Alberta Journeying Through Grief™

JOURNAL 2019

8 WEEK PROGRAM

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Name

Adult Attitude to Grief Scale – Week 1

Name	**Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female
Date	**Date of birth** (MM/DD/YYYY)

Please place a check mark (✔) to indicate your response to the attitudes expressed in the following statements:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. I feel able to face the pain which comes with loss.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. For me, it is difficult to switch off thoughts about the person I have lost.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I feel very aware of my inner strength when faced with grief.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I believe that I must be brave in the face of loss.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I feel that I will always carry the pain of grief with me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. For me, it is important to keep my grief under control.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Life has less meaning for me after this loss.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. I think its best just to get on with life and not dwell on this loss.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. It may not always feel like it but I do believe that I will come through this experience of grief.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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We are collecting this information according to the requirements specified in the Health Information Act of Alberta, sections 27 (1)(a), (g)

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™

Introduction

Please read this while you are waiting for class to begin.

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™ is a **Red Deer Primary Care Network program** designed by psychologists and clinical social workers with the support of family doctors.

It is an 8 week program that empowers you to understand and cope with your grief and support emotional healing. Each week you will learn new skills that will help you in your journey through your grief. We will challenge you to try the skills out during the week. You will discover a few skills that you find work the best for you. You have the biggest influence over your journey through your everyday choices.

To get the most out of this workshop:

- Make a healthy healing process your priority.
- Practice the weekly grief skills.
- Make grief skills a part of your life moving forward.
- Attend all classes.

"Our grief, though naturally difficult, is a source of energy within us. When we outwardly mourn, we unleash this amazing healing force." – Alan D. Wolfelt

Housekeeping

- Each class will have a **Vitality Break** about halfway through – this is a chance to refresh yourself – walk around, use the facilities and get some water.
- Bring your **Grief Journal** each week.

Workshop Format

The **program format** is two hours a week for 8 weeks.

Each week begins with a **Check-in and you will have opportunities to practice the skills that will help you to work through your grief.**

Group Guidelines

- Please make every effort to attend on time, if you must come late please slip in quietly and take a seat.
- If you are going to be late or miss group, call the front desk at **403.343.9100**. We will ask that you review the material you missed prior to your return if you are absent so that you can participate fully in the next class.
- Being absent for more than 2 sessions out of 8 will result in a request that you rebook into a future group.
- Treat other group members with the same courtesy that you would like to receive.
- Confidentiality – keep information that comes up in group private to the group.
- If there will be someone in the room observing, we will let you know prior to them being in the room.
- Bringing snacks/water is permitted but please dispose of garbage afterwards. Does anyone have any severe food allergies we need to be aware of so we can avoid bringing those items?
- We encourage participation in class, but private conversations are discouraged until break so that you don't miss out on learnings. These conversations can be very distracting to others; we want to be respectful to all participants.
- If you need to leave the room before break, please give us a thumbs up so we know that you are ok. If you are gone for more than 5 minutes, one of us will come to check on you.
- This is a fragrance free facility, so please be mindful of this prior to group to maintain an adequate level of hygiene and avoid wearing fragrances.
- Please turn off all cell phones or put to silence/ vibrate.
- Verbal or physical attacks on the other clients or coaches will not be tolerated in group. Please use your skills to manage angry urges. Anyone who violates this rule will be asked to leave group for that day and will be called to discuss relevant consequences.
- Other:_____.
  Is there anything else that will help you feel more comfortable or safe in the group?

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™

Week 1

Each class over the next 8 weeks will have the following **three sections**:

Understanding My Grief Journey

Self-expression

Active Healing

Grief is like a mountain climb.

- Moving through grief is not a sprint, it is a long climb – similar to a climb up a mountain.
- At the end of this group, you will be "in the climb".
- You will have a toolkit or proverbial backpack to help you move through your grief and loss. You already have some tools in your backpack.
  - The challenge is to use these tools or skills each week.
  - Challenge yourself to expand your toolkit.
  - The tools or skills only work if you use them.
- Each person's mountain is different.
- Each person will be at a different point in the climb…some at the base, some further up.
- You are not alone in your grief.

Note: Since you are each dealing with a different type of loss in this group, we acknowledge that we do not have the perfect language to express some concepts in a way that includes everyone. When we use the words "your loss," you can personalize this to your own situation (loss of a person, pet, relationship, job, physical health or others).

Where am I now?

Place an **x** on the mountain to indicate where you are in your grief journey.

Understanding My Grief Journey

Grief vs. Depression: A. Wolfelt

NORMAL GRIEF	CLINICAL DEPRESSION
You have normal grief if you…	**You may be clinically depressed if you…**
Respond to comfort and support	Do not accept support
Are often openly angry	Are irritable and complain but do not directly express anger
Relate your depressed feelings to the loss experience	Do not relate your feelings of depression to a particular life event
Can still experience moments of enjoyment in life	Exhibit an all-pervading sense of doom
Exhibit feelings of sadness and emptiness	Project a sense of hopelessness and chronic emptiness
May have transient physical complaints	Have chronic physical complaints
Express guilt over some specific aspect of the loss	Have generalized feelings of guilt
Feel a temporary loss of self-esteem	Feel a deep and ongoing loss of self-esteem

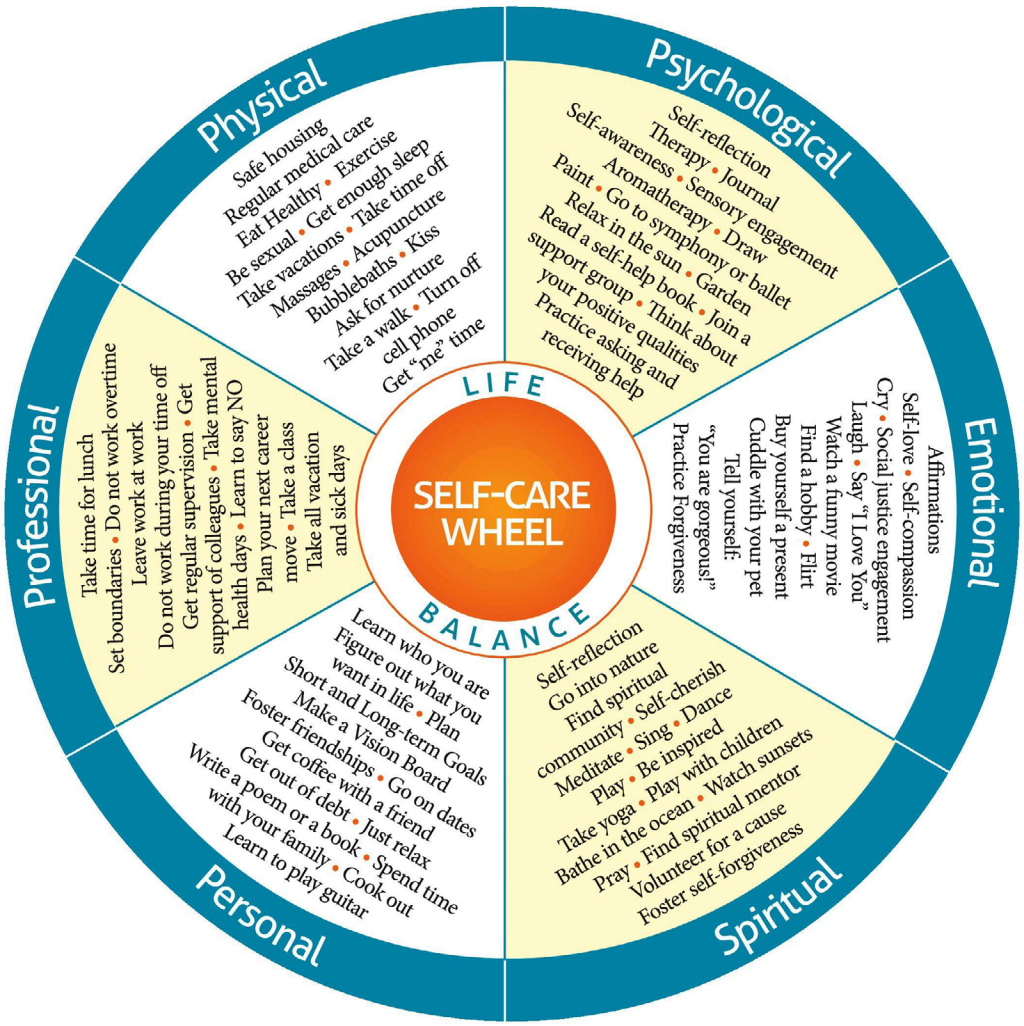
Why is it important for me to distinguish between normal grief and depression?

If you are concerned that you may be **struggling with depression**, please see one of the coaches after class.

Self-care Wheel

Self-care is encouraged during your grief journey. A Self-care Wheel allows you to explore and discover various ways to look after your well-being and pay attention to your needs.

SELF-CARE WHEEL



This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013). Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide. Copyright @ 2013 Olga Phoenix, All Rights Reserved.

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What one thing could I do this week from the Self-care Wheel to nurture myself?

Self-expression

What do I hope to get out of the group?

Active Healing

Breathing Meditation

- 5 minutes off

What did I notice before the exercise?

What did I notice after?

What did I learn?

Homework

For further exploration, check out:

- **Anxiety to calm meditations on Red Deer PCN website: www.reddeerpcn.com**
- **UCLA free guided meditations**
- **YouTube "Deep breathing"**
- **Visit your local library and ask about meditation DVDs**
- **CALM (not all of it is free)**

How do I plan to take care of myself this week?

Next week: Feel free to bring an **object** that helps you feel **linked** or **connected** to your loss.

Notes

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™

Week 2

Check-in

WEEKLY REFLECTION: How did my week go? Was there anything surprising from my Self-care Wheel last week? Did I try anything new for self-care? If yes, how was it helpful? If no, is there anything else that was helpful to me? What came up for me this week?

Understanding My Grief Journey

The Link

What is *my* link? Is it an item, place, story or thought? Something that is soothing and triggers a positive experience for me?

Take a few minutes to reflect on the link between grief and attachment. What does this mean for me?

"What we have once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose, for all that we love deeply becomes a part of us." – Helen Keller

Self-expression

Body Reaction Exercise

REFLECTION: take a few moments to reflect on the Body reaction exercise. What was that like for me?

What do/did I feel, see, smell, hear or taste?

What memories or thoughts came up as I experienced this?

What need(s) came up?

Active Healing

Journalling

Choose one or two topics to explore in my journal this week.

You can use **page 46** "How do I feel?" to help you in this process. Circle all of the emotions you feel when reflecting on a question.

Some suggestions for **Journal headings** to explore:

1. **The meaning of loss:** write down your thoughts about loss as a universal and personal experience. Focus on the unique experiences and if they have some meaning to you.
2. **Significant loss in childhood/adolescence or both:** write down your feelings about the loss as a child, reflecting on the feelings then and now. How did you make it through that tough time? In what ways do you feel the loss affected or changed you? Looking back, can you see any value in going through your loss at that time and describe in detail how it changed you as a person.
3. **Any other significant loss as an adult:** same as above except for age.
4. **Hurting:** write down your present wounds and compare them to earlier times. What are the differences?
5. **Helping:** write down what has helped you to cope with or heal your wounds.
6. **Healing:** how are you healing your current grief?
7. **Needs:** what are your current needs? What would help you be self-respecting and caring of yourself right now?
8. **Unfinished business:** what curiosities and unanswered questions do you have about your loss(es)? What was left unsaid?
9. **Now:** in what way do you currently relate to your loss(es)? What do you notice about your present experience of being here and interacting with loss(es) in the past?
10. **Beyond now:** now that you are adjusting to this different life, what plans do you have to embrace a new meaning in your life? It might include thoughts and dreams about the future.

For additional ideas, go online and type in "grief journalling."

How do I plan to take care of myself this week?

Remember to embrace the memory of my connection!

Notes

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™

Week 3

Check-in

WEEKLY REFLECTION: How did my week go? Did I try journalling? If yes, how was it helpful? If no, is there anything else that was helpful to me? What came up for me this week?

Six Needs of Mourning

1. Acknowledge the reality of the loss
2. Embrace the pain of the loss
3. Remember your loss
4. Develop a new self-identity
5. Search for meaning
6. Receive ongoing support from others

Understanding My Grief Journey

The Grief Process

Adapted from: GRIEF COUNSELING AND GRIEF THERAPY by J. William Worden, Ph.D

Grief is a **healing process**; a **normal response** when a death or loss occurs.

Each of us has **different reactions** and **varying intensity** of emotional responses – these may come and go, often described as a **"wave washing over you."** All of us move through our grief process **in our own way and at our own pace**.

Grief is **work** and can be thought of as a **back and forth** process, not simply as a steady progression. The phases outlined below are not linear. You can be going through more than one phase at the same time.

Facing the Reality of the Loss

You may feel a sense of **shock**, **disbelief** or **numbness** that the loss has actually occurred. You may secretly hope that your loss will **return** and life will go on as before. You may also have feelings of panic about what will happen to you. The task in this phase is to intellectually and emotionally integrate that your loss is **no longer physically present and part of your everyday life**.

Experiencing the Pain of Loss

Emotional and physical distress occurs. You will experience many reactions such as **sleep problems**, **physical aches**, **intense emotions** (e.g., anger, guilt, sadness). The pain and distress is like a **roller coaster** – some days are better than others. Many people find themselves asking who they are and exploring the meaning for themselves in their **new normal**. This is an **unavoidable task**. Give yourself **time** and **permission** – to **surrender to the loss** and feel the pain.

Reinvesting in Life

Your emotional and physical reactions become **less intense**, **less frequent** and **less overwhelming**. You are able to **connect** with the loss in a **new way**. As you **adjust** to a **new life**, you may need to **acquire new skills**, **relationships**, and **memories**. The **energy** used previously for **grief** may be **invested in hope for the future**.

Some people begin their grief process **before a loss occurs** – for example, grieve for what has already been lost when someone is ill and for the impending loss through death. This **anticipatory grief** sometimes can **change the process of our grief after the loss**.

REFLECT: Where do I think I am at in the process?

Self-expression

Inside and Outside Emotions

You can use page 46 to help you identify emotions/feelings for this exercise.

Why did I pick the colors I did?

What was the experience like?

What would it take to move an emotion from the inside to the outside?

What is so difficult about sharing the inside emotions with others?

How do I feel about sharing my emotions with the group?

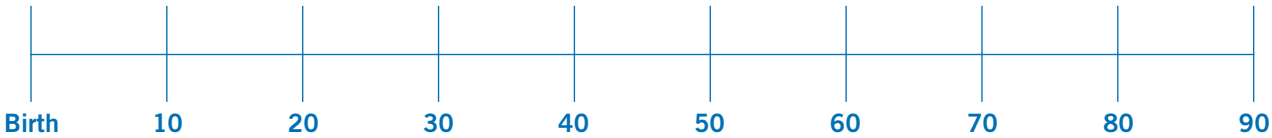
Active Healing

Coping Strategies – Lifeline

A **lifeline** is a **story of your life** that is depicted through **significant events** (positive or negative) that you went through. By reviewing and reflecting upon your lifeline you will be able to recall **support, attitudes, and beliefs** that allowed you to **survive difficult experiences** from the past that you may **utilize** now.

Life Line: Narrative Therapy (adapted from Narrative Exposure Therapy & *What dying people want*, Dr. Kuhl, ch.5).

On this lifeline, write down your life's significant events when they occurred. You can write positive events above the line and negative events below the line. The numbers indicate years.



What support, attitudes and beliefs helped me to survive difficult experiences in the past?

What did I learn from the positive experiences?

How could I draw on the support, attitudes and beliefs as well as what I learned now?

Homework

Choose one thing that helped me to cope with loss in the past — try activating it this week. How and when do I plan to do it?

How do I plan to take care of myself this week?

"To come to terms with our feelings is to be vulnerable to the arrows of the past still flying through the skies of the present." - David Richo

Notes

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Week 4

Check-in

WEEKLY REFLECTION: How did my week go? Did I choose one thing from the past that helped me to cope and try activating it? If yes, how was it helpful? If no, is there anything else that was helpful to me? What came up for me this week?

Understanding My Grief Journey

Healthy Attachment

Am I doing anything right now that I believe is an unhealthy attachment? Is there anything that is keeping me stuck?

If yes, what changes do I need to make?

If you answered yes, feel free to speak to one of the coaches after the session.

Self-expression

Making Sense of the Loss and Searching for Meaning – Is the "Why" Question Helping or Not Helping?

What feelings are attached to asking "why"?

What is the experience like for me when I ask "why"?

Does asking "why" help me find meaning?

What does the "why" give me?

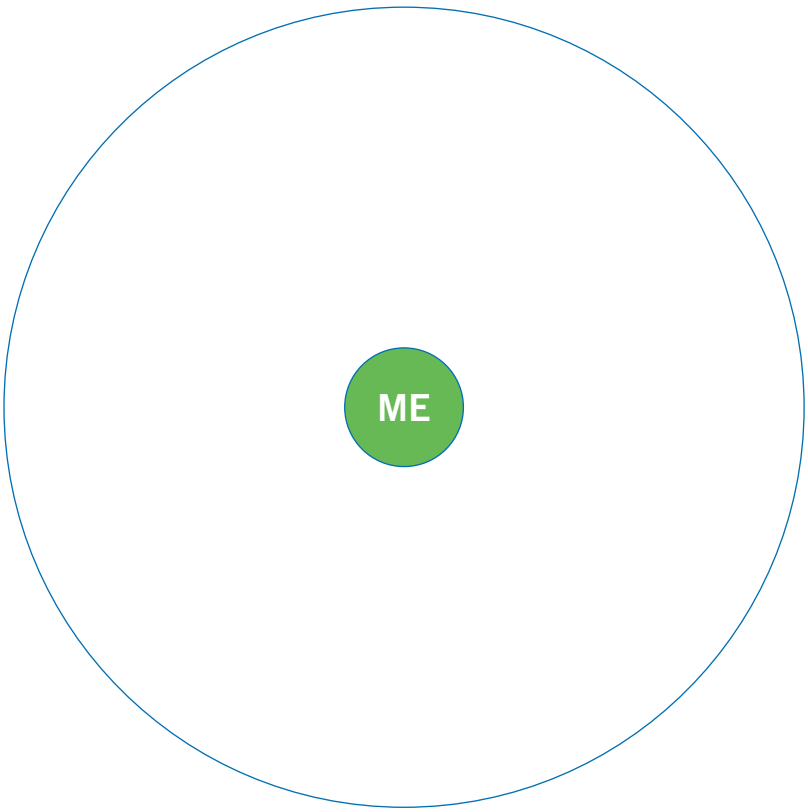
Is this an area where I need more self-care?

Active Healing

The Healing Wheel (Adapted from the Red Deer Primary Care Network Balance Wheel)

The purpose of this exercise is to increase self-awareness regarding "what nurtures you" and "what depletes you".

- Look at each section under "things to consider". Choose the things that are most relevant to you to put on your wheel.
- Draw an arrow from the **outer edge** of the wheel **inward** to indicate those things that nurture you. Label the arrows so you remember what it is that nurtures you.
- Draw arrows from the **inside** of the circle pointing **outward** to indicate the things that deplete you. Label the arrows.



Things to consider

SPIRIT

Relationships
- Family and friends
- Pets

Community
- Community projects
- Neighbours
- Colleagues

Life purpose
- Faith
- Meditation
- Time in nature
- Good deeds

BODY

Nutrition
- Eating regularly
- Choosing healthy foods
- Lots of water

Exercise

Sleep

Emotions

MIND

Thoughts

Playtime

Personal growth
- Dreams and challenges

Work
- Paid and unpaid work

Regarding my Healing Wheel, what does the number of arrows 'in' vs. 'out' tell me?

What does my Healing Wheel tell me? Do I have enough inward arrows to support the weight of the outward arrows?

Homework

Reflecting on my Healing Wheel, what do I need more of to nurture me?

What is self-care to me?

What are one or two things I can do this week to recharge for the journey?

REMEMBER: This isn't a sprint, it's a long climb!

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Week 5

Check-in

WEEKLY REFLECTION: How did my week go? Did I do something to nurture or recharge myself this week? If yes, how was it helpful? If no, is there anything else that was helpful to me? What came up for me this week?

Understanding My Grief Journey

Activating My Memory: Remember My Loss

How do I remember my loss and honour my memories?

Cermony and Rituals

How can I use ceremony or ritual to strengthen the relationship with my memories?

What ritual would I like to create to honor my relationship to my loss?

What do I need in order to take that first step? Take the second step? The third step? Etc…

What do I need afterward? What can I do for self-care?

Self-expression

Legacy

What is the legacy of knowing or experiencing my loss?

How has it changed me?

What did I learn from it? How will I use it?

Active Healing

Significant Events

Homework

If I know a significant event is coming up, how will I prepare for it? (physically, mentally)

My plan for the next significant event (e.g., anniversary).

What is my plan for how I will cope?

Is there a ritual I want to build into this plan?

How do I plan to take care of myself this week?

"Grief is like the ocean; it comes in waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim." – Vicki Harrison

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™

Week 6

Check-in

WEEKLY REFLECTION: How did my week go? Did I plan for a significant event this week? If yes, how was it helpful? If no, is there anything else that was helpful to me? What came up for me this week?

Understanding My Grief Journey

Embrace the Pain of Loss; Grief Dosing

What have I done that has helped me to move through my grief?

What have I done to "open up the dam" just a little bit?

"We must embrace the pain and burn it as fuel for our journey." - Kenji Miyazawa

Self-expression

Non-verbal Expression

When I think of my loss, what feelings, thoughts, physical symptoms, spiritual issues and behaviors am I experiencing? (You can refer to **pages 46 and 47** of your journal for ideas.)

This exercise is an alternative way to tap into what we might not be consciously aware of. What comes to mind when I think of my loss. What does my grief look like to me? (use a picture, words, lines, colours, shapes or anything else to express what you see in your mind).

What are my reactions to doing this activity?

Active Healing

Healing Letter

A grief letter or healing letter allows you a different kind of opportunity to express emotions and thoughts you have been holding in your heart and to express what you have left unsaid. It also gives you a chance to become conscious of what you would have wanted or needed to hear from your loss.

You can express yourself in a form that appeals to you. If you prefer another form of expression, you can use a poem, art, music or collecting something from nature.

Do what feels right to reconnect with your life.

You can think about your letter or other expression right now.

You can use **page 30** for your letter.

Homework

How do I plan to take care of myself this week?

Take time this week to complete the healing letter (or other choice). An example of what you could write for your **Grief letter** or **Healing letter**:

Dear _____

I want to take this opportunity to say how I feel about you/this loss.

Some things you could think and write about:

- Anger, sadness, regret, shame, guilt or any other feelings-you can use "How do I feel" **page 46** to help you identify feelings.
- I regret…
- I need to apologize for…
- I want you to know…
- I wish I would have said…
- I miss
- I'm ready to move on/this is how you will be in my life…
- I have changed because…

Signed _____

If you really liked the Healing Letter, you can try this option:

Write a response letter as though your loss was answering you with what you wanted or needed to hear.

Dear _____

Thank you so much for the letter. I really appreciate hearing how it has been for you. Continue with what you would like to hear.

Notes/Continuation of Letter

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™

Week 7

Check-in

WEEKLY REFLECTION: How did my week go? Did I write my healing letter (or other form of expression) this week? If yes, how was it helpful? If no, is there anything else that was helpful to me? What came up for me this week?

Understanding My Grief Journey

Exploring My Self-identity

Who am I now and how might I incorporate my loss into my present life and my new normal?

Instructions: As you explore your new identity, write responses to as many as you want by filling in the blanks as best you can. You will be given 4 minutes, so write the first **spontaneous** idea that comes to mind. You will be given more time later to write **reflective** responses.

	Spontaneous	Reflective
I value...		
I love...		
I believe in...		
I spend my time thinking about...		
I am energized by...		
I am drained by...		
If I wasn't afraid I would...		
Today, I'm one day closer to...		
I want to learn...		
I am motivated by...		
I am inspired by...		
My biggest supports are...		
Today I need...		
I am looking forward to...		
What gives me hope is...		
I am surprised by/that...		
It's ok that...		
I want others to know...		
It is important for me to know...		
It is important for me to...		
I feel most comfortable...		
I don't need to hang on to...		

As I reflect on my answers to these statements, what things seem the same and what things seem different after experiencing the loss?

What emotions came up for me as I did this?

Is there something from page 34 that I want to explore or invest in now as part of my new self-identity?

"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." – Elizabeth Kübler-Ross

Self-expression

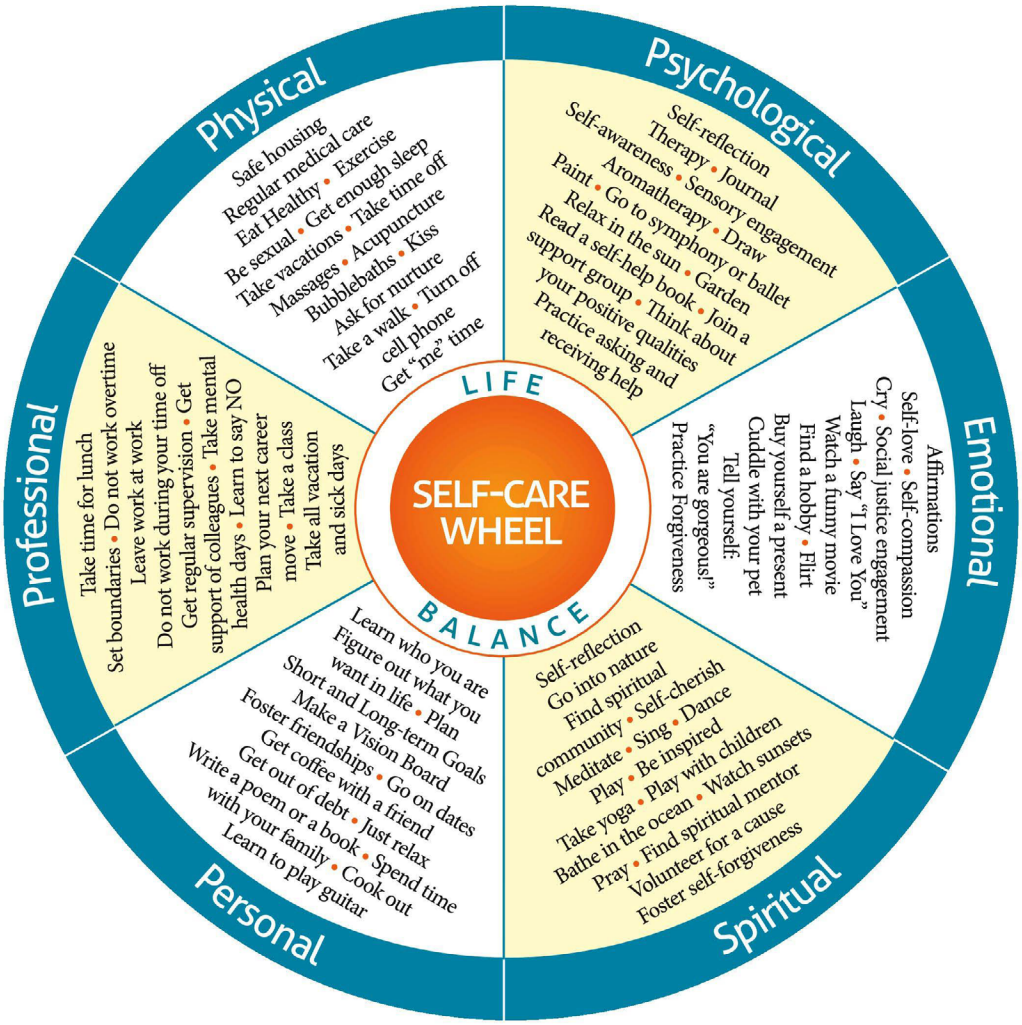
Investing in Me

Continuing to explore who you are now and what your future might look like, look at your Self-care Wheel.

Reflecting on the Self-care Wheel, what do I need more of to nurture me?

What other ways am I already caring for or nurturing myself?

SELF-CARE WHEEL



This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from *Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Traumatization* by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing for Social Change (2013). Dedicated to all trauma professionals worldwide. Copyright @ 2013 Olga Phoenix, All Rights Reserved.

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Active Healing

My Plan

Homework

Using my answers to the questions on page 36 and/or my self-identity exercise on page 34, choose 1 or 2 actions or phrases to focus on this week.

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™

Week 8

Check-in

WEEKLY REFLECTION: How did my week go? Did I take one small step to invest in my future? If yes, how was it helpful? If no, is there anything else that was helpful to me? What came up for me this week?

Understanding My Grief Journey

Ongoing Support: Getting What I Need

How do others react to my grief? Here are some possible ways people may respond. Check the ones that I have experienced:

- ☐ It's been (6 months). You need to move on.
- ☐ Let's not talk about the loss; let's go out and have some fun.
- ☐ I know how you feel.
- ☐ Life must go on.
- ☐ You must be strong for…
- ☐ It could be worse.
- ☐ At least she/he had a good life.
- ☐ Life never gives you more than you can handle.
- ☐ Everything happens for a reason.
- ☐ It was just their time to go.
- ☐ Time heals all wounds.
- ☐ Try to look for the good in the situation.
- ☐ Be positive.
- ☐ Your loved one is in a better place/you're better off this way.
- ☐ Try not to cry; crying won't change anything.
- ☐ Get up and move on.
- ☐ It shouldn't matter so much.
- ☐ Other _____

What are my needs at this specific point in my journey?

How would I feel if someone responded to me like this?

How can I communicate with them?

Helpful support:

Unhelpful support:

Why do I not reach out?

Where is the line between reaching out and burdening someone?

How can I get my needs for support met?

"I heal, in part, by allowing others to express their love for me. By choosing to invite others into my journey, I move toward health and healing. If I hide from others, I hide from healing." – Alan D. Wolfelt

Self-expression

Eco-map: How People Meet My Needs

An eco-map is a way of documenting connections between you and the outside world. It can help you identify needs and what aspects are being fulfilled by whom. Who can you lean on?

Fill in the eco-map below:

Legend:

People who are already helping me

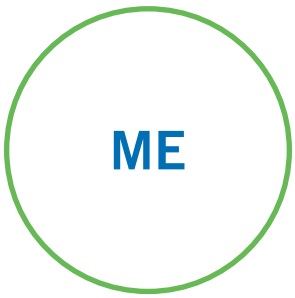
Relationships I want to strengthen

Other community supports I want to access

In your legend, use a different coloured line to represent each kind of relationship.

People/things to consider:

- Family
- Friends
- Extended family
- Colleagues
- Acquaintances
- Places
- Groups
- Service providers



Are there any changes I would like to make in my support network?

Active Healing

My Active Healing Toolkit

Write all the things that were helpful on my journey. Refer to page 45 for a reminder of the tools.

What was I not ready for yet?

How would I know when I am still climbing my mountain? When I need to revisit the tools?

How would I know when I need to reach out (e.g. counselor, family, group)?

Where am I on the mountain?

How do I plan to take care of myself this week?

"Should you shield the valleys from the windstorms, you would never see the beauty of their canyons." – Elizabeth Kübler-Ross

Resources

Website

5 MINUTES OFF
peacefulpause.com

Books

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™

Resources

Tools For the Journey

- ☐ Review Grief vs. Depression – talk to coach
  - ☐ Get 1:1 counseling if I need it
  - ☐ Sign up for Happiness Basics
- ☐ Self-care Wheel
- ☐ Mourner's Bill of Rights
- ☐ Meditation
  - ☐ 5 Minutes Off
- ☐ The Link
- ☐ Body Reaction Exercise
- ☐ Journalling
- ☐ Inside/Outside Emotions
- ☐ Lifeline
- ☐ Healthy vs. Unhealthy Attachments
- ☐ "Why" and Other Questions
- ☐ Healing Wheel – Recharge/Self-care
- ☐ Ceremony/Ritual
- ☐ Legacy
- ☐ Plan for Significant Events
- ☐ Grief Dosing – Open the Dam a Bit Each Day
- ☐ Symptoms as Needs – Non-verbal Expression
- ☐ Healing Letter/Poem, etc.
- ☐ Explore My Self-identity
- ☐ Investing in Me
- ☐ Communicate What I Need
- ☐ Eco-map – Activate Helpful Relationships

How Do I Feel?

Here is a list of some common emotions to help you better describe how you are feeling.

- ☐ Agonized
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Anxious
- ☐ Bored
- ☐ Cautious
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Curious
- ☐ Determined
- ☐ Disappointed
- ☐ Disbelieving
- ☐ Exasperated
- ☐ Excited
- ☐ Exhausted
- ☐ Fearful
- ☐ Frustrated
- ☐ Guilty
- ☐ Happy
- ☐ Hurt
- ☐ Indifferent
- ☐ Jealous
- ☐ Lonely
- ☐ Miserable
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Optimistic
- ☐ Paranoid
- ☐ Perplexed
- ☐ Regretful
- ☐ Relieved
- ☐ Sad
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Shocked
- ☐ Tearful
- ☐ Tense
- ☐ Testy
- ☐ Ticked
- ☐ Tired
- ☐ Troubled
- ☐ Withdrawn
- ☐ Worried

Normal Grief Reactions

There are many different ways people experience grief. The intensity and duration of the reactions vary from person to person. These are some of the reactions you may experience.

Please check off all of the responses that you have been or are experiencing.

Feelings

- ☐ Helplessness
- ☐ Sadness
- ☐ Anger
- ☐ Guilt
- ☐ Anxiety/fear
- ☐ Loneliness
- ☐ Irritability
- ☐ Fatigue
- ☐ Relief
- ☐ Shock
- ☐ Yearning
- ☐ Numbness
- ☐ Indifference
- ☐ Resentment
- ☐ Apathy
- ☐ Pessimism

Physical Symptoms

- ☐ Tightness in chest; palpitations
- ☐ Muscle weakness
- ☐ Dry mouth
- ☐ Lack of energy
- ☐ Constipation or diarrhea
- ☐ Breathlessness
- ☐ Nausea
- ☐ Headaches
- ☐ Sexual disturbances
- ☐ Irregular heartbeat
- ☐ Weight loss or gain
- ☐ Dizziness or shivering
- ☐ Restlessness

Spiritual

- ☐ Blaming God or life
- ☐ Lack of meaning in life/spiritual emptiness
- ☐ Wanting to die or join the deceased

Thoughts

- ☐ Disbelief
- ☐ Confusion
- ☐ Preoccupied about the loss
- ☐ Hallucinations
- ☐ Doubt own sanity
- ☐ Sense of unreality
- ☐ Inability to concentrate
- ☐ Lowered self-esteem
- ☐ Slowed thinking
- ☐ Absent minded, forgetful
- ☐ Reliving the death, divorce, etc
- ☐ Awareness of own mortality
- ☐ Idealize the loss
- ☐ Worry
- ☐ Unrealistic
- ☐ Constant thinking about the deceased/ feeling their presence/ seeing them

Behaviors

- ☐ Sleep difficulties
- ☐ Waking early
- ☐ Over or under eating
- ☐ Withdrawal from others
- ☐ Dreaming about the loss
- ☐ Nightmares
- ☐ Overactive
- ☐ Avoiding reminders of what was lost
- ☐ Treasuring objects of what was lost
- ☐ Inability to make decisions
- ☐ Crying
- ☐ Lack of interest in activities or socializing

Note: It is important to know that all of the reactions listed are common and natural. You are not alone.

Notes

Adult Attitude to Grief Scale – Week 8

Name	**Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female
Date	**Date of birth** (MM/DD/YYYY)

Please place a check mark (✔) to indicate your response to the attitudes expressed in the following statements:

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. I feel able to face the pain which comes with loss.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. For me, it is difficult to switch off thoughts about the person I have lost.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I feel very aware of my inner strength when faced with grief.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I believe that I must be brave in the face of loss.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I feel that I will always carry the pain of grief with me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. For me, it is important to keep my grief under control.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Life has less meaning for me after this loss.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. I think its best just to get on with life and not dwell on this loss.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. It may not always feel like it but I do believe that I will come through this experience of grief.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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We are collecting this information according to the requirements specified in the Health Information Act of Alberta, sections 27 (1)(a), (g)

Notes

Alberta Journeying Through Grief™ Participant Evaluation – Week 8

We welcome your feedback about the **Alberta Journeying Through Grief™** program and are interested in your experience with the program. Thank you for your time in completing these questions.

Date

About the Program

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
1. Please check the box that reflects your overall satisfaction in taking Alberta Journeying Through Grief™	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. Please check the best answer about the Alberta Journeying Through Grief™ program	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Program content was relevant to my needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Program was easy to understand and follow.	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Program provided opportunities to learn and practice skills to manage my grief.	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Program provided a good mix between listening and group activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Alberta Journeying Through Grief™ workbook is a useful reference in practicing grief management skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. I am confident I can use the skills learned in my daily life.	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. The workshop environment felt safe and non-judgemental.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Continued on page 52 ➤

h. The instructors were knowledgeable and prepared.	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. **What was most helpful about this program?**

4. **What was least helpful about this program?**

Personal Changes

	None									Severe
5. On a scale of 1 – 10, please rate the intensity of your grief **prior to your first** Grief group class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6. On a scale of 1 – 10, please rate the intensity of your grief **after your last** Grief group class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

	None									Most
7. On a scale of 1 – 10, please rate your confidence in your ability to cope with your grief **prior to your first** Grief group class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8. On a scale of 1 – 10, please rate your confidence in your ability to cope with your grief **after your last** Grief group class.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. **Which three Grief management techniques do you intend to use regularly?**

About You

10. **Are you?** ☐ Male ☐ Female

11. **Age:** ☐ 18 – 24 ☐ 25 – 44 ☐ 45 – 64 ☐ 65+

Grief/Depression Assessment Inventory

There are a series of paragraphs below that are paired: One describes how a person who is **depressed** might respond, the other a person who is actively **grieving** an important loss or life change. For each paragraph, check the statement that best describes your response. Not all the statements will apply. You may wish to underline statements within a question that do apply.

At the end choose which of the two paragraphs comes closer to describing your present state: **grief**, **depression**, **both**, or **neither**. Sometimes you'll choose neither. Sometimes, it might be both. By the end of the inventory, you'll have an idea whether you are grieving, depressed, or experiencing some of both.

This inventory should **not** be used in place of more comprehensive diagnostic methods, nor is it intended to provide a professional diagnosis.

If there has been a loss or a significant change in your life, how long ago did it occur or begin to affect you?

- ☐ A week or less.
- ☐ Less than a month.
- ☐ One month to six months.
- ☐ Seven months to a year.
- ☐ Less than two years.
- ☐ Two to five years.
- ☐ More than five years.
- ☐ It happened while I was growing up.

The loss(es) were:

- ☐ One(s) I could anticipate.
- ☐ Sudden and unexpected.
- ☐ Due to a chronic situation / condition.
- ☐ Caused by a traumatic event(s).

1. How have you experienced this loss or a significant change?

Grief: The way I am feeling makes sense in light of what has happened. These losses or changes are the sources of what I am going through. Others have validated my losses.

Depression: I don't understand why I am feeling this way. Nothing makes sense. No one considers what has happened as deserving of a second thought or any feelings on my part. I am not sure myself whether a loss has occurred.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

2. How have you been behaving since this began?

Grief: I am easily distracted. I wish I looked better. Sometimes I look better than I feel. Sometimes I feel better than I look. Some people have avoided me since this loss. Others have been insensitive. I am more cautious. I am aware of life's fragility as a result of what has happened.

I have tried to lose myself in my job, hobbies, and sports or in caring for my children but it doesn't always work. At times I prefer to be alone. At times, I feel lonely even when I am with others. Being with others can wear me out. It is an effort to do things.

Depression: I am often preoccupied. I don't care how I look—*or*, I have to look perfect or else I feel terrible. Nobody suspects or for that matter really cares how I am really doing. Danger makes me feel real *or* I don't take any risks. I refuse to take antidepressants. I don't always take my antidepressants or I can't function without my antidepressants.

Work/my children is/are my life. I keep busy all the time *or* I can't find anything to occupy me. I constantly watch television. I hate being alone *or* I hate being with others. I don't see the point in trying.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

3. How has your thinking been affected?

Grief: It's hard to concentrate but I can if I have to. Sometimes I don't know how I got somewhere. Time drags. There are times when I am startled that time has passed. I avoid listening to the radio or watching TV, for fear it will remind me about what happened. At times, I can think about other things than this—only to find myself right back in it. I've lost the best part of me. If only I had been able to do something different, this would not have happened.

Nothing can ever bring back what I have lost. I am often aware of what I have lost or what has changed. I am often preoccupied with the thoughts and memories associated with my loss. Just when I think it couldn't get any worse, it does.

Depression: I am so preoccupied I can lose days or weeks . The newspaper/TV seems unreal, like I am in another world from it. I can't stop thinking about why this has happened to me. This proves how worthless I am. I am to blame for what has happened. Someone must be punished for this. I will not rest until that happens.

I operate as if nothing has changed. I don't think about it if I can help it. Thinking makes me feel worse. Things always get worse.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

4. How have your feelings been affected?

Grief: My heart feels broken. I can get very angry about this. I can be very sad. The tears are hard to stop. At times I am so upset I could throw up. I yearn to be able to love again. There are times when I can laugh. I can feel joy. There are times when my feelings overwhelm me. There are times when I feel better. Sometimes my feelings are so intense I'm not sure I can stay with them. I am ashamed because of what happened and how I reacted to it. I feel numb. I have a hard time being around others. There are times when I feel terrific. There are times when I feel love.

Depression: I am not angry. I shouldn't feel angry. I don't cry. I don't feel sad. I have no right to feel sad. It's best not to get upset. There's nothing to be upset about. I know I will never be able to love again. I feel down when others seem happy. I wouldn't know what joy or happiness is. I avoid feeling anything about this. I never feel better. If I let myself I would get so upset I couldn't stand it. I could never admit how badly I've reacted to all this. I feel nothing. I never feel terrific. I never feel love.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

5. How do you feel physically?

Grief: I can start out a day feeling OK, and get wiped out during the day. Any sustained effort exhausts me. I feel lethargic, totally drained, lacking in energy. I have a hard time concentrating for more than a few minutes at a time. It's hard to go to sleep. I have trouble staying asleep. My heart hurts. I can't get enough rest. I feel better after I exercise. I do better when I'm active. I've never felt/looked better.

I don't pay attention to what I'm eating. Sometimes I don't feel like eating. I've felt nauseous after I eat. I don't feel like eating but make myself at times. Eating helps me escape. How well I eat makes a difference. I have lost weight since this loss. I have gained weight since this loss.

Drinking can give me temporary relief. I watch how much I drink. I'd rather not be taking drugs. The escapes I find are only temporary sources of relief. Prescription drugs for depression give me clarity about what I am dealing with.

Depression: I have no energy. I am in always in a fog or twilight zone. I can't seem to sleep more than four hours a night. I sleep more than ten hours every night. I always feel exhausted. I exercise constantly (more than two hours a day) or I don't exercise at all. I've never looked/felt worse.

I don't care if I eat too much. I don't care if I don't eat. I throw up what I eat. I weigh less than I ever have. I weigh more than I ever have.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

6. How do you feel pain and pleasure?

Grief: The pain comes and goes. When it is bad, it has never been worse. There are times when I don't seem to enjoy anything, but at other times I'm OK. There are times when something that is ordinarily pleasurable gives me pain. I feel more relief from the pain than real pleasure.

Except when I am reminded of my loss, I can enjoy life. I have a sense of humor. My sense of humor can be pretty dark these days. I can laugh. I enjoy being in nature. I watch sunsets and/or sunrises. Sometimes a time of joy produces tears and sadness.

Depression: I drink alcohol to drown the pain. I use drugs to escape. The only time I feel OK or can escape the pain is when I'm drinking/ taking drugs. I'm sick a lot. I am in pain a lot. I can't remember the last time I really enjoyed anything. When I have sex it feels like I can escape my problems temporarily.

Pleasure is not a part of my life. I feel numb. Nothing seems funny. I have an especially hard time when others have fun.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

7. How has this affected you spiritually?

Grief: I pray for strength to get me through this. I wonder if there is any hope for me. This loss seems so unfair. I am angry with God. I was naive to think this couldn't happen. I have lost my sense of innocence. I am confused by what this means. I have lost something essential. My life story has lost its thread of meaning. It's hard to imagine life ever having meaning again. My religious faith (God) is getting me through this *or* I'm changing (or know I must change) some of my most cherished beliefs—perhaps even my religion.

I don't know if I can ever be forgiven for this—or—if I can ever forgive others. I do believe forgiveness is possible. Forgiveness would require the grace of God—or something equally miraculous. I feel connected to something beyond me —e.g., a Higher Power, God (or love). Getting through this will heal me—something better lies ahead. Being in nature restores my soul. Sometimes I lose sight of my faith—but I am sustained by knowing others believe in me. I don't yet know what meaning this loss has.

Depression: My life is hopeless. I am a broken person. I am being punished. This proves how worthless I am. Nothing meaningful can come from this. What has happened is totally unfair. God is punishing me. I deserve to go to hell. I had it coming or I don't deserve this. I find no comfort in prayer or religion.

I can never forgive. I can never be forgiven. I can't accept why this has happened to me. My beliefs have not given me any answers.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

8. What are your dreams like?

Grief: I dream a lot but I don't usually remember them. I long to dream of the one I lost but can't. I've been too tired to dream. It's only in my dreams that I seem to be dealing with this. My dreams since the loss are vivid and clear, and they are often comforting. They make it easier to understand what has happened. In my fantasies, I remain connected to the person/object I lost. I have "imaginary" conversations (daydreams) with the one I lost.

Depression: I don't dream. When I do dream, I have nightmares. My dreams about the loss are disturbing. I dream of the destruction of the one I lost. My dreams actually keep me from sleeping. Voices from my loss can tell me to do things I ordinarily wouldn't do.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

9. How has this affected how you feel about yourself?

Grief: This loss has put me in touch with my "best self." It has caused me to question some of my values and beliefs. There are things about this loss that I need to process. There are some things I need to rectify. I've alienated people I wish I could reconnect with. I have been hurt by other's insensitivity. I have hurt others by being preoccupied. This loss has more meaning to me than others acknowledge. I am doing the best I can. I have been deeply moved by how some people have supported me.I am at peace with myself.

Depression: I don't care what happens. I've not been myself—I can't seem to do what I need to do. I can't seem to snap out of it. People have injured me since this loss. Those I have injured could never forgive me. There is nothing meaningful about this. I can't deal with it. Generally, other people don't affect me. If people really knew me, they wouldn't like me. I resent people trying to get me to feel better or to give up what they think are my bad habits or my self-destructiveness. Life is sheer torture to me.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

10. What kinds of support do you have?

Grief: I feel comforted when I'm with sympathetic people. I get uncomfortable when the conversation centers on me. I respond when someone is warm, persistent, and reassuring. I enjoy listening to others. Sometimes I feel like I talk too much. Sometimes I am vulnerable in ways I wouldn't be otherwise. At times I appreciate being left alone.

If someone has a good heart, I can overlook faults. I have lost some old friends. I am reassured by the presence of friends who will listen to my story. I feel connected to people with similar losses. I've made new friends who accept me as I am. I miss being loved or opportunities to love. I am in love again.

Depression: I say things to get others off my back. I never talk about what happened. I deliberately hurt others. I want others to suffer as much as I have. Others take advantage of me. When I'm alone, I feel frightened and abandoned. I hate being around people who are optimistic and superficial. I find it impossible to tolerate mistakes or incompetence.

Others don't care. I wear people out—they get irritable with me. People get angry with me. I have been assaulted verbally and/or physically. No one listens to my story. I feel disconnected. I've worn out my support system. I don't have a support system. I feel unloved. It's better to be punished than ignored. I feel incapable of loving anyone.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

11. How has this affected your will to live?

Grief: If life were to continue like this, it wouldn't be worth living. I have thought of what it would take to not to have this pain. I would not commit suicide because of this: My religious beliefs, the effect my death would have on the people who love me or having a something to live for keeps me going.

Depression: I'm looking for a way out. I cannot say I wouldn't commit suicide. I have nothing to live for. Life isn't worth living. Others would be better off without me. I deserve to die.

For me this item is most like:

☐ Grief ☐ Depression ☐ Both ☐ Neither

How to calculate your profile

Repeat below your responses to each of the items above. Total your checks in each section and find the total below:

	Grief	Depression	Both	Neither
1. Loss	___	___	___	___
2. Behaving	___	___	___	___
3. Thinking	___	___	___	___
4. Feeling	___	___	___	___
5. Physical	___	___	___	___
6. Pain and pleasure	___	___	___	___
7. Spiritual	___	___	___	___
8. Dreams	___	___	___	___
9. Self	___	___	___	___
10. Support	___	___	___	___
11. Will-to-live	___	___	___	___
Totals	___	___	___	___

How to interpret your scores

Uncomplicated grief: If you scored "grief" in all areas, you are clearly grieving normally, and probably do not need professional help, although you may wish to talk with someone.

Complicated grief: If you score mostly for "grief," but also have some "depression" items checked in any area, you should consult with your family doctor, therapist, or clergy.

Depression: If most items are checked as "depression," professional help is highly recommended.

Notes:

*__Item 11:__ If you checked "depression" on "Will to Live," professional help is urgently recommended.

If this way of responding to your loss(es) has lasted less than six months, it is natural for both grief and depression to be present. If your loss and your reaction to it has lasted longer than six months, depression items should have diminished.

These guidelines usually apply only to losses that were anticipated. Traumatizing losses will take longer (multiply by years). Also multiple losses will take longer as well (each loss x six months or more, though time is not an accurate measure.) Sudden losses also can take much longer. Chronic health conditions produce chronic grief, so little diminishing will be seen over time. However, in any of these situations, being able to "look good" to others can begin to appear after six months, and some progress can be noted in moving from the "depression" items even if it's at a slower pace.

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