

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:

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?

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

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 or what are you grieving? What happened? When?)

What are your thoughts and feelings surrounding the loss?

How have you been coping with the loss?

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

What might your grief be trying to communicate or teach you?

GRIEF TYPES

It has been suggested that there are different categories of common grief.

ANTICIPATORY

Grief that occurs prior to the eventual or anticipated 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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: _____

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: _____

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"/> Use scented oils, lotions, candles, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Send yourself a bouquet at work
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Step outside and spend a few moments in nature	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Put on fuzzy socks	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Plan (and take!) a vacation
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Complete a (not-too-difficult) task that you've been putting off	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Apply a heating pad to your neck	<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"/> Tell someone how you're <i>actually</i> feeling instead of saying "fine"	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Heat your towels or bathrobe in the dryer	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Redecorate your workspace
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Do something playful	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Use shower steamers (alternative to bath bombs!)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Spend a night at a hotel, order room service, and relax!
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Stretch	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Chill your face lotions/products in the fridge before using	<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"/> Replace self-defeating thoughts with optimistic reframes	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Repetitively tap chest or shoulders	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Upgrade your cell to the latest model
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Wink at someone	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Walk with a book balanced on your head	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Buy a piece of furniture that makes you happy
<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"/> Drink cucumber or fruit-infused water	<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"/> Use your favorite pens to write	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Put something cold on your forehead	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Treat yourself to a facial, massage, or other relaxing spa treatment
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Share your self-care plans with someone and brainstorm new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Go to an aquarium and watch the fish	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="radio"/> Buy yourself a new outfit
	<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	

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/

Refuge in Grief

refugeingrief.com

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:

- The Grief Recovery Method (griefrecoverymethod.com)
- My Grief Angels (mygriefangels.org)
- Grief 2 Hope (grief2hopesupport.com)
- The Compassionate Friends (compassionatefriends.org)

APPS

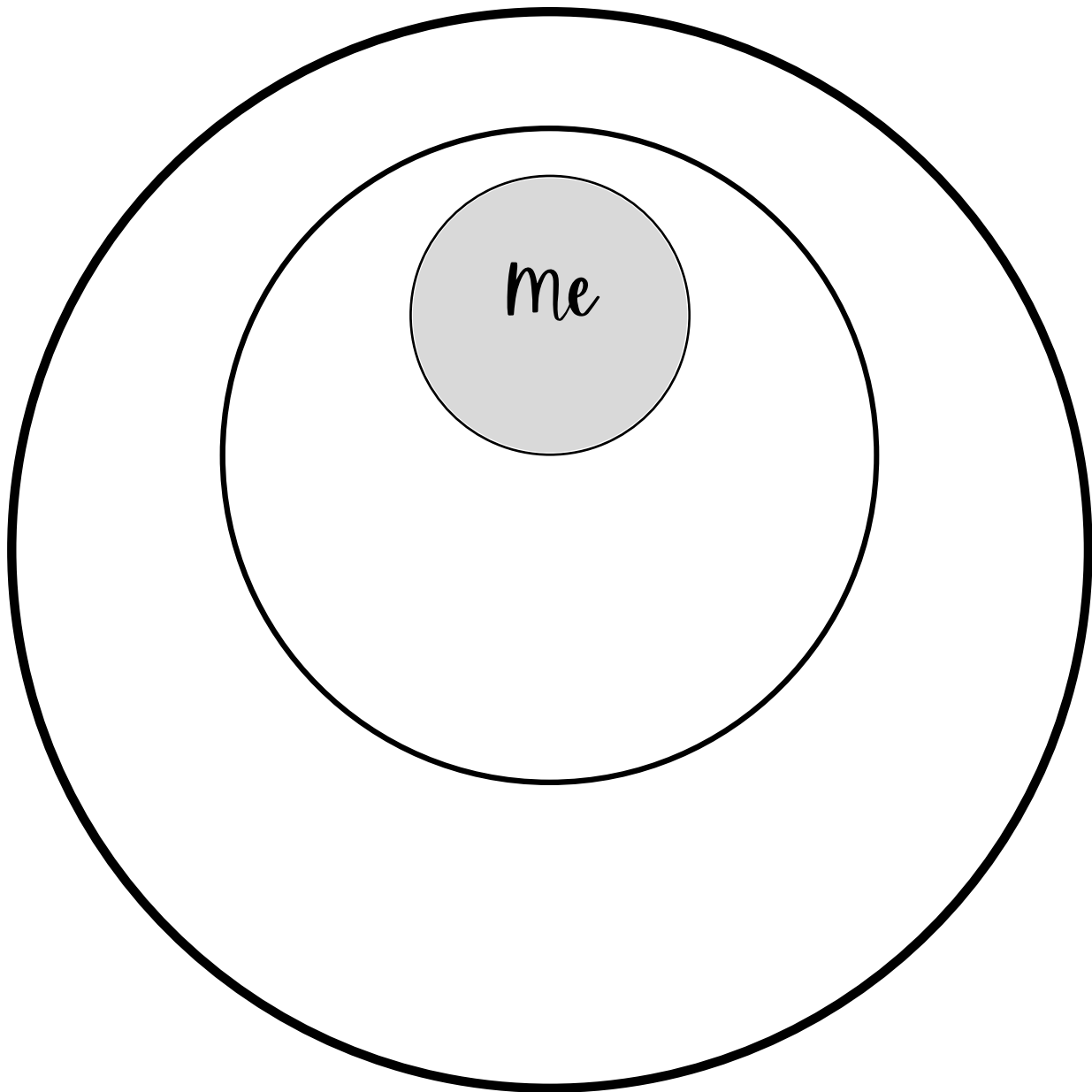
There are plenty of apps designed to help with symptoms of grief, PTSD, depression, stress, insomnia, and more.

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.



ADDITIONAL TIPS

- Socialize
- Take breaks from your grief and sadness
- Commit to reengaging with family, friends, and colleagues
- 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

GRIEF & LOSS QUOTES

"The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not 'get over' the loss; 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

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