRIEF MEDITATION SCRIPT

This grief-meditation script will help you to let go positively while honoring the person (or relationship) to release. You will need a personal object from the individual you've lost. It must be an object you are willing to let go of (literally).

- Sit in a secluded area outside (or somewhere quiet and peaceful indoors) with a meaningful object from the person or relationship. The absolute perfect spot for this is by a body of water or stream/river.
- Close your eyes and focus on your breath for 15 breaths.
- Bring the person to mind - if it's a romantic relationship, bring to mind the two of you together.
- See the person/relationship in a happy moment. Meditate on this happy moment for 15 breaths.
- Imagine saying anything you need to say to them. "I love you." "Thank you." "I am sorry for..." Take 25 breaths to do this.
- Imagine hearing them saying what you need to hear. "I forgive you." "I am still with you." Take 25 breaths to do this.
- Feel them with you as you take another 10 breaths.
- Say that it is time to move on, but that you are moving on with love and gratitude.
- Let go of the personal object. If you are by water, release it into the water and say "I release you."
- Express gratitude for this meditation.

Source: The Daily Meditation (www.thedailymeditation.com/meditation-for-grief)

Prayer & Meditation (Cont.)

MEDITATION FOR GRIEVING

Whenever you find yourself feeling overwhelmed with grief for the loss of a loved one, take a few minutes to sit in stillness by following these meditation steps.

- Find a comfortable place to sit upright where you won't be disturbed for 15 to 20 minutes. Make yourself comfortable with pillows or a blanket.
- Begin to breathe slowly and deeply, and place your attention on how you are feeling—both emotionally and physically. Try not to analyze what you are feeling and rather, just be in the experience. Acknowledge your emotions in a gentle and loving way.
- Imagine the face of the person you are grieving. You may think of it as a manifestation of their spirit or just see it as a memory in your mind.
- Now, consider anything that needs to be said or forgiven and begin to have a conversation with them. Visualize this happening in your mind, now. Spend a few minutes saying whatever it is that you need to say from your heart. Then hear them saying whatever they need to say to you from their heart. Tell them you forgive them and hear them tell you that they forgive you, too. Focus on the conversation taking place in a loving and compassionate way—a giving and receiving of open, loving communication with this person.
- Next, focus in on any one of the most positive memories you can bring to mind with this person and immerse yourself in this memory. Relive the happy, fun times and the deep connections that you shared, knowing that what allows grief to release is positive, happy moments.

When you are finished, take a few slow, deep breaths. Sit quietly for a few minutes and bring your meditation to an end. Do this meditation as often as you need to and know that you can always return to this space whenever you want to feel at peace.

Source: Chopra (www.chopra.com/articles/healing-after-loss-meditation-for-grieving)

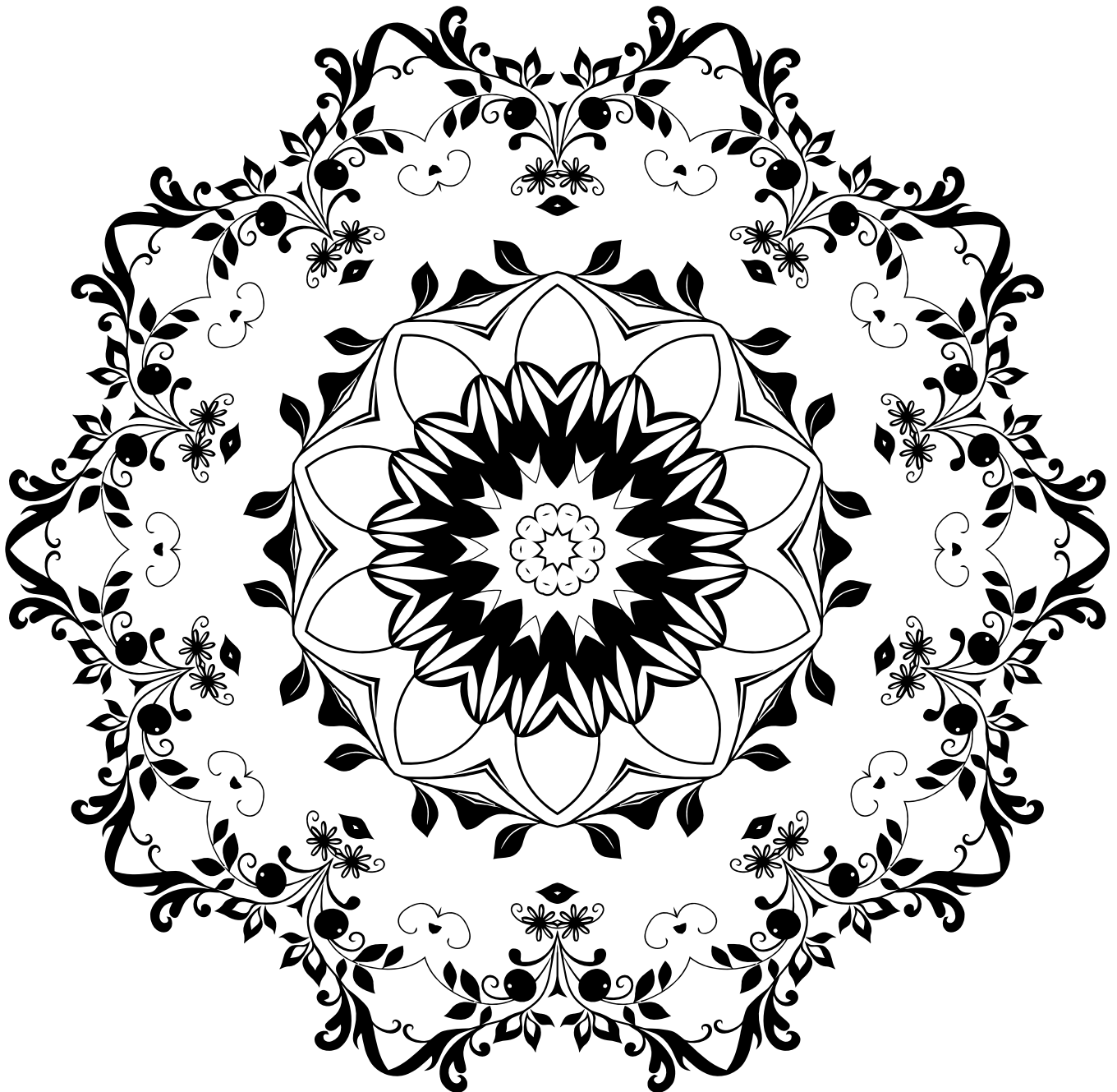
CREATIVE & SOOTHING OUTLETS

Relaxing Mandala Coloring Designs

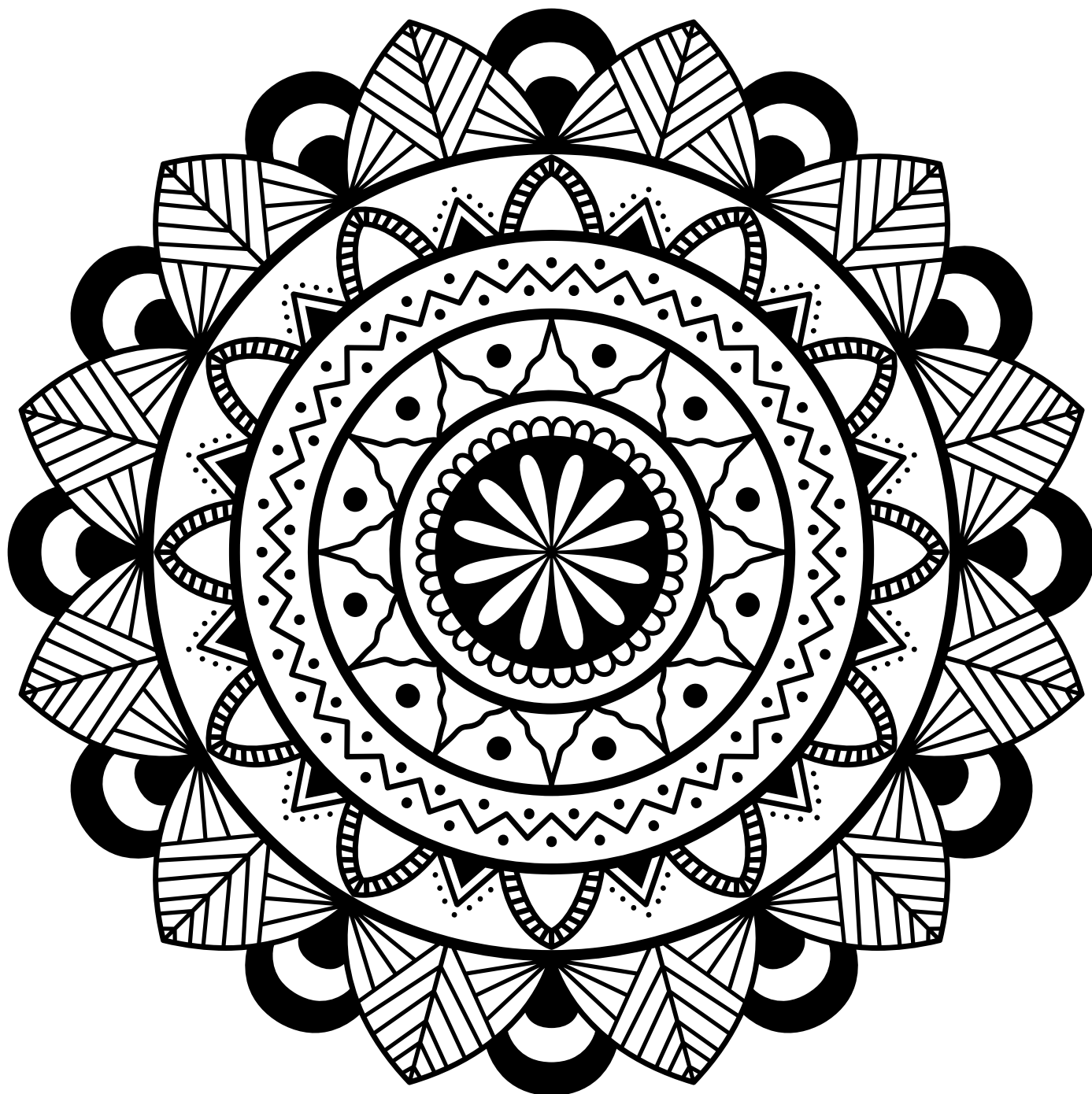
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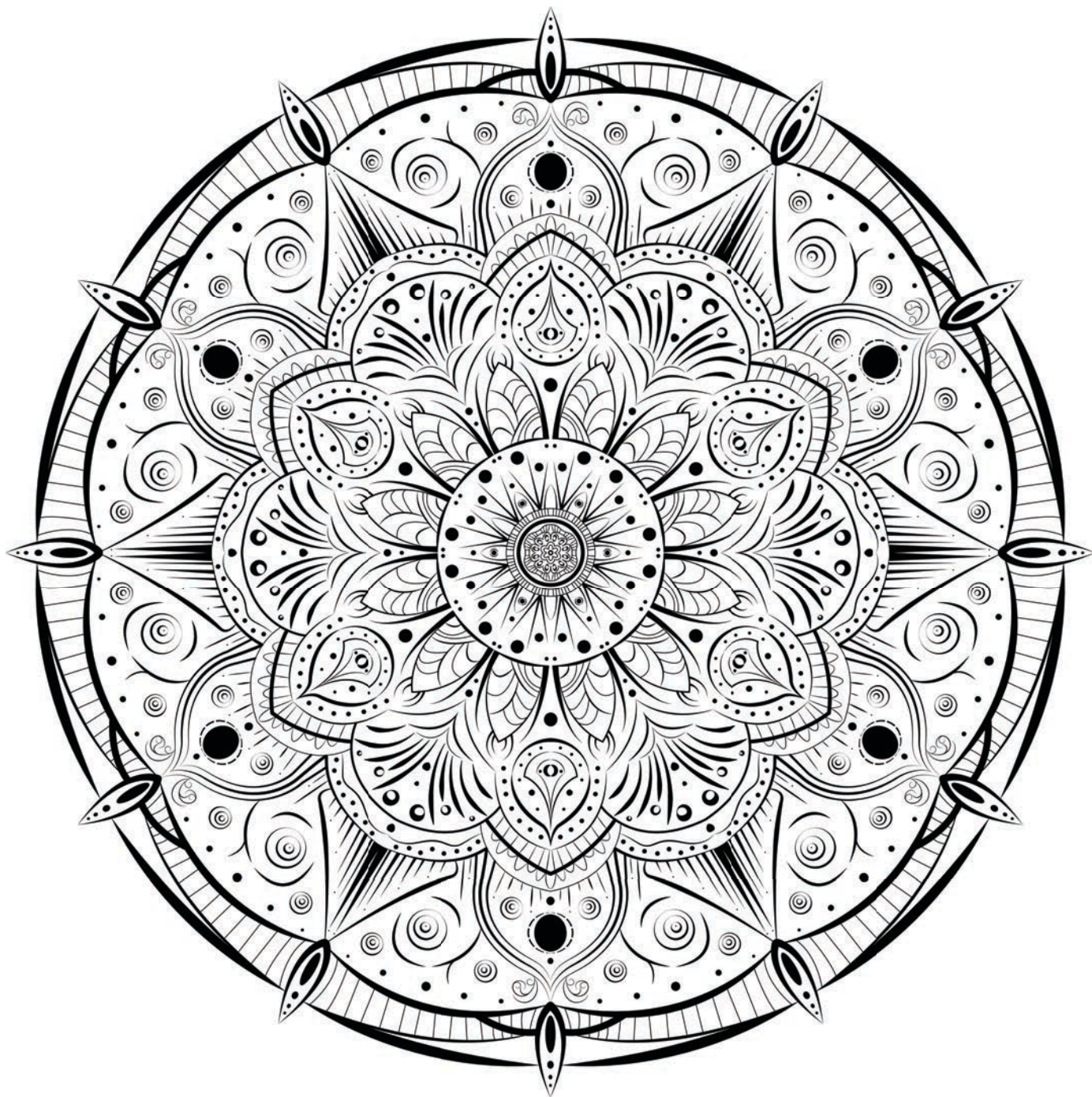
FOR PERSONAL USE



FREE  CONTENT



FREE  CONTENT



CREATIVE & SOOTHING OUTLETS

Nature

Spending time in nature can be both therapeutic and spiritual. Green spaces have the power to uplift and heal. According to Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt, a grief expert and educator, nature has the capacity to steady and calm. It also softens the pain of grief.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness has been linked to reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety, and decreased stress levels. When you use your senses to engage in the present and remain fully aware of self or surroundings, you are being mindful. When grieving, the practice of mindfulness allows you to connect with your body and recognize the physical symptoms of grief. It can also help you to regulate your emotions or ground you when you feel disconnected. Mindfulness may help you to process your grief and heal.

Journaling

Journaling is a powerful tool for reflection and expression. Consider keeping a grief journal to write about your grief journey or to preserve memories. You may also choose to write in journal as though you're writing to the deceased. Use your journal for poetry, stories, and gratitude lists. Another idea is to write "future chapters" of your life. Keep the focus on positive things to come.

Art

Art is a powerful form of expression. Research links art and creative expression to mental wellness, increased positive emotions, and reduced levels of depression, stress, guilt, and grief. Art provides an innovative outlet for sharing and releasing grief, especially grief feelings that have been suppressed or that feel too painful to otherwise let out, and is a means of mourning a loss. Art may also provide temporary relief as a distraction from overwhelming pain. Additionally, you can also use art to create a memorial and then dedicate your work to the deceased.

Dance & Movement

Dance and movement allow your body to express what words cannot. Research indicates that dancing and dance therapy may improve physical and mental health, reduce pain, improve gait and balance, reduce stress, and even reverse signs of aging in the brain. Dance allows you to release pain and it awakens you from numbness. Dance therapy may also help to relieve tension and anxiety.

Music

Music is another powerful form of creative expression. Listening to or playing music can evoke strong emotions and help you to connect with feelings you weren't aware you had. Music and music therapy may reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety, and PTSD.

Massage

Massage therapy is not only relaxing; it may reduce pain and improve your health. Some research indicates that massage can help fight stress. What's more, human touch is soothing; therapeutic massage may provide consolation, much-needed rest, and relaxation when grieving a loss.

Light Therapy

Light therapy can help to reduce symptoms of depression and seasonal affect disorder. It may also alleviate symptoms of PTSD. Some research indicates that light therapy helps with insomnia. Consider this treatment if you have co-existing depression, bipolar disorder, PTSD, or insomnia.

Aromatherapy

Essential oils are pleasant and soothing. When inhaled, the scent travels to the brain, signaling certain receptors associated with emotion. If you enjoy scented oils, consider using them to self-soothe or relax. Aromatherapy may even help reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety when used in conjunction with massage or other alternative therapies.

FINDING SUPPORT

Where Can I Find Support?

SELF-HELP LITERATURE

The "Recommended Resources" section in this workbook provides a list of suggested books and websites. You can also find free guides and booklets online via search engine.

HOTLINES

Crisis hotlines (or text lines) provide immediate support, especially if you feel like harming yourself or are thinking about suicide. If you are in need of emotional support, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

ADDITIONAL HOTLINES & HELPLINES

Crisis Text Line (text "HOME")	741-741
Samaritans Helpline	1-877-870-4673
United Way	2-1-1
Disaster Distress Helpline	1-800-985-5990
NAMI HelpLine	1-800-950-6264
SAMHSA's National Helpline	1-800-622-4357
National Parent Helpline	1-855-427-2736
First Candle Griefline	1-800-221-7437
National Domestic Violence Hotline	1-800-799-7233
National Sexual Assault Hotline	1-800-656-4673
National Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-422-4453
LGBT National Hotline	1-888-843-4564
Trans Lifeline	1-877-565-8860
TrevorLifeLine (or text "START" to 678-678)	1-866-488-7386

ONLINE COMMUNITIES, FORUMS, & CHATROOMS

In addition to reading materials and tips from websites or blogs, you can find online support through bereavement communities (including Facebook groups and email support), forums, and chatrooms.

AARP Grief & Loss Forum

www.community.aarp.org/t5/Grief-Loss/bd-p/GriefLoss

Alliance of Hope Community Forum

allianceofhope.org/find-support/community-forum/

Cake Forum

joincake.com/forum/

The Compassionate Friends

compassionatefriends.org/find-support/online-communities

GRASP Facebook Group

grasphelp.org/community/joining-us-facebook/

Grief Anonymous

griefanonymous.com/facebook-groups/

Grief Healing Discussion Groups

griefhealingdiscussiongroups.com

Grief In Common

griefincommon.com

GriefNet.org

griefnet.org

Grieving.com

forums.grieving.com

MISS Foundation Online Support Group Forums

missfoundation.org/grieving/

Modern Loss

modernloss.com

My Grief Angels Online Forums

mygriefangels.org/forums-by-loss.html

Online Grief Support

onlinegriefsupport.com

Open To Hope

opentohope.com

Pet Loss Grief Support Message Board

petlossmessageboard.com

TAPS

taps.org/onlinecommunity

Widowed Village

soaringspirits.org/programs/widowed-village/

Widowers on Reddit

reddit.com/r/widowers/

SOCIAL MEDIA

Sharing your grief on social media is a way to connect with others and receive support. The condolences you receive will bring you comfort and help you to feel less alone.

SUPPORT GROUPS

You can find an in-person support group at a funeral home, hospital, or church. You could also attend a virtual support group.

Virtual Grief Support Groups:

- Actively Moving Forward (healgrief.org/actively-moving-forward/young-adult-grief/)
- First Candle (firstcandle.org/online-support-groups/)
- GriefShare (griefshare.org)
- Hand to Hold (handtohold.org/nicu-family-support/nicu-family-support-groups/)
- Rainbows (rainbows.org/services/find-a-group)

APPS

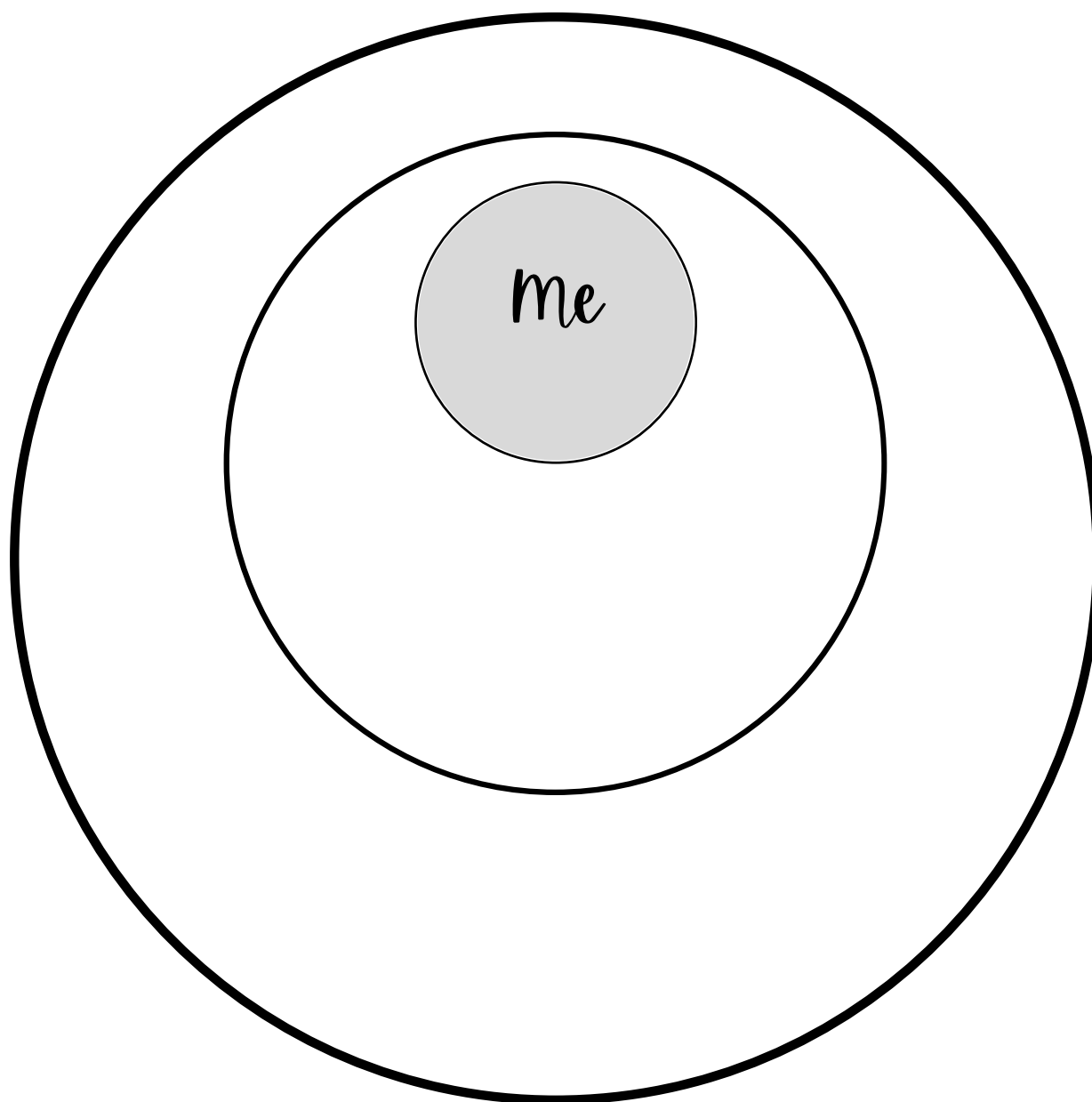
There are plenty of apps designed to help with symptoms of PTSD, depression, stress, insomnia, and more.

Recommended (highly-rated and therapist-approved) apps for grief, trauma, depression, stress, and insomnia:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| □ Actively Moving Forward | □ myStrength |
| □ Calm | □ PTSD Coach |
| □ CBT-i Coach | □ Sanvello: Depression & Anxiety |
| □ Happify | □ Smiling Mind |
| □ Headspace | □ SuperBetter |
| □ MoodKit | □ Virtual Hope Box |
| □ MoodMission | |

Circle of Support

Who is in your circle? Write down the names of people in your support network. Include an inner, middle, and outer ring. The inner ring is for you and the middle ring is for the people you are closest to and can count on the most (family and close friends). The outer ring is for supplemental supports including co-workers, online grief communities, church members, etc.



My Support Network

Use the spaces below to write the names and numbers of people from your support network who you can call when you're struggling.

[illegible]

ADDITIONAL TIPS

- ☐ Socialize
- ☐ Take breaks from your grief and sadness
- ☐ Show others photos of the deceased or sentimental items
- ☐ Identify emotions as you experience them
- ☐ Schedule time-limited mourning sessions each day
- ☐ Talk about your loved one
- ☐ Express your grief
- ☐ Come up with a plan (and backup plans) for managing holidays, anniversaries, and other difficult times
- ☐ Schedule time for self-care or pleasant activities
- ☐ Let your emotions out
- ☐ Replace unrealistic thoughts with reality-based statements
- ☐ Stick to a regular schedule as much as possible and structure your days
- ☐ Explore negative emotions
- ☐ Utilize a variety of coping skills
- ☐ Engage in activities/hobbies you previously enjoyed or try new ones
- ☐ Practice self-forgiveness
- ☐ Make a list of your regrets and share with a trusted person
- ☐ Use positive self-talk and affirmations
- ☐ Talk to others who have experienced loss and ask them how they got through it
- ☐ Visit the gravesite of the deceased
- ☐ Commit to reengaging with family, friends, and colleagues

GRIEF & LOSS QUOTES

"The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not 'get over' the loss of a loved one; you will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same nor would you want to."

ELIZABETH KÜBLER-ROSS

"Those we love never truly leave us. There are things that death cannot touch."

JACK THORNE

"Grief is the price we pay for love."

QUEEN ELIZABETH II

"It takes strength to face our sadness and to grieve and to let our grief and our anger flow in tears when they need to. It takes strength to talk about our feelings and to reach out for help and comfort when we need it."

FRED ROGERS

"GIVEN THE CHOICE BETWEEN THE EXPERIENCE OF PAIN AND NOTHING, I WOULD CHOOSE PAIN."

William Faulkne

"Embrace your grief. For there, your soul will grow."

CARL JUNG

"Life is full of grief, to exactly the degree we allow ourselves to love other people."

ORSON SCOTT CARD

CHAPTER FOUR

SEEKING PROFESSIONAL HELP

"Healing takes time, and asking for help is a courageous step."

MARISKA HARGITAY



SEEKING PROFESSIONAL HELP

WHEN SHOULD I SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP?

If you are having difficulty functioning after a significant period has passed since the loss (12 or more months), it may be time to consider professional help.

Prolonged (or complicated) grief is characterized by ***persistent intense yearning*** and ***longing or preoccupation with thoughts and memories of the person who died*** along with:

- ☐ Difficulty accepting the death
- ☐ Experiencing disbelief or emotional numbness
- ☐ Bitterness or anger
- ☐ Self-blame
- ☐ Excessive avoidance of reminders of the death
- ☐ Desire to die to be with the deceased
- ☐ Difficulty trusting others
- ☐ Feeling alone or detached
- ☐ A sense of meaninglessness
- ☐ Feeling a part of you died with your loved one
- ☐ Difficulty or reluctance to pursue interests

If you were with your loved one when they died and/or if it was sudden, violent, or accidental, you have an increased risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which may require professional treatment.

Grief-related PTSD symptoms include:

- Persistent, invasive, and/or intrusive and distressing memories of the loss
- Frequent disturbing nightmares about the loss
- Re-experiencing the loss as though it is happening (i.e., flashbacks)
- Persistent or intense distress when things, events, or thoughts remind you of the loss
- Intense physical reactions to things, events, or thoughts that remind you of the loss
- Avoiding (or attempting to avoid) anything that reminds you of the loss, including:
 - Memories
 - Thoughts
 - Emotions
 - People
 - Places
 - Things
 - Conversations
 - Activities
 - Situations
- Difficulty remembering certain aspects of the loss
- Negative thoughts/beliefs about self, others, and/or the world
- Blaming self or others
- Persistent negative emotional state
- Inability to experience positive emotions (such as happiness, joy, satisfaction, love, etc.)
- Loss of interest in things and/or events you once enjoyed
- Inability to connect with others
- Irritability, aggression, and/or angry overreactions
- Reckless or self-destructive behavior
- Constantly feeling on edge and alert
- Over-exaggerated startle response
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep

Exercise: Traumatic Grief Assessment

1. Were you with your loved one when they died or was the death sudden, violent, or accidental?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Are you experiencing any symptoms of PTSD? (See page 74)

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. If you are experiencing PTSD symptoms, are they causing significant distress or impairment in your life?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

4. If you are experiencing PTSD symptoms, have they been occurring for a month or longer?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

If you answered "Yes" to at least one of the above questions, you may want to consider further assessment. If you answered "Yes" to all of the above questions, strongly consider further assessment and/or consult with a licensed mental health professional (therapist, counselor, social worker, psychologist, or psychiatrist).

Exercise: Depression Screening Tool

If you're experiencing symptoms of depression in addition to grief, you may require professional treatment. The following questions assess for depression.

In the past two weeks, have you experienced:

Depressed or sad mood most of the day, nearly every day?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Loss of interest or pleasure in nearly all activities most of the day, nearly every day?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "No" to both questions, your current risk of depression is low. If you answered "Yes" to at least one of the above questions, continue to the next section.

In the past two weeks, have you experienced:

Significant weight loss or significant changes in appetite?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Insomnia or oversleeping nearly every night?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Restlessness or doing things more slowly than you normally would?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Fatigue or loss of energy nearly every day?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or intense guilt nearly every day?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Inability to concentrate or indecisiveness nearly every day?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Intrusive and frequent thoughts of death or suicide or planning to end your life?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "Yes" to five or more questions (total), you are at increased risk for depression. Treatment for depression may include therapy or antidepressant medication.

If you are having thoughts of suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

PROFESSIONAL GRIEF TREATMENT

Other questions to ask yourself to assess the need for professional treatment:

- _____ Does it feel like something just isn't right?
 - _____ Am I unable to share or talk about my grief with others?
 - _____ Am I engaging in substance use or other risky behaviors to cope?
 - _____ Am I harming others in my grieving process?
-

Role of a Grief Therapist

- To help individuals adjust to loss in a healthy way
- To guide individuals through the various stages of grief
- To potentially diagnose prolonged grief disorder and refer as needed
- To provide an important service to the community and church in times of tragedy

Source: Role Of The Certified Grief Counselor – AIHCP

Treatment Options

Promising treatments for prolonged grief, stress, and trauma include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Cognitive Therapy (CT), Complicated Grief Treatment (CGT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Pro-Change® Stress Management, Prolonged Exposure (PE) Therapy, Somatic Experiencing (SE), and Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT).

In addition to therapy, you may want to consider attending a therapist-led workshop or seminar. There are also online counseling services and web-based programs available.

Before enrolling in an online course, check that there is scientific evidence to back up its effectiveness. A few effective web-based programs for treating depression and insomnia are Beating the Blues, Managing Your Mood, MoodGYM, RESTORE, and Space from Depression.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

“Mourning in our culture isn’t always easy. Normal thoughts and feelings connected to loss are typically seen as unnecessary and even shameful. Instead of encouraging mourners to express themselves, our culture’s unstated rules would have them avoid their hurt and ‘be strong.’ But grief is not a disease. Instead, it’s the normal, healthy process of embracing the mystery of the death of someone loved. If mourners see themselves as active participants in their healing, they will experience a renewed sense of meaning and purpose in life.”

DR. ALAN WOLFELT

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

BOOKS

Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief (2000) by Pauline Boss, Ph.D. (176 pages)

Bearing the Unbearable: Love, Loss, and the Heartbreaking Path of Grief (2017) by Joanne Cacciatore, Ph.D. (248 pages)

The Courage to Grieve: The Classic Guide to Creative Living, Recovery, and Growth Through Grief (2008) by Judy Tatelbaum (192 pages)

Dark Nights of the Soul: A Guide to Finding Your Way Through Life's Ordeals (2005) by Thomas Moore (329 pages)

Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief (2020) by David Kessler (272 pages)

Good Grief: A Companion for Every Loss (2019) by Granger E. Westberg (80 pages)

The Grief Club: The Secret to Getting Through All Kinds of Change (2006) by Melody Beattie (368 pages)

Grief Day by Day: Simple Practices and Daily Guidance for Living with Loss (2018) by Jan Warner (272 pages)

A Grief Observed (2001) by C. S. Lewis (96 pages)

The Grief Recovery Handbook, 20th Anniversary Expanded Edition: The Action Program for Moving Beyond Death, Divorce, and Other Losses including Health, Career, and Faith (2009) by John W. James & Russell Friedman (240 pages)

Healing After Loss: Daily Meditations for Working Through Grief (1994) by Martha Whitmore Hickman (384 pages)

How Can It Be All Right When Everything Is All Wrong? (1999) by Lewis Smedes (192 pages)

How to Go On Living When Someone You Love Dies (1991) by Therese Rando (338 pages)

How to Survive the Loss of a Love (2006) by Melba Colgrove, Ph.D., Harold H. Bloomfield, MD, & Peter McWilliams (208 pages)

It's OK That You're Not OK: Meeting Grief and Loss in a Culture That Doesn't Understand (2017) by Megan Divine (280 pages)

I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye: Surviving, Coping and Healing After the Sudden Death of a Loved One (2008) by Brook Noel & Pamela D. Blair, Ph.D. (292 pages)

A New Normal: Learning to Live with Grief and Loss (2017) by Darlene F. Cross (92 pages)

No Time for Goodbyes: Coping with Sorrow, Anger, and Injustice After a Tragic Death, 7th ed. (2014) by Janice Harris Lord (240 pages)

On Grief and Grieving: Finding the Meaning of Grief Through the Five Stages of Loss (2014) by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross & David Kessler (272 pages)

Permission to Mourn: A New Way to Do Grief (2014) by Tom Zuba (121 pages)

Resilient Grieving: Finding Strength and Embracing Life After a Loss That Changes Everything (2017) by Lucy Hone, Ph.D. (256 pages)

Tuesdays with Morrie (2002) by Mitch Albom (192 pages)

Unattended Sorrow: Recovering from Loss and Reviving the Heart (2019) by Stephen Levine (240 pages)

When Bad Things Happen to Good People (2004) by Harold S. Kushner (176 pages)

When the Bough Breaks: Forever After the Death of a Son or Daughter (1998) by Judith Bernstein (230 pages)

When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times (2016) by Pema Chodron (176 pages)

The Wild Edge of Sorrow: Rituals of Renewal and the Sacred Work of Grief (2015) by Francis Weller (224 pages)

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN & TEENS

Badger's Parting Gifts (1992) by Susan Varley (32 pages, ages 4-8)

The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: A Story of Life for All Ages (1982) by Leo Buscaglia (32 pages, ages 4-8)

Healing Your Grieving Heart for Kids: 100 Practical Ideas (Healing Your Grieving Heart Series) (2001) by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. (128 pages, ages 12-14)

Healing Your Grieving Heart for Teens: 100 Practical Ideas (Healing Your Grieving Heart Series) (2001) by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. (128 pages, ages 12-18)

The Invisible String (2018) by Patrice Karst (40 pages, ages 4-8)

The Memory Box: A Book About Grief (2017) by Joanna Rowland (32 pages, ages 4-8)

I Miss You: A First Look at Death (2000) by Pat Thomas (32 pages, ages 4-7)

Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing After Loss (2005) by Pat Schwiebert & Chuck DeKlyen (56 pages, ages 8-12 years)

When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death (Dino Tales: Life Guides for Families) (1998) by Laurie Krasny Brown (32 pages, ages 4-8)

When Someone Very Special Dies: Children Can Learn to Cope with Grief (1996) by Marge Heegaard (32 pages, ages 9-12)

When Something Terrible Happens: Children Can Learn to Cope with Grief (1992) by Marge Heegaard (32 pages, ages 4-8)

Where's Jess: For Children Who Have a Brother or Sister Die (1982) by Marvin Johnson (24 pages, ages 6-8)

WEBSITES

General Information & Support

Association for Death Education and Counseling
adec.org

At A Loss (UK)
ataloss.org

Bereavement Advice Centre (UK)
bereavementadvice.org

Bereavement Services Association (UK)
bsauk.org

Center for Loss & Life Transition
centerforloss.com

Cruse Bereavement Care (UK)
cruse.org.uk

Domani for Grief
domaniforgrief.com

The Elisabeth Kübler-Ross Foundation
ekrfoundation.org

Evermore
live-evermore.org

Grief.com
grief.com

Grief Anonymous
griefanonymous.com

Grief Dialogues
griefdialogueseducation.com

Grief Haven
griefhaven.org

Grief Healing
griefhealing.com

Grief in Common
griefincommon.com

GriefNet
griefnet.org

Grief Resource Network
griefresourcenetwork.com

Grief Share
griefshare.org

Grief Speaks Out
griefspeaksout.net

The Grief Toolbox
thegriefftoolbox.com

HealGrief
healgrief.org

Open to Hope
opentohope.com

Recover from Grief
recover-from-grief.com

Speaking Grief
speakinggrief.org

Webhealing
webhealing.com

What's Your Grief?
whatsyourgrief.com

Grieving Children, Youth, & Families

The Alcove Center for Grieving Children & Families
thealcove.org

Child Bereavement UK
childbereavementuk.org

Childhood Bereavement Network (UK)
childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk

Coalition to Support Grieving Students
grievingstudents.org

The Compassionate Friends
compassionatefriends.org

Dougy Center
dougy.org

Grief Encounter (UK)
griefencounter.org.uk

Hope Again (UK)
hopeagain.org.uk

National Alliance for Children's Grief
childrengrieve.org

Sesame Street in Communities: Helping Kids Grieve
sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/grief/

Twinless Twins Support Group International
twinlesstwins.org

Grieving Parents

Alive Alone
alivealone.org

Bereaved Parents of the USA

bereavedparentsusa.org

COPE Foundation

copefoundation.org

Courageous Parents Network

courageousparentsnetwork.org

Helping Parents Heal

helpingparentsheal.org

National Organization of Parents Of Murdered Children

pomc.org

Project Grace

project-grace.org

Pregnancy, Stillborn, & Infant Loss

First Candle

firstcandle.org

Miscarriage Matters, Inc.

mymiscarriagematters.org

MISS Foundation

missfoundation.org

Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance

plida.org

Pregnancy Loss Support Program

pregnancyloss.org

Sands: Miscarriage, Stillbirth, & Newborn Death Support (AU)

sands.org.au

Share Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support, Inc.

nationalshare.org

Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Charity (Sands - UK)
sands.org.uk

Grieving Spouses

Life as a Widower
lifeasawidower.com

The Sisterhood of Widows
sisterhoodofwidows.com

Widowed and Young (WAY)
widowedandyoung.org.uk

Widow Might
widowmight.org

Widow Net
widownet.com

Widowed Parent
widowedparent.org

Suicide Loss

Alliance of Hope
allianceofhope.org

American Association of Suicidology (AAS)
suicidology.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
afsp.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Samaritans (Greater Boston and MetroWest, Massachusetts)
samaritanshope.org

Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE)

save.org

Suicide Prevention Resource Center

sprc.org

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (UK)

uksobs.org

Survivors of Suicide Loss

soslsd.org

Overdose Loss

Bereaved Through Alcohol and Drugs (BEAD - UK)

beadproject.org.uk

Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP)

grasphelp.org

Overdose Lifeline

overdoselifeline.org

Support After a Death by Overdose

sadod.org

Sudden, Accidental, & Violent Loss

AirCraft Casualty Emotional Support Services (ACCESS)

accesshelp.org

Disaster Action (UK)

disasteraction.org.uk

Family Liaison & Co-ordination of Support Services (FLACSS - UK)

flacss.co.uk

Road Peace (UK)

roadpeace.org

Sudden (UK)

sudden.org

Support After Murder and Manslaughter (SAMM National - UK)

samm.org.uk

Survivors of Violent Loss Network

svlp.org

Violent Death Bereavement Society

vdbb.org

Military & Law Enforcement

American Gold Star Mothers

goldstarmoms.com

American Widow Project

americanwidowproject.org

Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.)

concernsofpolicesurvivors.org

National Military Family Bereavement Study

militarysurvivorstudy.org

Society of American Widows

militarywidows.org

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

taps.org

Vets4Warriors

vets4warriors.com

Life-Changing Illness

AIDS Bereavement and Resiliency Program of Ontario

abrpo.org

American Cancer Society
cancer.org

American Childhood Cancer Organization (ACCO)
acco.org

CancerCare
cancercare.org

Hospice Foundation of America (HFA)
hospicefoundation.org

National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO)
nhpco.org

National Hospice Foundation (NHF)
nationalhospicefoundation.org

Pet Loss

Animals in Our Hearts
animalsinourhearts.com

Association for Pet Loss & Bereavement
aplb.org

I Loved My Pet
ilovedmypet.com

In Memory of Pets
in-memory-of-pets.com

Pet Loss Help
petlosshelp.org

Pet Loss Matters
pet-loss-matters.com

The Pet Loss Support Page
pet-loss.net

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COPING WITH LOSS WORKBOOK

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