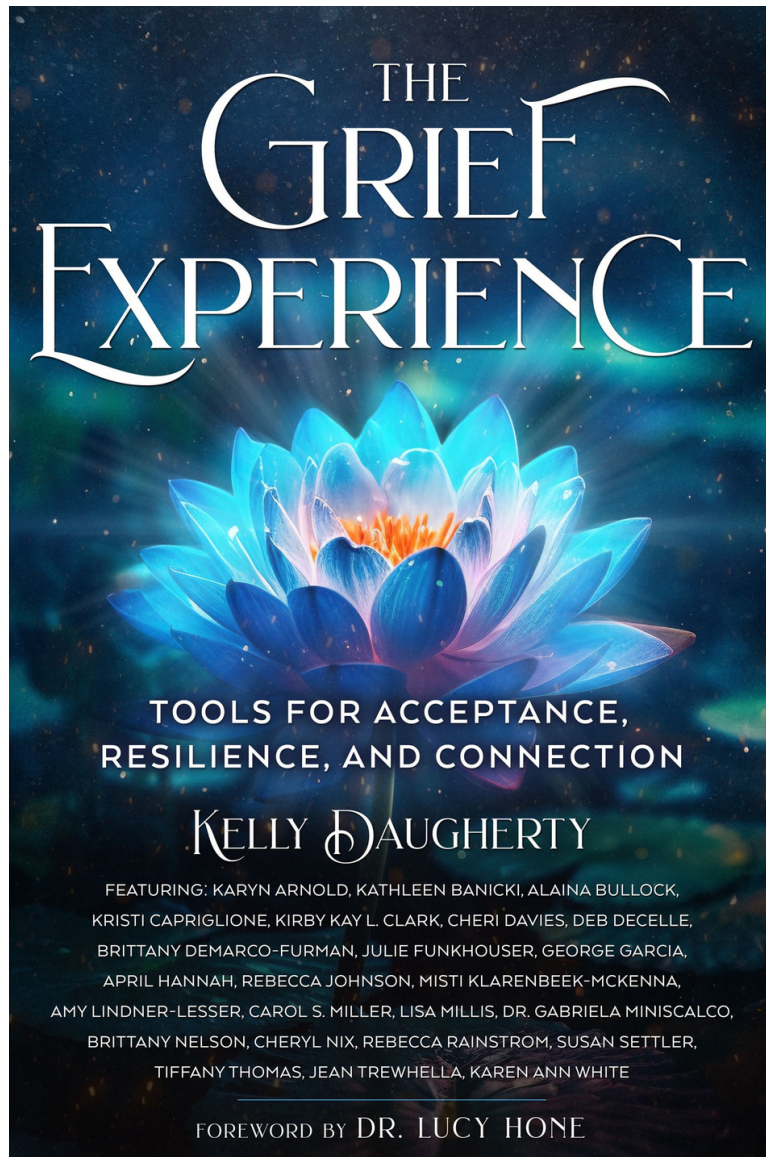


THE GRIEF EXPERIENCE WORKBOOK



THE GRIEF EXPERIENCE



TOOLS FOR ACCEPTANCE,
RESILIENCE, AND CONNECTION

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FOREWORD BY DR. LUCY HONE

Introduction

Welcome to the "Grief Experience Workbook" – a companion to the wisdom shared in "The Grief Experience: Tools for Acceptance, Resilience and Connection," available on Amazon. We're excited to have you join us on your unique experience through grief.

In "The Grief Experience: Tools for Acceptance, Resilience, and Connection," 25 diverse authors generously share their personal stories of grief, along with practical tools to navigate it. This workbook contains the majority of the tools in the book, allowing you to explore them in greater detail at your own pace. It's a space for reflection and personal growth as you navigate your own grief.

These tools are designed to help you find acceptance, build resilience, and foster meaningful connections. Whether you're grieving as an individual or seeking professional insight into grief, this workbook is here to guide and support you.

Thank you!

CHAPTER 1

Treasured pawprints | 1
NURTURING SELF-CARE WHILE
NAVIGATING GRIEF

By Kelly Daugherty, MSW, FT

This worksheet is designed to guide you through the process of creating a personalized self-care plan. In this plan, you'll explore various aspects of self-care that can provide comfort, support, and a pathway toward resilience. Your well-being matters, and engaging in these activities means honoring yourself and your unique journey through grief.

Take some quiet moments to reflect on each section below. You can get inspiration from the tools shared by the authors of "The Grief Experience: Tools for Acceptance, Resilience and Connection." As you fill out the prompts, be genuine and open with yourself. Your self-care plan is a personal commitment to your emotional and physical well-being, and it's okay to tailor it to your preferences.

By incorporating these tools, you're embracing the potential for greater acceptance, resilience, and connection.

What Activities Bring You Comfort:

- What activities or hobbies have provided you comfort in the past? How can you integrate these into your current routine?

Social Support:

- Who do you feel most comfortable sharing your feelings with? How can you reach out to them when needed?

Physical Well-being:

- How are you taking care of your body? Are you getting enough sleep, maintaining a balanced diet, and engaging in regular physical activity?

Mindfulness and Relaxation:

- What techniques help you relax and stay present? Can you incorporate mindfulness exercises, meditation, or deep breathing practices?

Creative Expression:

- Do you enjoy any creative outlets such as writing, drawing, painting, photography or playing music? How can you use it to express your emotions?

Nature and Outdoors:

- Do you find solace in nature? How can you spend more time outdoors, whether it's taking walks, gardening, or simply sitting in a peaceful setting?

Setting Boundaries:

- Are there situations or people that drain your energy? How can you establish healthy boundaries to protect your well-being?

Professional Support:

- Have you considered seeking support from a therapist, counselor, or support group? How can you take steps to access professional help if needed?

Memorializing and Remembering:

- How would you like to honor your grief? Are there rituals or activities that could bring comfort?

Limiting Stressors:

- What stressors can you identify right now? How can you reduce or manage these stressors to prioritize your well-being?

Personal Goals:

- Are there small goals you'd like to set for yourself? These could be related to self-care, personal growth, or trying new activities.

Gratitude Practice:

- How can you incorporate gratitude into your daily life? Focusing on positive aspects can provide a new perspective during tough times.

CHAPTER 2

Unlocking new depths of the heart | 12

HOW TO TRANSFORM LOSS

By Julie Funkhouser, B.S.

THE TOOL

Our heart center is our divine path through which God communicates with us. Our heart center is the portal through which we feel God's pure and perfect intentions. Our heart center is our key to freedom and awakening.

As the grief experience presses its weight onto our hearts, we can feel blocked. Stuck. Heavy. We collect and hold onto this grief with tremendous terror at the thought of releasing it. The idea of rumbling with this profound pain can feel unimaginable.

Honoring these emotions and acknowledging their presence in our hearts is important. And feeling and releasing them is vital to heal. By cleansing this heart space, our spirit grows lighter. Our energy feels softer. Our heart slowly begins its journey to vibrancy again, perhaps more radiant than ever before, as we cleanse all of the deep pockets and crevices of our divine connective source.

So, breathe with me. Cleanse with me. Release with me.

And unlock new depths of your heart you never knew existed.

Visualization Meditation

Visit https://www.instagram.com/two_real_chicks/ for the guided meditation.

Settle yourself into a seated position with your spine straight and your sit bones nestled into the Earth. You may close your eyes or cast them down, whatever feels right for you.

Begin to bring focus to your breath, inhaling deeply through the belly and lengthening your exhales to slow your central nervous system. Enter into the present moment.

Now, bring your focus into your heart. What do you see?

Perhaps you see dark, murky colors or sense a hardening around the heart like dry clay. Maybe it looks sluggish and stuck. Congested.

What do you feel?

Does it feel heavy? Slow? Stagnant? Cluttered? Messy? Do you feel sad? Angry? Whatever is coming up, it is meant to come. It all belongs.

Now, place one hand over your heart. On your inhale, envision a bright, white light entering your heart from the middle of your back. Breathe it in from the back of the heart. Say to yourself, "I allow Divine love into my heart."

On your exhale, envision that dark, low, stagnant energy leaving through the front of your heart center as it becomes absorbed by the universe. Feel the sorrow, the pain, the fear, the worry clearing. Say to yourself, "I release the pain to allow more love."

Check in with your body and your heart center after each cycle. Repeat this breath as many times as you need to until you feel your heart center feel lighter, open, and vibrant. Perhaps you see it growing in actual size, changing colors, pumping rhythmically. You may cry, feel a deep sense of gratitude, or sense loved ones in heaven close by. Everyone's experience of what they see, hear, feel, and sense is different. Trust what is coming up for you.

When you feel that it's time to finish this practice, you may rub your hands together, creating warm, loving, healing energy in your palms, and place both hands on your heart.

Say to yourself,

**"I am safe to release.
My heart is opening.
I receive God's pure love.
I deserve to heal."**

Honor yourself for your bravery in this practice. By cleansing the deep corners of your heart, new depths of abundant love and light fill your spirit. Feel the peace in the exhale.

CHAPTER 3

When a client dies | 23


CREATING A SAFE SPACE TO GRIEVE

By Brittany Nelson, PsyD, LMFT, RPT-S

THE TOOL

The goal of my tool is to create a safe space that can be utilized for self-care during the grieving process. Many of us are likely familiar with calm spaces and containers, which I combine to create a safe place. Safe spaces are visualization exercises that can be created either through strict visualizing, creating a drawing, constructing a sand tray, recalling a memory, etc.—whatever medium speaks to you to help you with this process. The goal of a safe place is to create an outlet for times when we may be experiencing our grief, which is either becoming overwhelming, or we're not in a space to safely feel, and we need a place to reset.

When constructing your safe place, the first piece is to create a visual of a place in which you feel calm, comfortable, and safe. This visual can be only in your mind, or you can create an outward expression of your safe place that you can hold in your visualization. The place you create can be real or imagined. Next, we're going to further develop our safe space by integrating all of our senses. What do you hear? Smell? What are the things you can reach out to touch and feel around you? Is there anything you can taste in your safe place? With all the senses engaged, take a slow, deep breath. And again. And again.



Now, close your eyes and visualize your safe place and all the sensations associated with it as you continue to breathe slowly. I want you to imagine a container in your safe space. This can be any sort of container you like. Construct it however it fits into your safe place. Ensure your container is strong enough to hold any thoughts or feelings of grief that may come to your mind.

Now, imagine using this box whenever a thought or a feeling of grief becomes too much. Hold that thought/feeling until you can come back to your safe space and sit with your grief. Continue to breathe until you feel a sensation of calm, then take one more deep breath and open your eyes.

During sessions with clients, it would be challenging to close your eyes and go through the whole process. But when you can practice the calming piece routinely, during the session, you can take a slow breath and visualize your safe place and your container, and it can support in bringing you back down to a more grounded place in the moment. For example, there have been times when I've been in sessions with clients, especially in the early sessions with my client's sibling, when I was triggered and needed to find a way to quickly regroup. Being able to take a few deep breaths, think of my safe place, and place my feelings into my container was helpful for me to quickly shift back my focus, knowing I'd come back to my feelings for processing when I could.

CHAPTER 4

Fighting for memories | 32
ANTICIPATORY GRIEF, RESILIENCE,
AND ALZHEIMER'S
By Cheri Davies, MSW

THE TOOL

To manage all the information that comes with an Alzheimer's diagnosis, I kept all the documents, imaging, and reports in a convenient binder that I took to all the doctors' appointments. It was an important step for me to be able to communicate with the various specialists we would be having on our care team. Going to these specialists could be intimidating, so having the information on hand helped me answer questions confidently and accurately. This binder has been a lifeline that reduces my stress in already emotionally challenging appointments.

This checklist is a way to navigate any medical journey a person may be facing. It's convenient to have all your information in one place, and, in my experience, doctors appreciate you being able to give them information when they don't have access to it

This happens frequently when you see providers in different groups' practices. You may have imaging done at another facility, see a holistic provider, and access services like speech or occupational therapy, all of which may not be connected to your doctor's network. Any records you can keep will help you advocate for whatever you need for your or your family member's care. Also, keep a notebook with all your questions for your doctor.

These appointments can be stressful, so be sure to give yourself time afterward to process the meeting if you are overwhelmed. Don't be surprised if appointments bring up feelings of grief. Take time after each appointment for some self-care

Purchase these items from your favorite office supply store:

- A 3-inch, 3-ring binder: I chose purple, which is the color of the Alzheimer's Association.

- Sheet protectors for your paperwork.

- Folder tabs to separate the sections.

You can use a small composition book to write notes in the appointment.

Set up of sections: I suggest keeping them in chronological order in each section for easier access.

- Primary care provider: even if you have a digital portal, print your reports so you can refer to them in an appointment.

- Specialist (for us, it was the neurologist): print these if they are on a portal.

- Testing (this includes blood work): you may have other tests that can go in this section, like neurological testing, genetic testing, etc.

- Imaging (MRIs, X-rays, scans): After your appointment, you need two things from imaging. Ask for a copy of the report and a disk of the imaging. On the cover of the disk, write "Do not destroy." If you ever have a doctor's office make copies of the disk, it will remind them to return it to you.

- Insurance (keep paperwork of any prior approvals). Things like MRIs may need prior approval, and having a copy of the document will save you a headache if there is a dispute.

- Living will and health care proxy: This section is crucial to discuss with your family and doctor. I suggest everyone does this, even if they're in excellent health. Life is unpredictable, and someone may need this information to fulfill their wishes in an emergency.

- A living will will spell precisely what you would like to happen in various scenarios based on different healthcare emergencies. This can help reduce the chance of confusion about the choices you would like made on your behalf. Many websites can help create this document, or you can consult an attorney. Be sure to give a copy of this document to all your providers and whomever you choose to be your healthcare proxy.

- A healthcare proxy names the person (or people) you have chosen to oversee your care if you cannot make your own decisions. Make sure you have a candid conversation about your wishes with that person.

- Social security: paperwork related to applying for or receiving any benefits.

Use a notebook or a notetaking app during appointments. It's hard to process large amounts of information at the doctor's, particularly if it's an emotional appointment that doesn't go as you hoped. The notes will help you when you get home and have time to reflect on what was discussed in the appointment. You will be less likely to miss important points if you take notes, decreasing your stress.

- Write any questions you may have before you go to the appointment.

- Document all impressions the doctor has on that visit.

- Write all recommendations for testing, imaging, etc.

Being a care partner for a family member is a life-changing event, but working with medical providers shouldn't be your biggest stressor. This simple system can reduce stress and help you confidently advocate for your family members.

CHAPTER 6

Even in death,
we cannot be separated | 51
DEVELOPING CONTINUING BONDS
AFTER A DEATH
By Rebecca Rainstrom, LMHC

How to develop continuing bonds after your person dies:

First and foremost, honor your grief. Grief is normal. Grief is the cost of great love. Grief is about bringing your loved one with you as you live without them.

Prompts to help you move forward

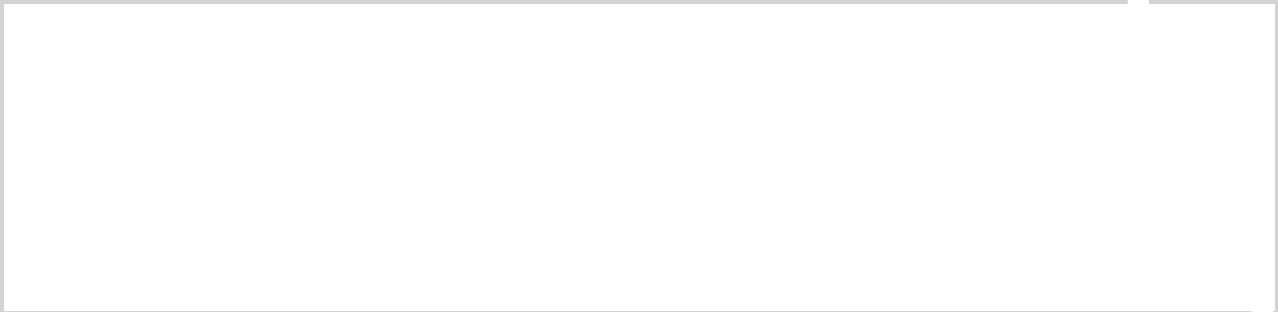
1. What was your loved one's legacy? How do you want the world to remember them?

2. How can I honor that legacy in the world moving forward?

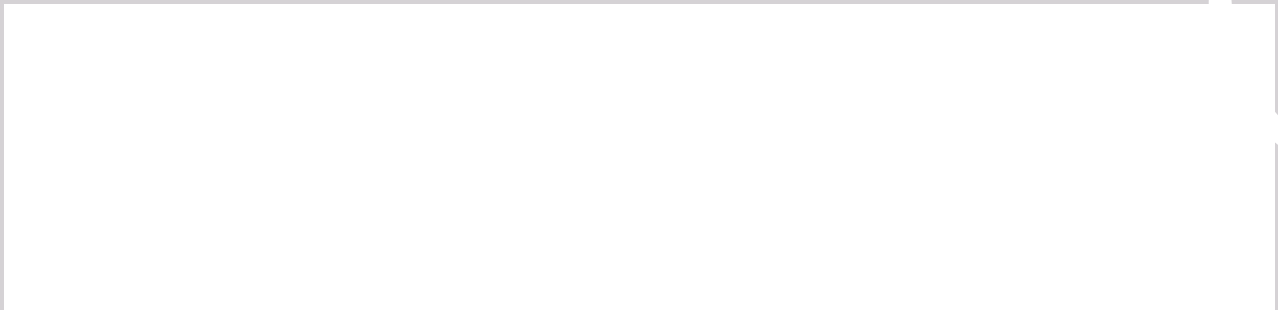
3. How can you find comfort in the everyday moments that remind you of your loved one?



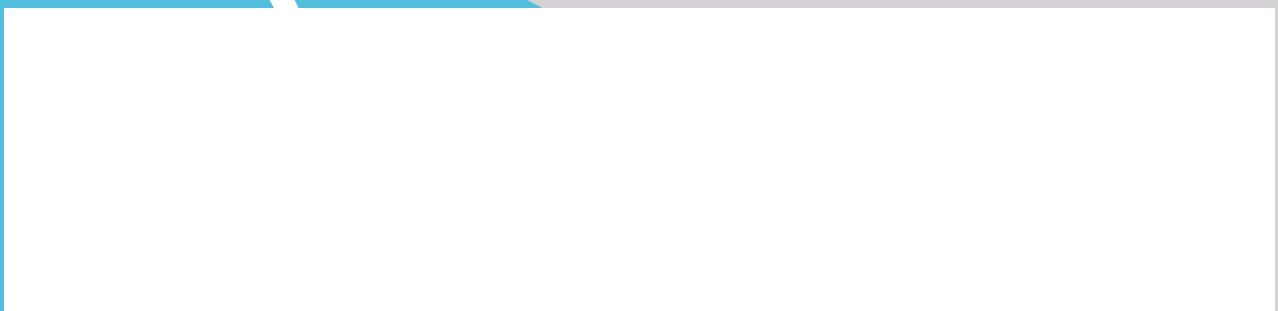
4. How can you embrace the positive attributes of your loved one?



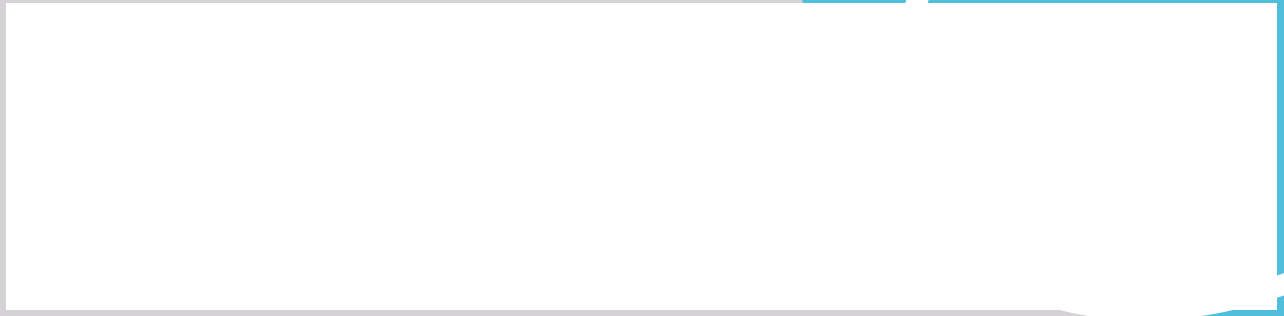
5. How can you incorporate the lessons you learned from your loved one into your daily life in large, small and meaningful ways?



6. Are there specific places that hold special memories of your loved one? Can you continue to connect in those places?



7. Share stories about your loved one



8. Carry on traditions created with or shared with your loved one

9. Keep saying their name

10. Explore ways to carry on your loved one's love through acts of kindness, sharing their interests, cooking their recipes, keeping their pictures out, sharing their stories, starting new traditions to honor them.

Your loved one may have died, but they have not left you.

CHAPTER 7

Soul friend | 59

THE MIRACLE OF HEALING THROUGH PRAYER

By Kathleen Banicki, BS

HOW TO PRAY THE HOLY ROSARY

The practice of the Rosary is accessible to people from all walks of life and can be adapted to individual needs. Whether you're seeking solace in times of grief, moments of reflection in your daily routine, or a way to strengthen your spiritual connection, the Rosary can be a flexible and personal experience. It's a timeless tradition that has brought comfort and spiritual growth to countless individuals throughout history. So, don't hesitate to explore this prayerful journey, as it can be a source of deep inner peace and understanding.

The Holy Rosary is a prayer that allows you to reflect on the life of Jesus Christ. Each day of the week is associated with specific Mysteries:

- Monday and Saturday: Joyful Mysteries
- Tuesday and Friday: Sorrowful Mysteries
- Wednesday and Sunday: Glorious Mysteries
- Thursday: Luminous Mysteries

Here's a step-by-step guide:

1. Begin with the sign of the cross and recite the Apostles Creed.
2. Say the Our Father.
3. Follow with three Hail Marys.
4. Recite the "Glory Be to the Father."
5. Announce the First Mystery and say the Our Father.
6. Meditate on the Mystery while saying ten Hail Marys.

7. After each decade (a group of ten beads), say the prayer requested by the Virgin Mary: "Oh, my Jesus, forgive us our sins; save us from the fires of Hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of thy mercy."

8. Repeat steps five to seven for the remaining Mysteries.

9. Conclude with the "Hail, Holy Queen" prayer on the medal after completing the five decades.

Those unfamiliar with these prayers can find guided Rosary prayers in this Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/745786165568413/>, making it easier to meditate and focus.

Praying the Rosary deepens your understanding of Jesus and His sacrifice. Mary, his Mother, offers profound insights into his life and death. As Jesus hung on the Cross, he entrusted Mary to all humanity, emphasizing her role as the Mother of all. Praying the Rosary brings wisdom and spiritual enlightenment.

THE JOYFUL MYSTERY

- The Annunciation- Gift: Humility
- The Visitation- Gift: Love of Neighbor
- The Birth of Jesus- Gift: Poverty in Spirit
- The Presentation- Gift: Obedience
- Finding the Child Jesus in the Temple- Gift: Joy in Finding Jesus

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERY

- The Agony in the Garden- Gift: Sorrow for sin
- The Scourging at the Pillar- Gift: Purity
- Crowning with thorns- Gift: Courage
- Carrying of the Cross- Gift: Patience
- The Crucifixion- Gift: Perseverance

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERY

- The Resurrection- Gift: Faith
- The Ascension- Gift: Hope
- Descent of the Holy Spirit- Gift: Love of God
- The Assumption- Gift: Grace of a Happy Death
- The Coronation- Gift: Trust in Marys Intercession

THE LUMINOUS MYSTERY

- Baptism of Jesus- Gift: Openness to the Holy Spirit
- Wedding at Cana- Gift: To Jesus through Mary
- Proclaiming the Kingdom- Gift: Repentance and trust in God
- Transfiguration- Gift: Desire for Holiness
- Institution of the Eucharist- Gift: Adoration

Praying the Rosary brings wisdom and spiritual enlightenment. Many blessings to all who embark on this journey!

CHAPTER 8

From loss to connection | 69
CREATING A RELATIONSHIP WITH
LOVED ONES IN SPIRIT
By Deb DeCelle

Before beginning to connect with your loved one, it will be helpful to release any physical tension by utilizing progressive muscle relaxation (PMR).

Here's a basic guide on how to practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation:

Choose a quiet environment where you won't be disturbed.

Sit in a comfortable chair or lie down on a soft surface.

You may do this with your eyes open or closed.

Start with a few deep breaths to calm your mind and focus your attention on the present moment.

Progressively work through different muscle groups in your body by tightening the muscle group (in the order below) as tightly as you can, holding the tension for about 5-10 seconds, and then releasing it. Concentrate on the feeling of relaxation as the tension melts away. Relax for 20-30 seconds in between muscle groups. When you're finished, take a few deep breaths and gradually bring yourself back to full alertness.

- Feet and toes
- Calves, knees, and thighs
- Abdomen
- Chest and back
- Hands, fingers, arms and shoulders
- Face and neck

CONNECTION WITH LOVED ONE'S MEDITATION

Close your eyes and begin to focus your attention on your breath - breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth - breathe in to the count of 4, hold to the count of 5 (if it's comfortable for you), breathe out through your mouth to a count of 7. You may repeat this as many or as few times as you'd like.

Begin to envision yourself in a relaxing setting - a special place you shared with your loved one in the physical world or another place that makes you feel comfortable. We are not all visual people, so don't fret if you don't "see" anything.

Envision or sense your loved one approaching and joining you. Notice the details - perhaps it's how they look or a scent they used to wear. What do they look or feel like now? Do they appear to you as they were in their younger years or the age at which they passed?

Imagine them embracing you or standing with their hands on your shoulders. As you experience this moment, feel or see their soul's energy - often, this appears as light. Picture or sense it surrounding you both and see or feel your light merge with theirs.

Stay in this moment as long as it feels right to you. When your time with your loved one is finished, become more aware of your physical body. Move your fingers and toes, focus again on your breathing, and open your eyes to return to the physical world.

CHAPTER 9

Isolated in grief | 78
PRESERVING RELATIONSHIPS
AFTER LOSS

By Karyn Arnold, B.S.

THE TOOL

Use this template to organize your thoughts. You can fill it out and send it, or use it as a base for a conversation—whatever you choose. Share it with as many people as you like, and remember that the one who benefits most from better communication in grief is you.

Dear _____,

I'm writing because I need you to better understand this loss, my grief, and all that has changed since it happened.

You have always known me as a person who is _____ (think of adjectives here: strong, funny, easy-going, optimistic...include as many as you like).

I'm sure you've seen the change in me, and I know I don't feel like that same person right now. While every day of grief is different, most of the time, I'd say I'm feeling _____ (exhausted, scared, angry, helpless, alone...again include as many descriptive words that you can think of).

This loss has changed everything. I have lost the life I thought I would have and a future that I hoped would be. I have lost every part of who I am and who I used to be. It has changed every minute and every hour and every part of my routine. I think about it all day and pretty much all night, too.

I'm just not myself right now. I say "right now" because I hope to be able to show you a glimpse of who I was again at some point, but there is no going back to normal. The me you knew before is gone, and in some ways, I guess we all have to mourn that loss as much as any other.

But I am _____ (hopeful, confident, filled with faith or belief...try and think of at least one positive phrase or word here) that with your love and support, I will survive this.

I may not feel as strong a person as I once was, and I'm asking for your patience because I think this pain will be with me for a very long time. In many ways, I will carry it forever. In return, and as best I am able, I will also try to be patient as I recognize that you, too, are adjusting to the changes you see in me.

More than anything, I'm inviting a conversation between us. You can ask me anything, at any time. Please don't be afraid to make me sad, and don't be fooled into thinking that if I look "okay" and that if I'm back to work or at a party or returning to some kind of routine that I'm not thinking about it. I'm always thinking about it.

It helps me to know you are thinking about it, too. I want to hear _____'s name. I want to know that you miss him/her too. I don't want this loss to be forgotten.

You don't know how much this will mean to me and how much it will help me to feel less alone...

CHAPTER 10

Mindfulness in death | 88

HOW TO USE NATURE TO COPE WITH GRIEF

By Kristi Capriglione, MA, LPC

Allow yourself to be guided through this meditation and embark on the practice of mindfully being present. At first, it may feel unnatural, or you may question whether you're doing it right. Approach this with no judgment or expectation and focus on the overall experience. Remember, mindfulness is experiential, and each time, it will showcase something different.

While reading each paragraph, take time before moving on to the next. Let yourself relax into the words and bring the world around you alive. After each time you practice, the experience will brighten. If you prefer to listen to this guided meditation, visit my website <https://daylightgrief.com/tools-and-resources> to hear a recording where I gently guide you through this tool.

- Find a serene and secluded spot in nature where you can sit comfortably. Choose a place that resonates with you, whether it's a park, a forest, a beach, or a quiet garden. Allow yourself ample time, free from distractions. As you take your seat, close your eyes for a moment and take a few deep breaths, allowing your body to relax.
- Begin by grounding yourself in the present moment. Feel the firm support of the earth beneath you. Visualize roots extending from your body, sinking deep into the earth's core. These roots symbolize your strength and resilience during your grieving process. Connect with the steady stability of the Earth.

- Shift your focus to your breath. Take slow, deliberate breaths, inhaling through your nose and exhaling through your mouth. Observe the rise and fall of your chest with each breath. Let each breath become an anchor, gently guiding you into the present moment and calming the turbulence within.
- Open your eyes and take in the exquisite beauty that surrounds you. Allow your gaze to wander, taking in the colors, shapes, and textures of your environment. Observe the interplay of light and shadow on leaves, the graceful dance of branches swaying in the breeze, or the gentle flow of a nearby stream. Nature is a living testament to the interconnectedness of all life.
- Fully engage your senses. Focus solely on the sounds of nature—the birds singing, leaves rustling, water trickling. Feel the warmth of the sun caressing your skin or the coolness of a gentle breeze on your face. Use your sense of touch to connect with the earth beneath you. Let your senses become an intimate bridge between you and the natural world. Feel free to close your eyes for a moment and take in all the senses.
- As you continue to observe and engage with nature, practice mindful presence. Become aware of any emotion that arises within you without judgment. Allow your emotions of grief to exist in this very moment. Acknowledge them and know that they are valid, seen, and held.
- Contemplate the profound concept of impermanence, which is inherent in the natural world. Just as seasons change and trees shed their leaves, life moves through cycles of transformation. Similarly, your grief will evolve with time. Embrace the natural ebb and flow of emotions, trusting in the healing journey.

- Take a moment to express gratitude for the gift of connecting with nature during your grieving process. Gratitude is a potent tool for healing and finding peace. Reflect on the beauty and serenity nature generously offers, even amidst your grief.

- As you near the end of this guided mindful moment, take a few moments to reflect on any insights or feelings that arose during your time in nature. If any burdens or emotions are weighing heavy on your heart, imagine placing them gently in the hands of the natural world, trusting that it can hold and heal them.


As the guided mindful moment comes to an end, remember that nature is a reliant companion, always available to offer solace and support whenever you seek it. Your grief is your own, and it's crucial to honor your emotions and grant yourself the time needed to heal. Nature, with its timeless wisdom, is here to nurture and guide you on your journey.

When you're ready, slowly bring your awareness back to the present moment. Begin to wiggle your toes and your fingers. Take a few deep breaths. Carry with you the sense of peace and connection you've found in nature as you continue your path toward healing and self-discovery.

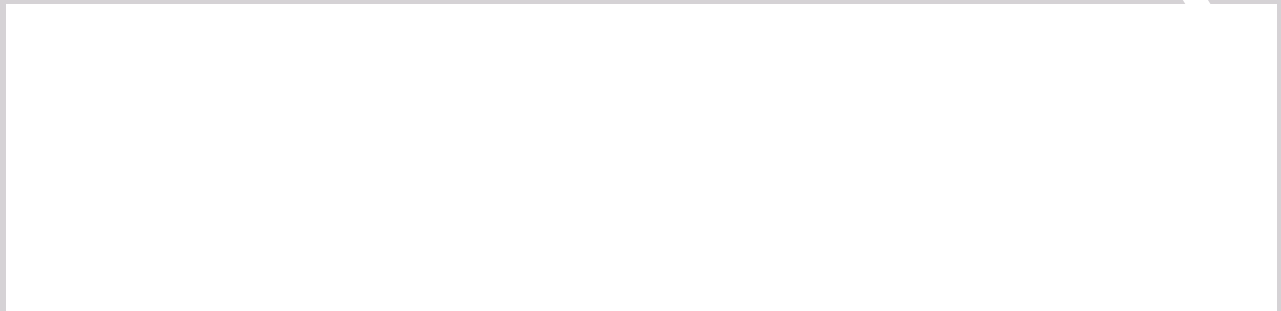
Reflection Questions:

1. Which of your senses played the most significant role in connecting with nature during this meditation?

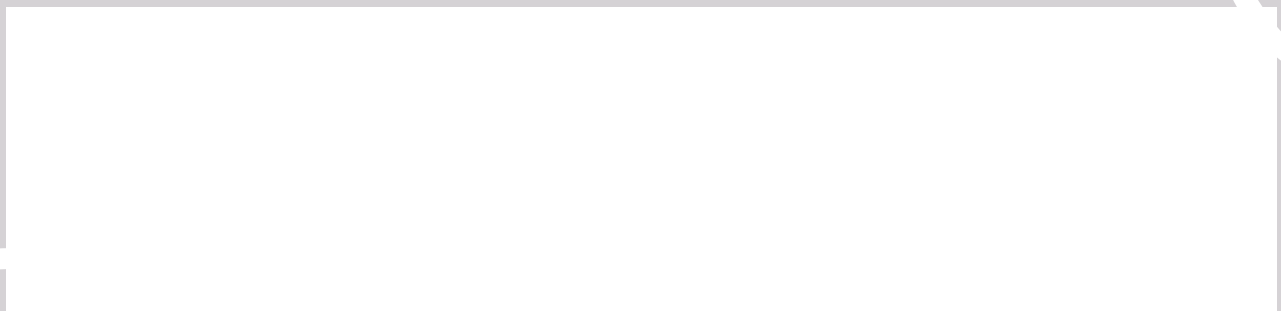
2. Reflect on a specific moment in nature that stood out to you during the meditation. How did the moment in nature serve as a supportive and nurturing companion in your journey through grief?



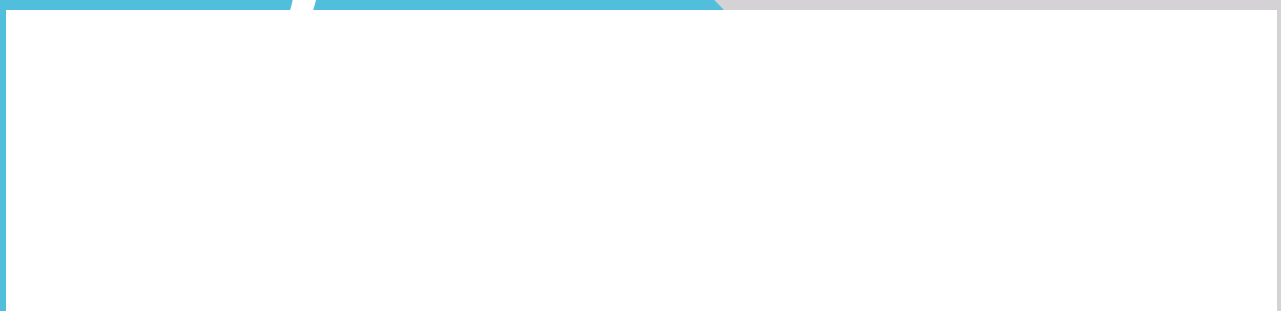
3. As you acknowledged and allowed your emotions of grief to exist without judgment, were there particular sensations or realizations that arose?



4. How can the lessons and experiences from this guided meditation be integrated into your grief and daily life?



5. Are there specific aspects of nature or mindfulness practices that you feel inspired to incorporate into your routine for ongoing support in your grieving process?



CHAPTER 11

A love letter to my sons,
in memoriam

NAVIGATING THE RIPPLES OF LOSS,
LOVE, AND TRANSITION

By Carol S. Miller, LCSW

THE PRACTICE (FROM THE GRIEF EXPERIENCE BOOK CHAPTER)

Our culture still minimizes or runs from grief. This is especially true for losses through infertility, miscarriage, stillbirth, and infant death. These types of losses are often invisible to others. They represent “disenfranchised grief” – grief that is not usually openly acknowledged, socially accepted, or publicly mourned. Often experienced as a trauma because of their unexpected, sudden nature, they go against the grain of what we are expecting – to give birth, not to experience death.

Created by Cath Duncan, co-founder of The Creative Grief Studio, The Ripples of Loss is a tool for exploring and integrating grief. I’ve offered this tool to many of my clients and group participants. It’s useful for death and non-death losses alike, and people always tell me they found it helpful for gaining greater insight into their loss and grief. I’m going to share a shortened version of The Ripple of Loss here, so you can use it too.

The tool is simple. I invite you to gather:

- One or more sheets of unlined paper (8½ x 11 or larger if you like!).
- Art supplies of your choice – pencils, colored pencils, crayons, markers, paints, pastels ... whatever you enjoy working with.
- You may also want to have a journal nearby to make notes as you go along.

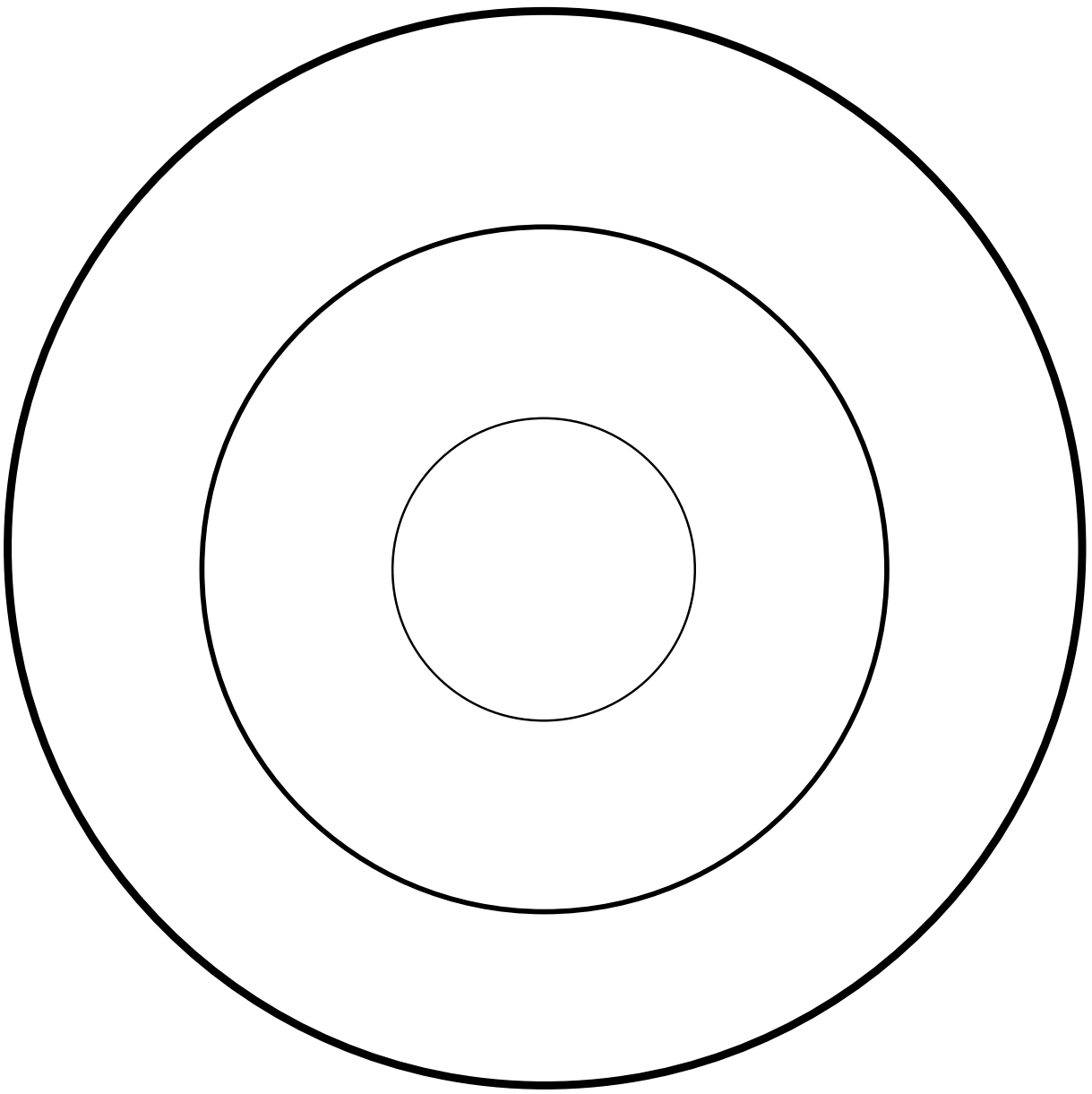
You may wish to have some quiet, peaceful music playing in the background. I invite you to first settle or ground yourself in the moment before beginning to work. You might sit quietly and focus on your breath, paying attention to where it enters and exits your body, the rise and fall of your abdomen as your breathing deepens. You might enjoy placing your hands over your heart and continuing to breathe into your heart space. Or select another grounding technique that calls to you.

When you're ready, select a piece of paper and a writing implement. Draw three concentric circles, like a bullseye – one small circle in the middle of the paper (perhaps 1.5 to 2 inches in diameter), a second circle around that (perhaps 5 to 6 inches in diameter), and a third large circle around these two.

1. In the first circle in the middle, write down or symbolically identify your loss. For example, I might write the names of one or both of my sons in the center circle.

2. In the second circle, using words or symbols, note your responses to this question: What other losses have you experienced because of this death or loss? I might write: Loss of innocence; trust in my body; identity as a mother; faith in medical technology.

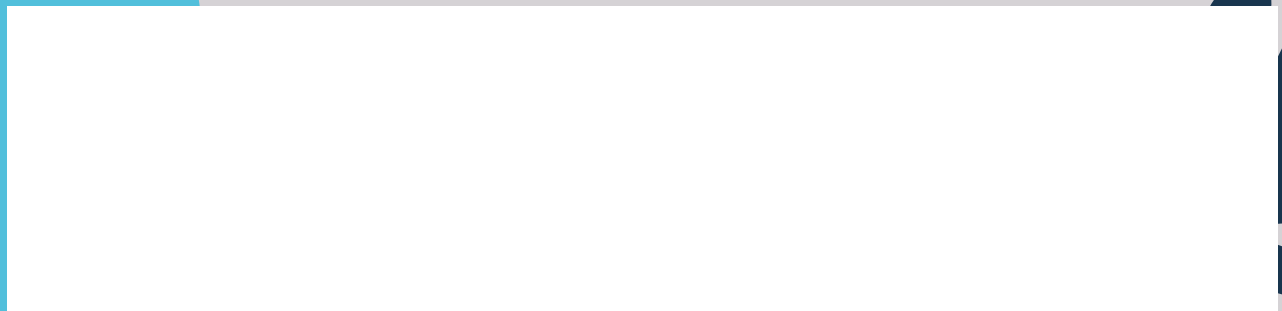
3. In the third circle, again using words or symbols, note your responses to this question: What other losses are you concerned or fearful of experiencing because of this loss? My responses might be: The ability to parent in a joyful, easy, non-anxious way; being able to enjoy a pregnancy; losing relationships with others who don't get it.



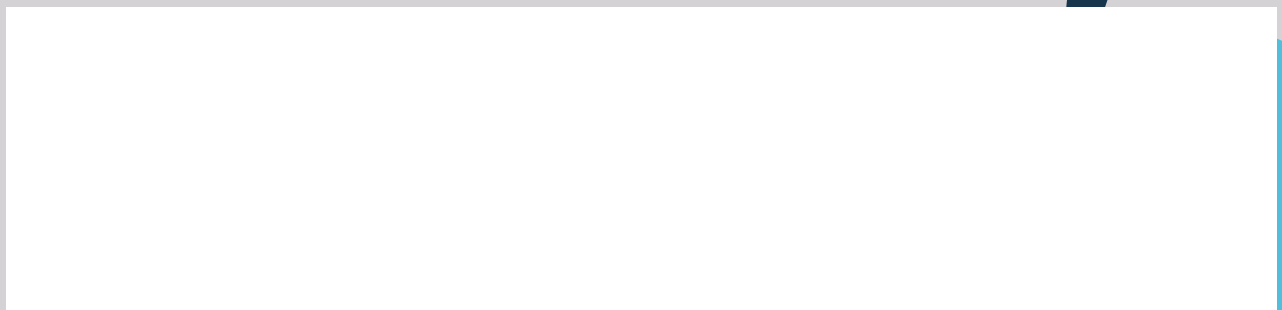
4. It is important to recognize that despite these deep injuries and losses, they do not define our lives completely. So, in the blank space that surrounds your circles, note your responses to these questions: Despite this loss, what remains? What blessings or gifts are still present in my life? For example, I might write: unconditional love; resilience; greater understanding and empathy for others who grieve; friends and family who stepped up and supported us.

Here are some additional questions you might wish to reflect upon once you feel that you have completed your Ripples of Loss:

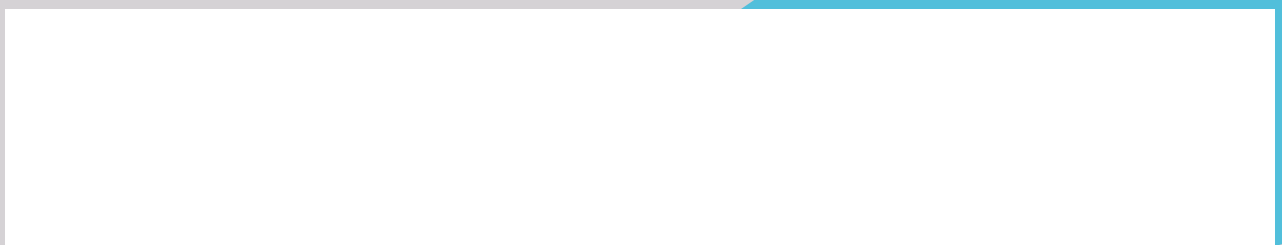
As you moved through the process, what did you notice in your body? In your emotions? In your thoughts?



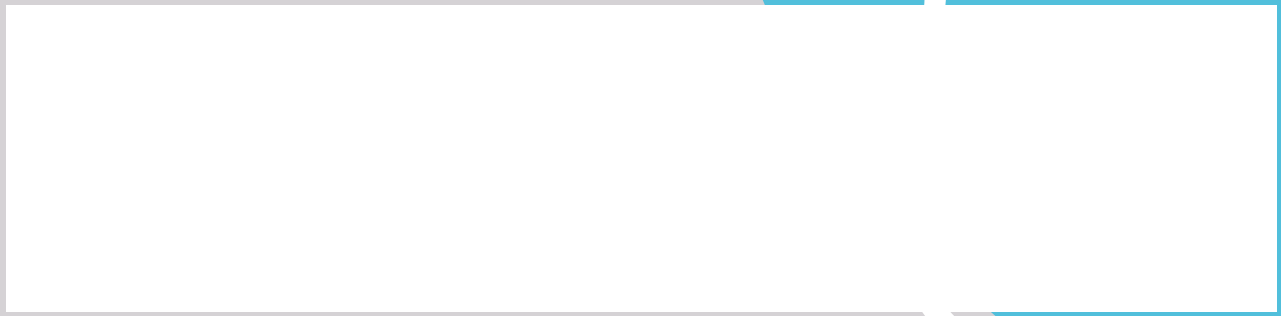
What surprised you about this process?



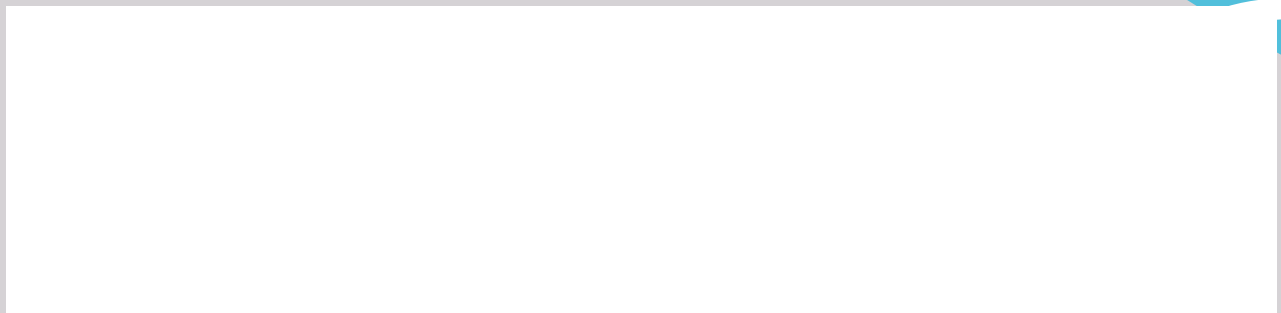
What surprised you about this process?



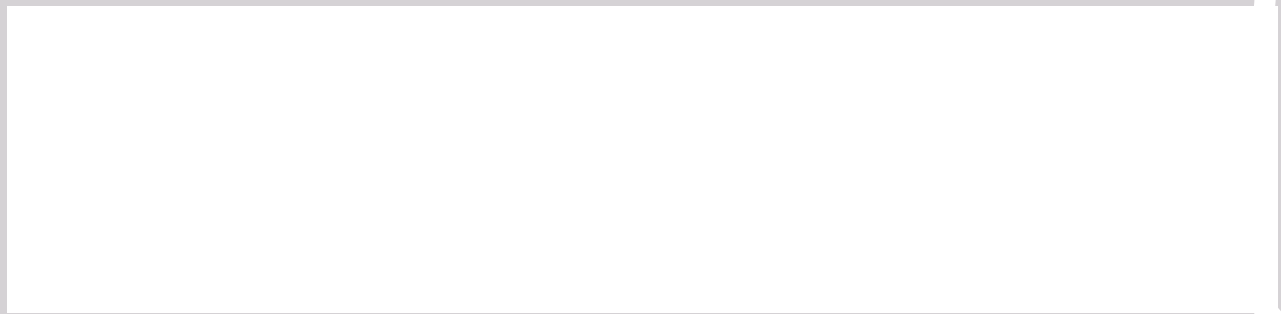
What came to light about yourself and your loss?



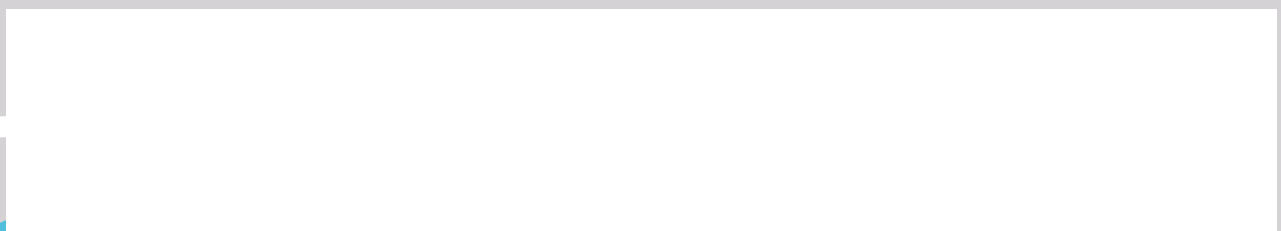
What invisible or ambiguous losses did you identify through this process? How do those losses impact your primary loss?



What new meaning or meanings might have arisen for you through this process?



What new resources came to light for you?



If you've found this Ripple of Loss process meaningful and you'd like to do a deeper dive using Cath's expanded Ripple of Loss journaling prompts and guided creative process, I encourage you to work through Cath Duncan's book, *Untangle Your Grief - Questions + Art After Loss*, which you'll find at her website, www.RememberingForGood.com. If you'd like to train to use The Ripple of Loss and many other wonderful creative tools in your work as a Grief Support Practitioner, you can do that with Cath Duncan and Kara Jones at The Creative Grief Studio (www.CreativeGriefStudio.com).

CHAPTER 12

My grief journey | 106

CARVING A HEALING PATH BY
LISTENING TO AND
HONORING YOURSELF

By Karen Ann White, LPC

THE TOOL

I can't tell you exactly what to do because we all have different feelings and needs. What I can encourage you to believe is that everything you're feeling and experiencing after the death of a loved one or another significant loss is okay and normal.

My journey through grief has helped me understand the importance and necessity of listening to and honoring my needs and my feelings. I am learning that listening to myself means acknowledging and feeling my feelings as well as doing the thing that feels right or important to me when it comes to my grief.

I hope that sharing some of my experience - including some of the questions I've been answering and the "next right things" I've been doing - will not only help you see how to listen to and honor yourself and your grief but will also help keep you moving forward in your own journey.

Your process and needs will likely look different - just know that pretty much nothing you feel like you need to do is too weird, silly, or unimportant. It means something to you, it will be therapeutic for you - so honor that and do it.

It's okay if the loss creates a paradigm shift - it did for me. Honor that. Embrace it if you can. Eventually, things will start making more sense. You'll feel better and stronger. You'll learn that grief and joy can coexist. Things will start lining up, and you'll start to see that reconstructed identity taking shape. It's not easy, and more questions will come. Take the time to feel the feelings, acknowledge the questions, and do what you need to do to find the answers. When you do, you'll come back home to yourself.

To start listening to and honoring yourself, slow down. If you have to cut some things out temporarily, do it. This came naturally to me (like the gym and even church). I didn't want to stop these things, yet something in me needed that break.

For me, listening to myself and honoring my needs looked like:

- Taking time off work
- Limiting time with people who felt draining
- Getting real with my closest friends
- Letting the tears fall, no matter where I was or who I was with—crying is healing y'all
- Meditating, breathing
- Writing a birthday card to Pappaw and reading it out loud at his grave
- Speaking at both funerals
- Enjoying a nice takeout meal and wine aptly labeled "Complicated" on my ex-boyfriend's birthday

- Dinner and toasting our dads' memories with two good friends on Father's Day
- Incorporating legacy and ritual into my life
- Therapy
- Taking a gym break. I used that time in the mornings to read, reflect, journal, and pray; this was invaluable for me
- Reviving a family tradition of going to Waffle House on Christmas even though my mom, boyfriend, and I were the only ones who went
- Going to Puerto Rico with two amazing friends the week my ex-boyfriend and I were supposed to be in Colorado – so freeing and healing and presented me with new opportunities and a door to return

Breathe. Pay attention to your body. Move. Spend time outside. Put your bare feet on the ground.

Get a notebook. Write in it—your feelings, needs, those questions that keep popping up.

Step by step, do the thing that feels right for you—the thing you need to do. Just go with it.

This is how you honor yourself.

Don't worry about what other people think. If you're worried, do it anyway. You're on your own healing journey.

Some of the questions I've been answering are listed below. You might have your own that are coming up or you might find some of these helpful, especially if you're feeling stuck.

Use these like journal prompts. Focus on one at a time and give yourself the time you need to reflect and answer them.

I want to honor Dad's and Pappaw's lives and the good parts of my relationship. What are meaningful ways I can do this?



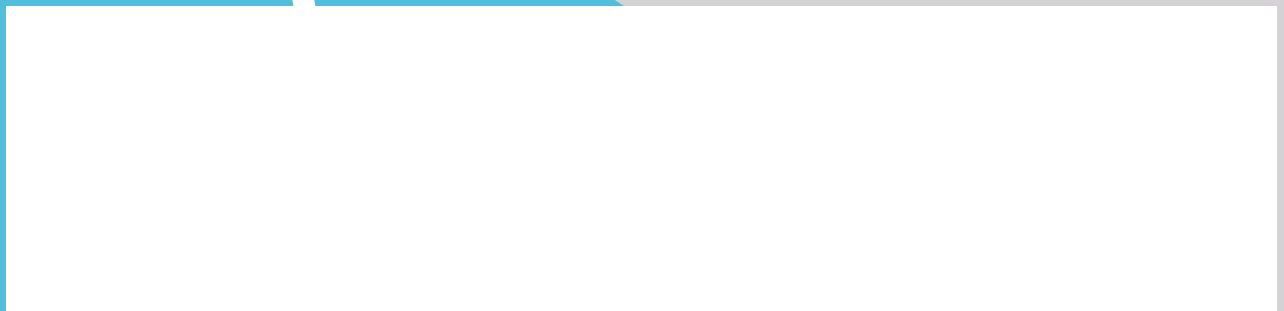
What feels right to me? If I don't know the answer immediately, I'm acknowledging what's happening and my needs and feelings about it.



What gives me a sense of purpose? How can I do more of this?



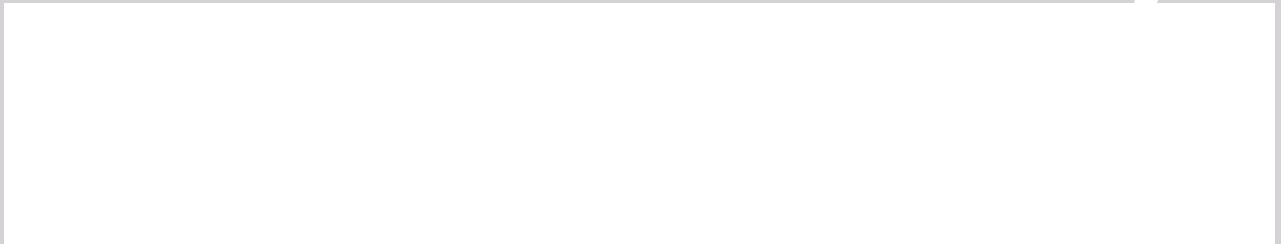
Who are my people? Am I being real with them? How can they support me? Am I asking for this?



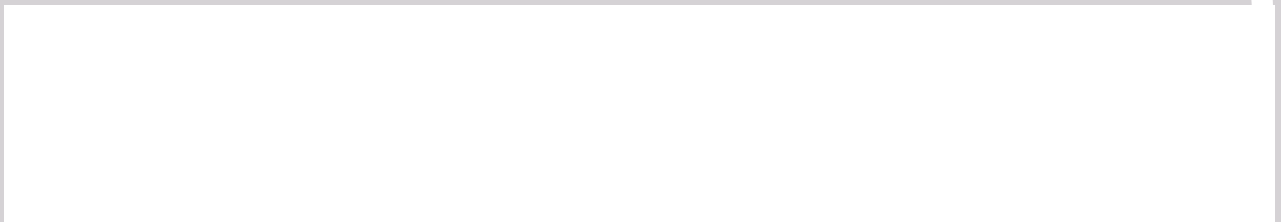
What are my core values? Is the way I'm living right now congruent with them?



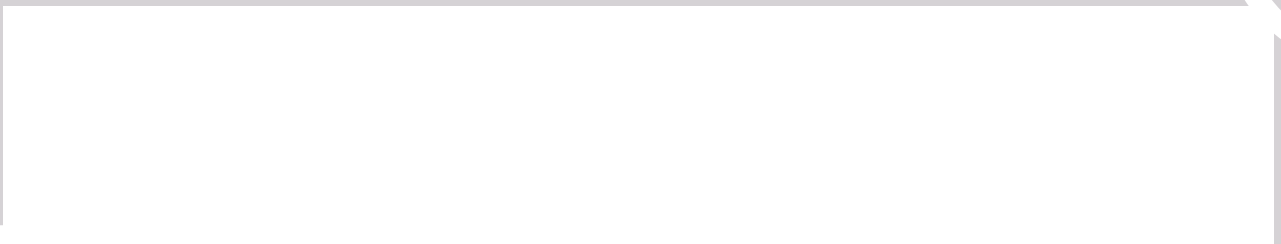
Who am I?



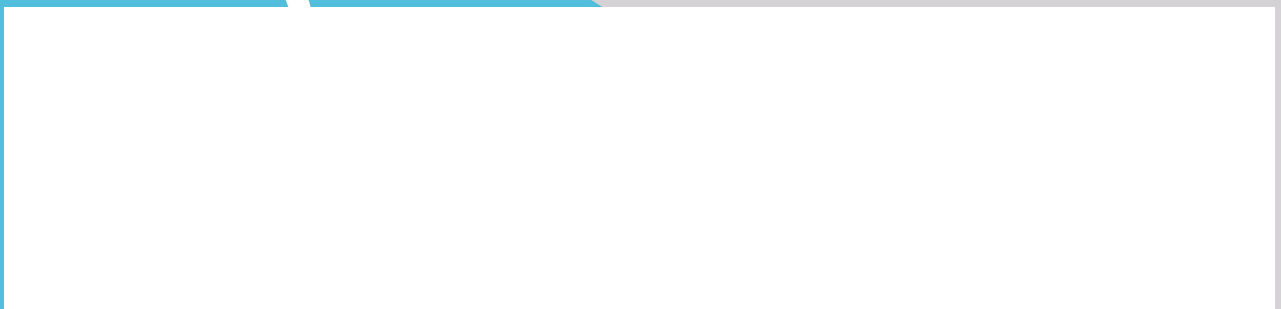
What do I want?



What do I need?



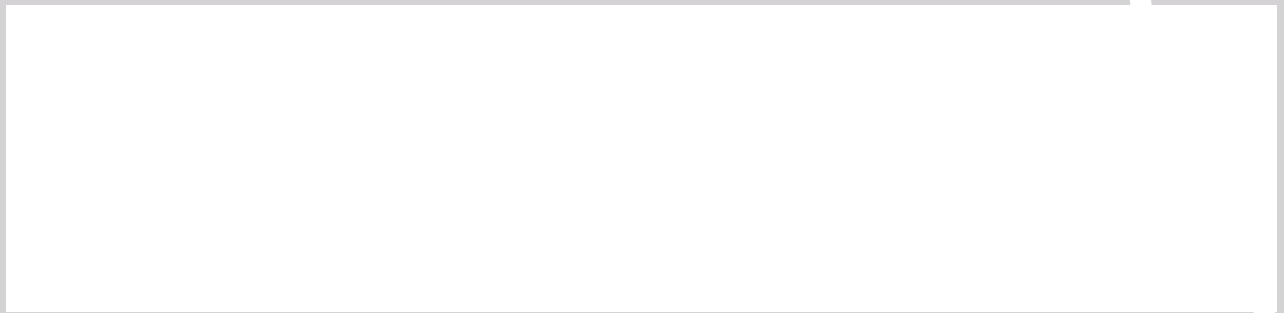
Where am I going, and what will life look like when I get there?
What will I be doing?



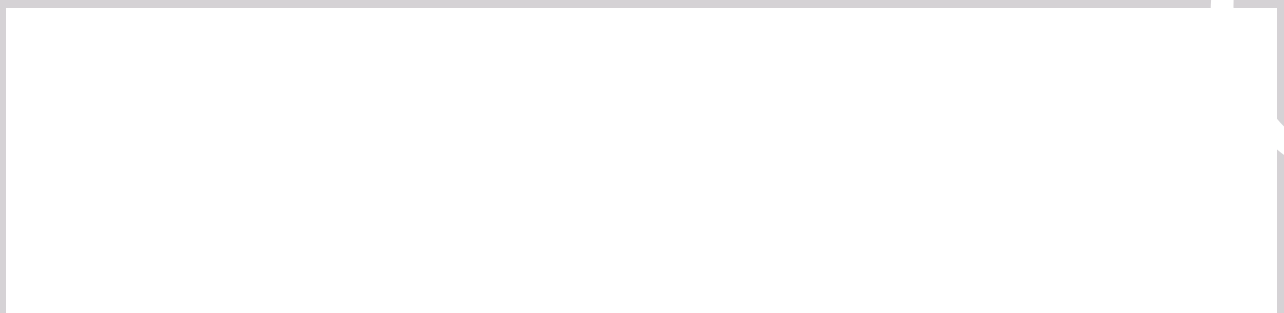
How can I live out the both/and that grief and loss present (e.g., sadness/joy, fear/courage, anger/gratitude)?



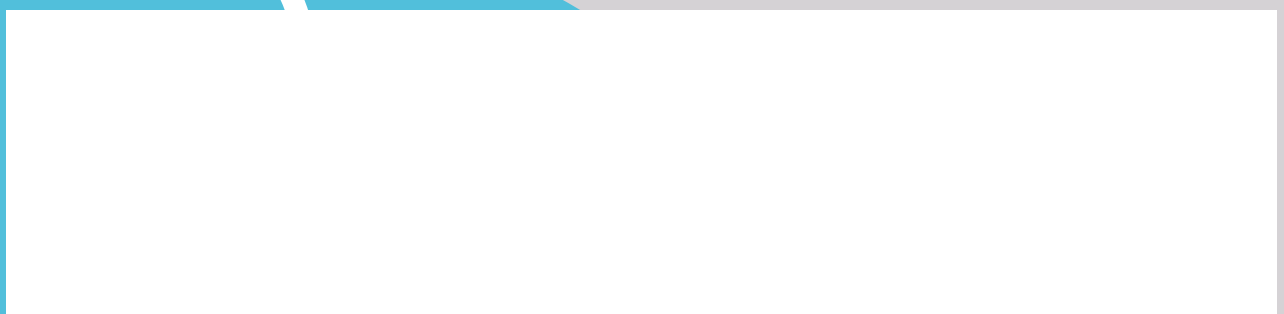
What are some ways I can be intentional about my grief and what I do with my feelings?



What is my loved one's legacy and how can I continue living that out in my own life?



What did I learn from my loved one? (There might be positive and negative parts to this answer).



Word to the wise: don't tackle these all at once! Do what you can as you feel like it, and come back to your questions later. Even a few minutes of reflective writing can be beneficial.

This is an ongoing journey. The waves of grief and loss ebb and flow, as will your healing path.

Come back to these questions and others that arise as often as you need. Get comfortable with uncomfortable feelings.

Just do the thing, whatever you need to do. You'll be so glad you do.

Here's to growth. Here's to legacy and ritual. Here's to healing.

I would love to connect with you! You can find me here:
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KarenWhiteLPC>
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/karen_ann_white

CHAPTER 13

Mindful motion | 116

THE ULTIMATE TOOL FOR HEALING

By Lisa Millis, MA, CHC

The following Walk-Run Therapy practice combines the art of being aware with the movement of your body in nature.

Our research shows that being present while moving decreases the body's stress response, reduces anxiety, lowers blood pressure, increases the ability to regulate your emotions, and improves your overall sense of well-being and peacefulness.

First, choose a Couch to 5K plan and a safe, familiar route to move on. Begin with a three-minute walk, transitioning into a one-minute jog at a conversational pace. Add 30 seconds each week to the jog time while subtracting 30 seconds each week to the walk. This strategy will allow you to slowly build your endurance, reducing your risk for injury while introducing you to the healing powers of mindfulness-based Walk-Run Therapy.

STEP 1 – PREPARE YOUR BODY

- Wear comfortable shoes and non-cotton apparel/sports bra.
- Make nutrition choices natural, fresh, whole, and organic when possible.
- Properly hydrate with water throughout your day.
- Adopt a dynamic warm-up and static stretch cool-down routine

STEP 2 – PREPARE YOUR MIND

Before Your Workout

- Take a slow, centering breath and determine your intention.
- Quickly scan your body to notice if you are feeling fatigue, sadness, and/or anger. Or are you energized and ready to move? Acknowledge the feelings you're having without judgment, and release them.
- Choose a mantra. For example: "With every step, I heal." Or, "I've got this."

During Your Workout:

- Practice raising your awareness by noticing how your feet feel when they hit the pavement or what you see or hear the grief experience.

STEP 3 – PREPARE YOUR SOLE

Use Good Form as a simple method for achieving a natural, efficient stride.

- Posture - Pull shoulders back, keeping a long, tall spine with chin up, eyes level with the horizon.
- Mid-foot strike - Minimize your impact and maximize your efficiency by landing lightly on the center of your mid-foot.
- Cadence (Stride) - Make shorter strides at a comfortable pace. An ideal stride doesn't break your posture and allows you to have a soft, unlocked knee.
- Lean - Use a subtle, forward shift of your weight from the ankle joint.

After Your Workout

- Congratulate yourself for your initial intention, no matter how many times your mind wandered or how difficult you thought the workout was. Practice becomes habit-forming, which cultivates gratitude and healing

CHAPTER 14

Walking through divorce | 126
FINDING GRACE, FORGIVENESS, AND
ACCEPTANCE

By Tiffany Thomas, CADC-II, MA, LMFT

THE TOOL

The following exercise will guide you through a process that has been incredibly helpful for me. This process uses self-awareness and intention.

When was the last time you went somewhere outside of your comfort zone? Or spend your day just being outside, by yourself, without your phone or music to distract you? Aside from talking about my feelings to family, friends, or my therapist, being outside has been the biggest teacher and healer as I navigate my divorce.

Why? It has forced me to slow down, get in touch with myself, and learn how I respond when I'm in unfamiliar territory. When I see strangers, do I say hi? Do I avert eye contact? Do I become aware of my loneliness? It brings me back to my existence and simplifies everything.

Take a moment and think about a place you have wanted to go but never made the time or even the environment that surrounds where you live. Find a place outside where you can spend some time: a beach, forest, mountain, trail, park, or lake.

Maybe you start by going for 30 minutes or throw yourself in and plan a hike in unfamiliar territory. No matter how you do it, as long as the intention is there, you can't go wrong. Challenge yourself to leave the headphones at home; no music, no podcasts, no audiobooks. Go alone; bring a journal if you want. Also, tell someone where you are going if you are going somewhere unfamiliar to you.

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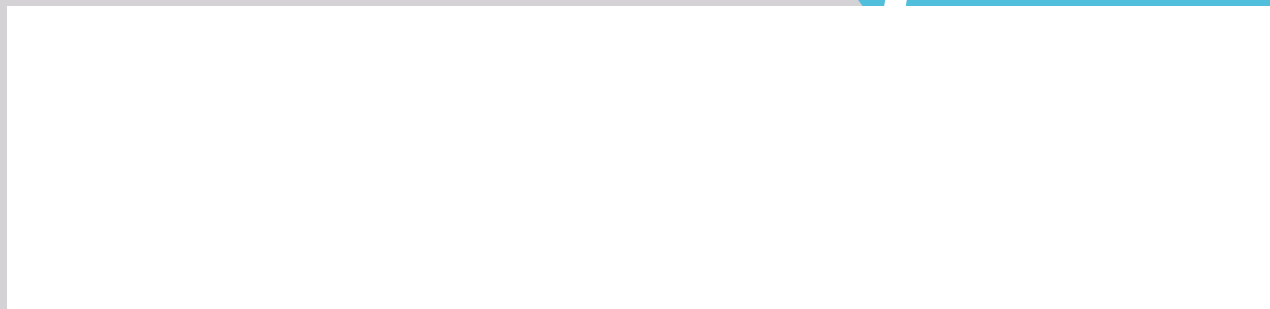
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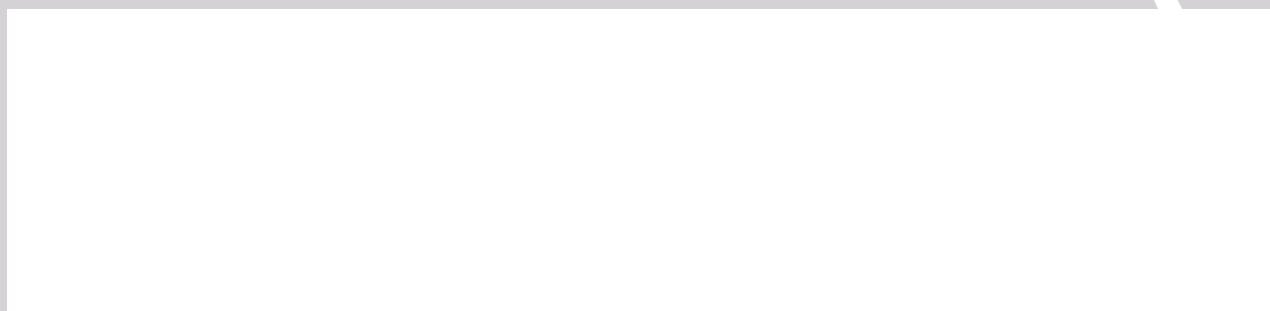
Before you go, ask yourself the following questions:

What are the strongest emotions for you at this time? This is not intended for you to dwell on the feelings but to recognize and accept where you are and know what you need to release to move forward.

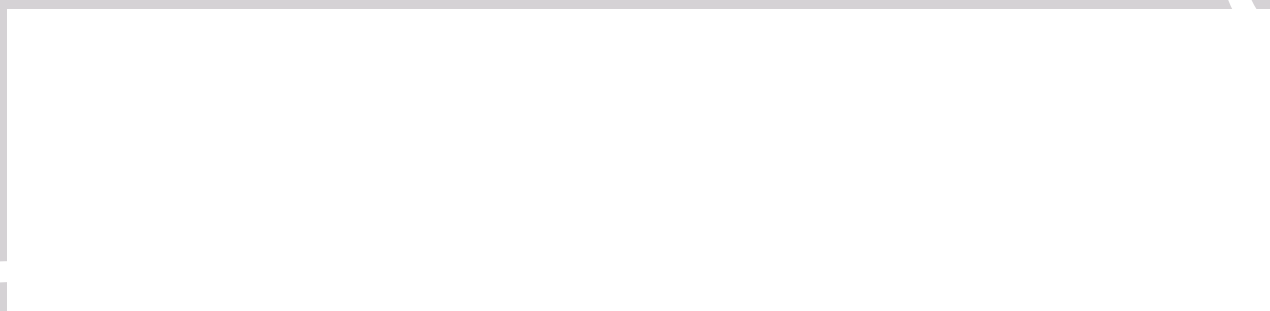
What is my intention for today? This question forces you to pause and self-reflect. While you're outside, you can come back to this if you find your mind starts to wander or you feel anxious.



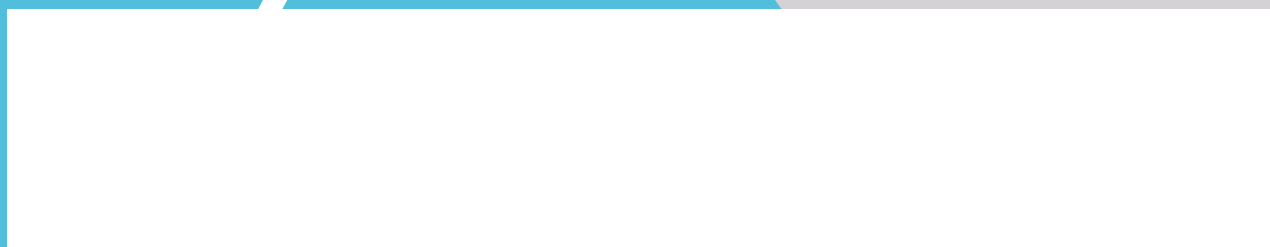
Where am I feeling lost? The answer to this is not as important as making room to be in the unknown. Allow space to not have all the answers in your life right now.



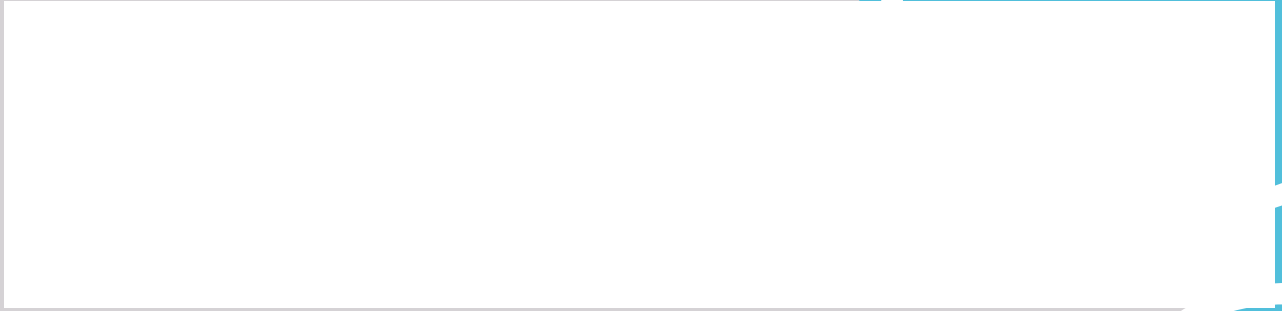
How do I feel anchored? This question should prompt you to connect with something that grounds you. It might be a memory, person, symbol, spiritual connection, or goal.



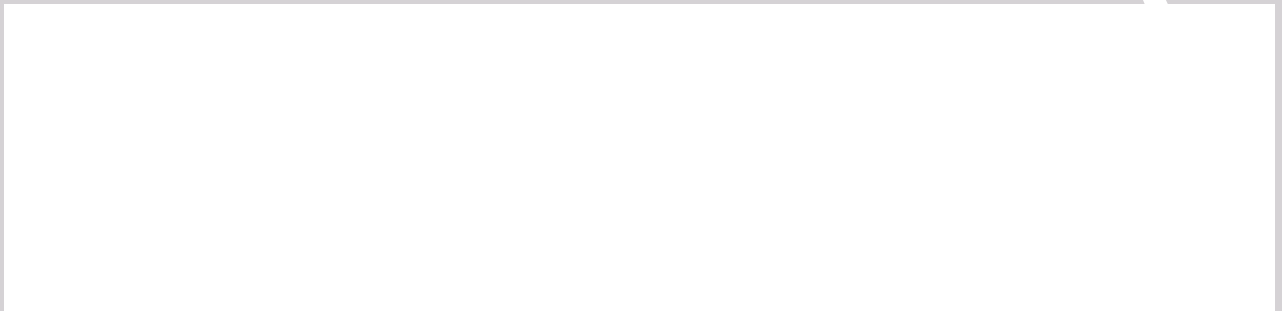
What do I wish were different right now? Maybe it's all the things you wish were different (e.g., how you're feeling, your work circumstances, your relationship status, other people's behavior), or maybe it's imagining all the possibilities and opportunities that are available to you now.



What am I open to receiving during this experience? Asking this question alone opens you up. You don't need a practical answer to this. Just ask and watch how your awareness expands.

A large, empty white rectangular box intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

Come back to this tool when you are feeling overwhelmed, detached, or sad. Let it guide you back to your truth.

A large, empty white rectangular box intended for the user to write their response to the question above.

CHAPTER 15

Chasing your rainbows | 135

STAYING CONNECTED WITH YOUR
LOVED ONES

By Kirby Kay L. Clark, MSED, Licensed
Funeral Director

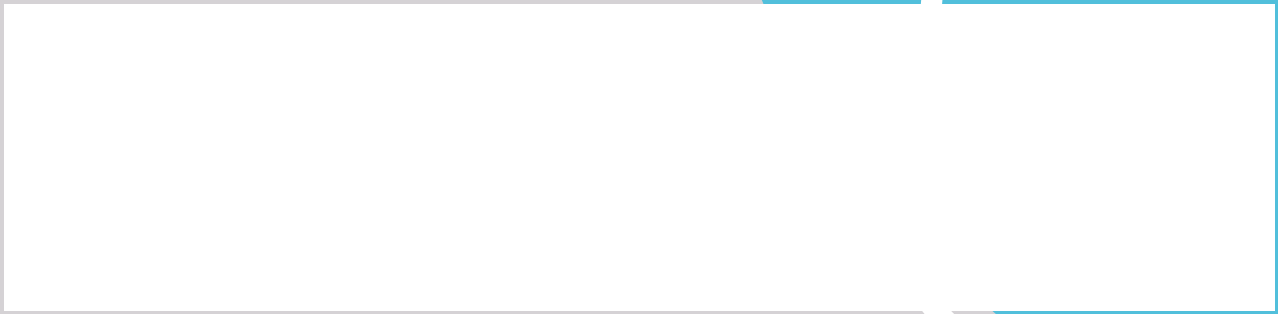
THE TOOL

When my grandparents died, I kept a journal for a year. I wrote to them daily about what was happening in my life, whether it was good or bad. I felt that was my continuing bond with them. Somehow, I felt closer to them with each word I wrote down. This technique brought me a sense of peace during an extremely tumultuous period.


Journaling serves as an organizing force when everything else feels out of order and overwhelming. Through this medium, you can articulate your fears, express thankfulness, and explore your evolving identity or sense of purpose following the death of a loved one.

If you're wondering how to begin or what to include, here are some straightforward prompts to kickstart your journaling journey:

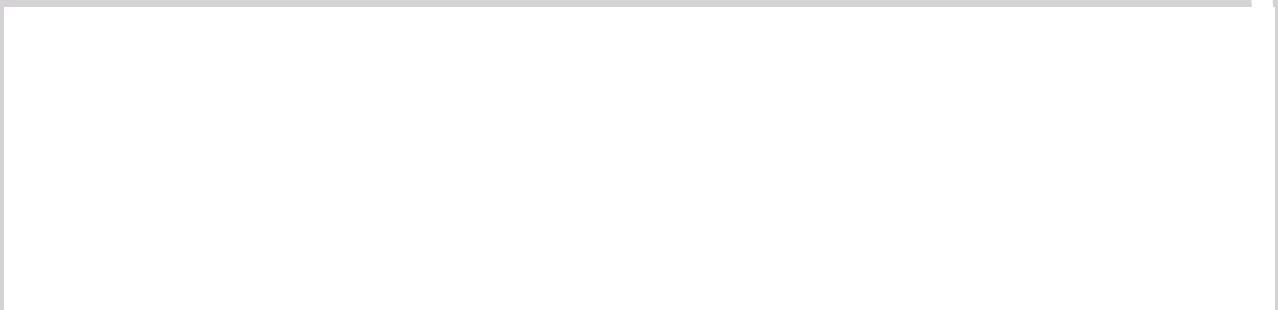
- List three aspects of life you are thankful for.



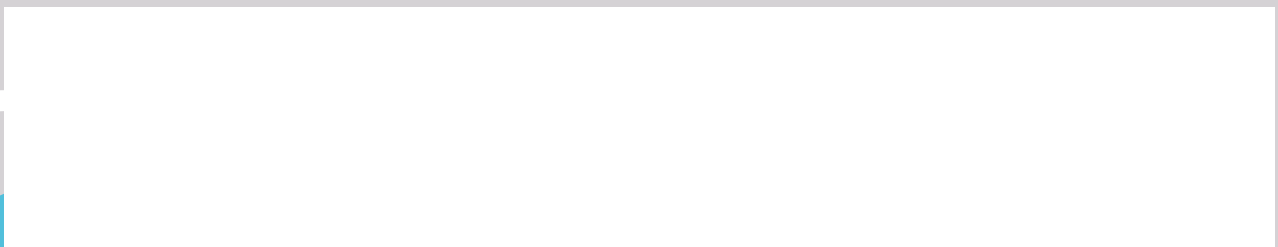
- Summarize your loved one's life story in just six words.



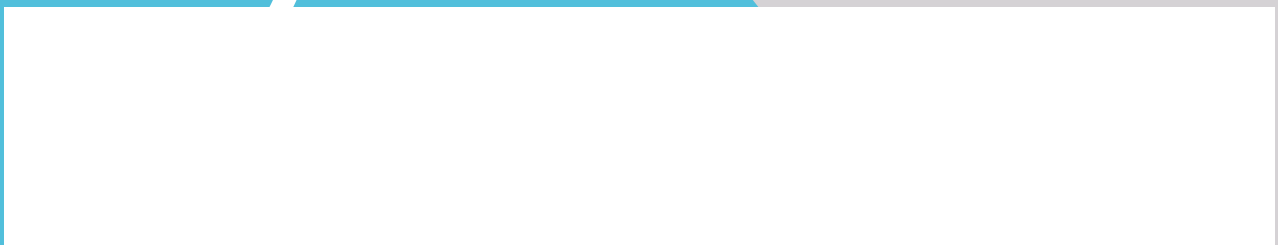
- Describe a specific memory you cherish of your loved one. Focus on details like sounds, scents, and sensations.



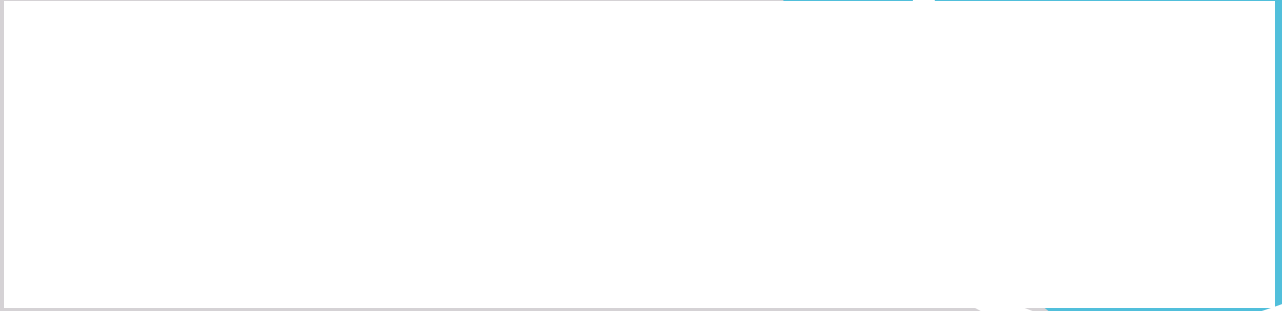
- Document what you miss and treasure about the person who has died.



- Create a letter to your future self, explaining how you feel now and what you hope will change or stay the same.



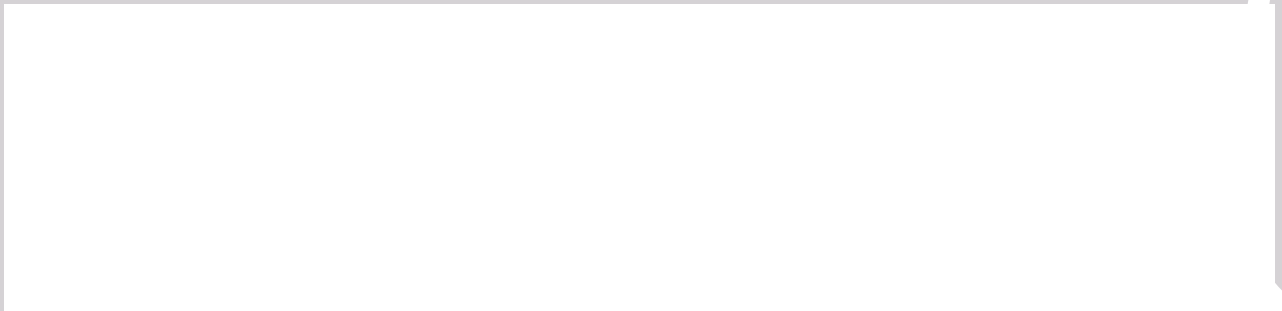
- List any regrets or unresolved issues you may feel and explore how you might come to terms with them.



- Note any changes in your daily routines.



- Explore what resilience means to you and how you have noticed it showing up in your life recently



Embracing the power of journaling can provide you with a unique and healing tool to navigate your own grief experience, helping you find comfort and strength in your cherished memories.

CHAPTER 16

The healing power of art | 144
LEARNING HOW TO TRANSFORM THE
PAIN OF GRIEF

By April Hannah LMHC, MS.Ed.

THE TOOL

The following tool is the process I used to move the physical pain of grief out of my body. It's a simple, abstract art technique anyone can do; no artistic ability is required. I gave my technique the name High-Frequency Healing Art. You can follow along and watch my process and listen to my guided meditation to help you connect with the grief in your body at www.HannahsHealing.com/HighFrequencyHealingArt.

Before you begin, you will need to buy a few art supplies: an 8x8 canvas, a package of acrylic paints, a paintbrush, a glass of water, and paper towels.

- Step one: Set up your space with the intention of healing. Bring a candle, a picture of your deceased loved one, a crystal, sage, or anything that brings you comfort.
- Step two: Begin to play the guided meditation on my website, as it will help you get into a meditative state. This meditation will connect you with your grief, help you face it, communicate with it, and give you a vision of how to represent it on your canvas in three separate layers. If you're unable to listen to the meditation, here are the series of questions to ask yourself before you begin your painting.
 - Layer 1: Where is your grief located in your body? What color is it? What shape has it taken? What is the size of your grief? Is there anything else your grief wants to show you? Open your eyes and write down the information that came to you on your canvas. You will use these words and color(s) as the first layer of your painting.

- Layer 2: Ask your grief what colors it needs to begin to heal. Trust the colors that come to mind, even if they are colors you wouldn't typically select. Write these colors down as they will be painted over layer one.
- Layer 3: What colors and shapes represent the feeling of love and joy? Write these colors down, as they will be the last layer of your painting.
- Step three: Apply your paint to the canvas in this order, and you will begin to create your own piece of High-Frequency Healing Art.
Use your painting as a reminder of what the higher frequency of grief feels and looks like every time you look at your painting. Allow your painting to be a reminder to choose joy over your grief.

To learn more about High-Frequency Healing Art, to see my grief paintings, and to listen to the guided meditation, visit my website:
<https://www.HannahsHealing.com/HighFrequencyHealingArt>

CHAPTER 17

The alchemy of grief | 154
DISCOVERING THE SILVER LININGS
IN A LOVED ONE'S DEATH
By Amy Lindner-Lesser, MSW,
Certified Life Transitions Coach

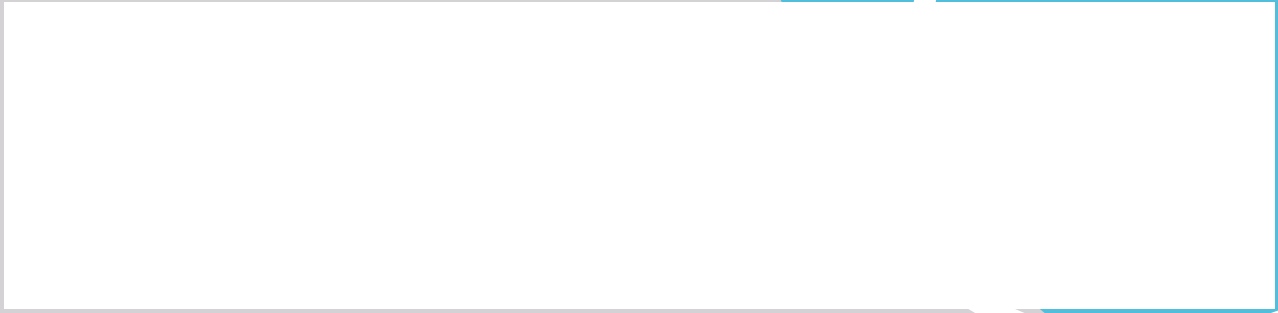
THE ALCHEMY OF GRIEF TOOL **Amy Lindner-Lesser, MSW, Advanced Grief Recovery** **Specialist & Coach**

*"They always say time changes things,
but you actually have
to change them yourself."
Andy Warhol*

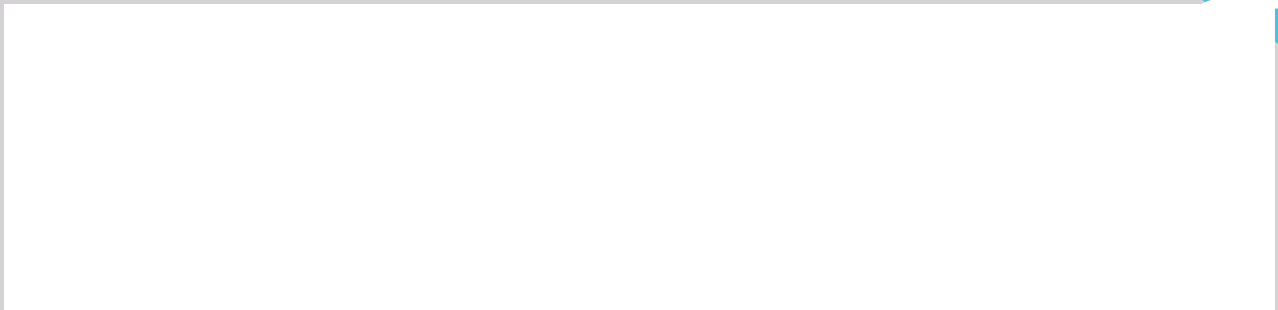
The first step is to allow yourself to feel all your feelings! Grief is normal, natural, and healthy. It's also painful and messy. Unfortunately, you have to go through it, or it will just rear up again, possibly stronger and in sneaky ways like anger and addiction.

After you've taken the time to feel all the feelings, started on the work to settle any legal and financial matters (believe me, I know how tough this is), and are feeling like you're ready to move forward with your life, take some time to answer these prompts:

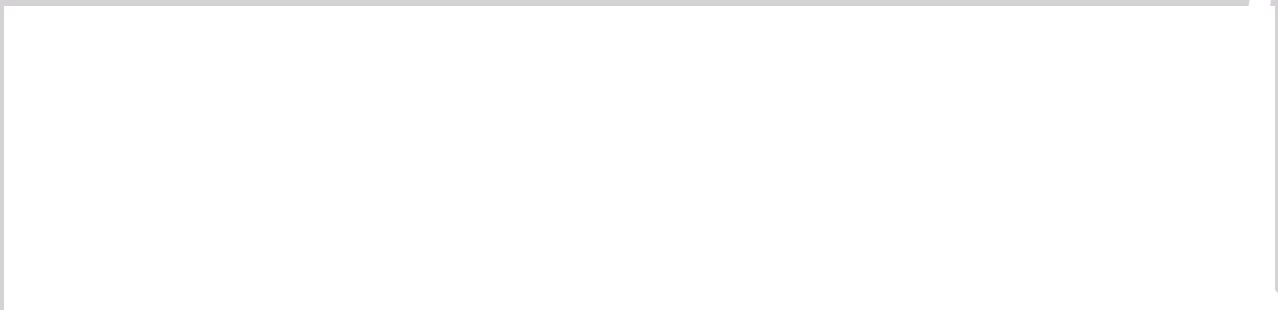
Describe the lifequake you're in the midst of or have experienced.



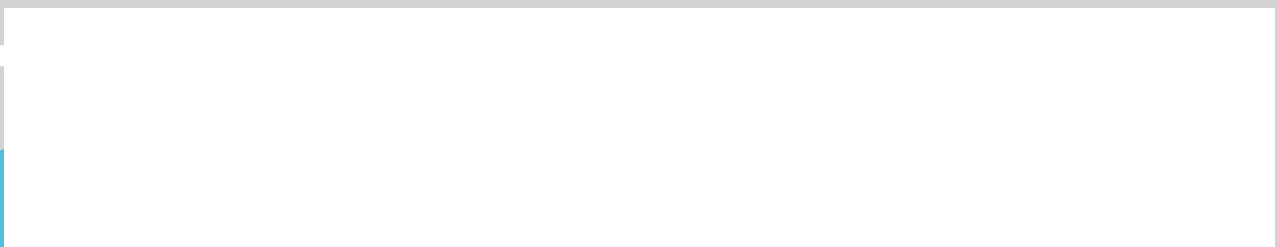
How would you describe yourself before the quake?



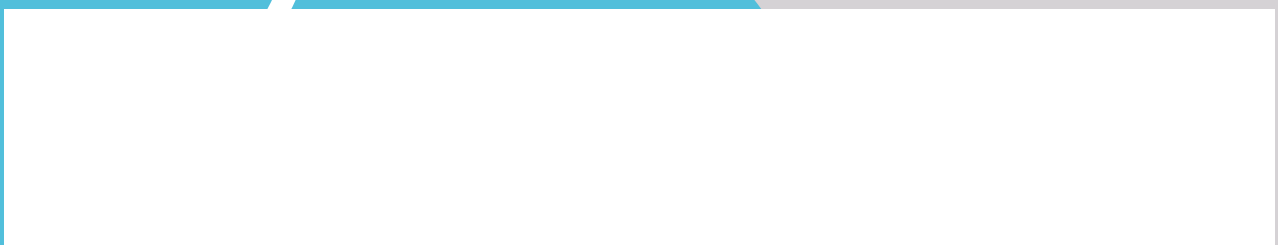
What dreams did you have for yourself when you were younger? Were they realized? What/who did you dream of becoming?



What activities did you love as a child? As a teen? Before your lifequake?



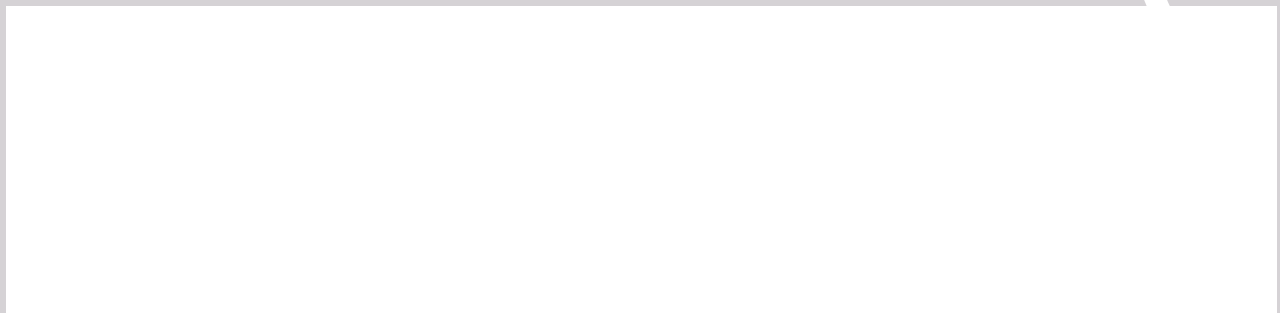
Why did you stop doing them?



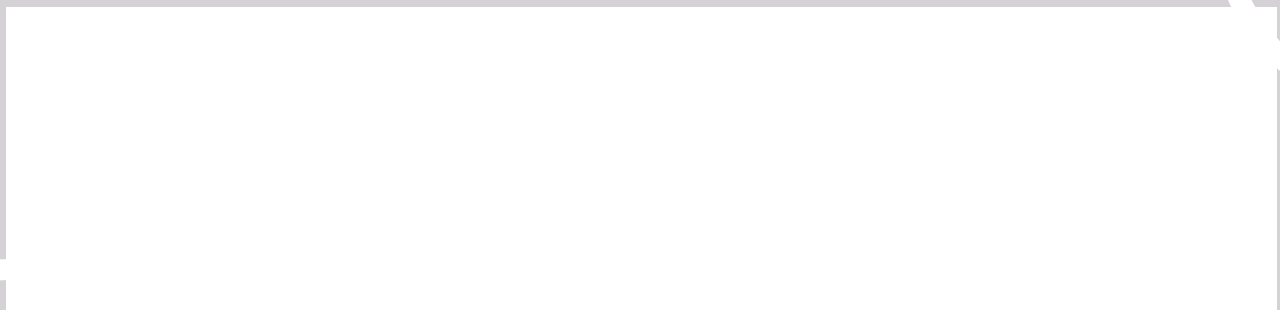
What activities have you always wanted to do but never tried?
What held you back?



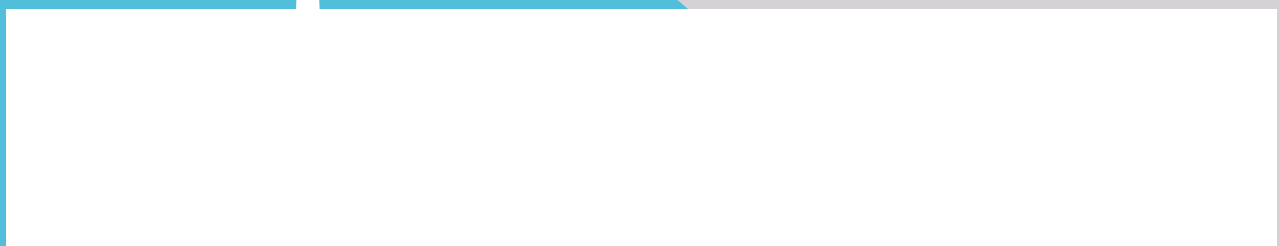
What are your hobbies? Interests? What brings you joy? Are you including these in your daily life? If not, how can you integrate them?



Imagine yourself three years into the future; how would you like to see yourself (emotionally, spiritually, physically, job/career, friends/relationships)?



What is one thing you can do today/this week that will bring you joy?



What memories of life before the lifequake bring you happiness?



What are you able to do today that you couldn't do before the lifequake? What strength do you now have because of what you've been through?



Who is in your corner (family, friends, co-workers, clergy, therapist, coach)? Who bring you joy? Who makes you laugh?



One of the gifts I have found in navigating grief is that while life will never be the same as it was before your lifequake, in some ways, it's also freeing. This may be the perfect time to redefine yourself and decide who and what you want to be. You don't have to meet anyone else's ideas or expectations. Have fun. See what resonates.

CHAPTER 19

The last responder | 177
CONTINUING FOR THE DEAD
By Brittany DeMarco-Furman,
Licensed Funeral Director

A bucket list isn't something new, most people just call them goals. Bucket lists are created somewhere in the middle of ordinary life, typically without deep thought, just desire. However, when faced with your own mortality clock, let's call a spade a spade since we all kick the bucket one day.

The kind of bucket list I want you to implement is one with love and purpose behind it. Let these goals steer you towards happiness and fulfillment, and test the strength of the new version of you.

Many people in my personal life and those whom I have honored have inspired me in different ways; my love for writing, desire to travel, obsession with oysters, and appreciation for sailing, fishing, and listening to Fleetwood Mac, all originated within the funeral home.

The dying and the dead have a lot to teach us. Luckily, I have a front row seat to all the master classes – and the forum to share all I've learned.

You may be reading this and not know where to begin. Start by examining yours and your loved ones yesterday, and plan you're tomorrow. Here are some prompts:

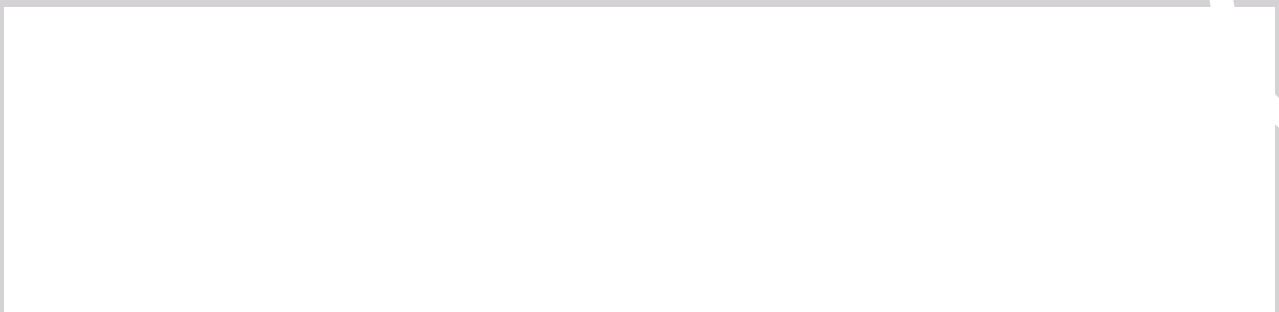
What in my past did I love to do, and why am I not doing it anymore?



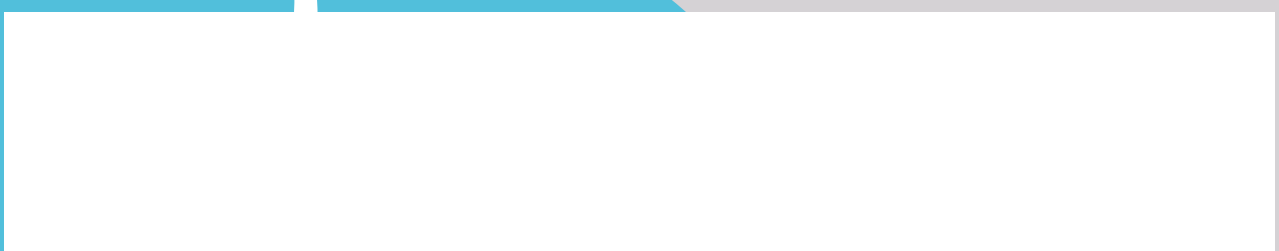
What did he/she do that I never have tried before?



What did he/she do with me that I can continue tomorrow with?



What did he/she want to do that he/she never got the chance to do?



What is something he/she taught me?

A large, empty white rectangular box intended for the user to write their response to the question above it.

What is something he/she wished they could do one more time?

A large, empty white rectangular box intended for the user to write their response to the question above it.

The fact is that love never dies. Heartbreak will come and go for the rest of your life. And then, one day, our life is over. And someone else will have to endure the heartbreak as we have. And when we no longer write our own story, it becomes the responsibility of our legacy and people you wouldn't ever expect to celebrate your memory—the last responders. As you continue your grief journey, please honor your loved one daily by living for today, hoping for tomorrow, and appreciating the past.

**“There are no goodbyes for us.
Wherever you are, you will always be in my heart.”
~ Gandhi**

Follow Brittany on Instagram at [@buriedinconversation](#)

CHAPTER 20

Letters from the heart | 186
TRANSCEND STUCKNESS WITH
SOULFUL WORDS
By George Garcia, PhD, LMFT

THE TOOL

STEP 1:

The first part of this strategy is all about awareness. If we can't see it, we can't heal it. Grab a pen and some paper, and find a place that you can focus on.

We all have an internal dialogue going on, that inner voice that speaks loudly to us. It's a voice that often gets it wrong and gives unhelpful commentary on life. Taking the internal dialogue and bringing it outside in front of us often gives a different vantage point to consider.

Start with naming that adversary that stands before you. As I mentioned in my story, infertility was my foe—the challenger who pushed me to my limits and changed my life as I knew it. That opponent who forced me outside my comfort zone and forced me to reconcile the life scripts I previously clung to so tightly. Naming my challenger brought this battle outside of my head and helped separate it from my own personhood. It helped me manage the distance so I could better manage the damage and assess what was happening.

STEP 2:

Just like I did above, take a few moments to write down any past limiting thoughts or beliefs that have stuck with you. This helps with better understanding these beliefs through awareness and seeing the choices in front of us. At the very least, it can help guide us to where and what we need to speak to.

Write it all out. Don't hold back. The conversation and the statements are already happening whether we acknowledge it or not. They don't always have words, but the conversations are going on even in the inaudible.

This step is just about putting words to the conversation. So, put it all on the table.

Example 1: One limiting belief I held onto was that I was inadequate—that I was a failure because I wasn't able to overcome this adversity. Because having biological children was not likely.

Example 2: A second belief I held was that the estranged relationship with my own father was essentially for nothing. That the experience.

I was viewed as a means to equip me to be a better father was, in fact, a mere pain point in my life, holding no redemptive value, reinforcing the belief that was just a mere failure.

STEP 3:

Time to write the letter. I want you to literally treat this as a letter you'd write to a friend and put in the mailbox. Write to that foe you identified in step one. Tell them what you would say if they were literally sitting across from you.

Speak from the heart. Say the things they and you need to hear.

Letter to a Friend

STEP 4:

I want you to switch roles now. I want you to write a letter to an earlier version of yourself. For me, this would've been the version of me that sat in that doctor's office and first heard the words male infertility.

Letter to Earlier
Version of self

I would tell him that he's going to be okay. That he doesn't need anything more than his presence in the world. That he himself is enough; despite the infertility.

This is where we can give ourselves what we needed all along—assurance, love, support, and truth.

STEP 5:

This is the last step. I want you to read the letters out loud. This will access a different part of our brain and allow us to experience the words in a different way.

You deserve a part in the conversation. You deserve a seat at the table.

CHAPTER 21

You are not alone | 196

A JOURNEY OF HEALING THROUGH FEELING

By Rebecca Johnson, LPC

The Grief Experience Worksheet/Chapter 21-
Traumatic Grief/ Johnson

THE BUTTERFLY HUG WORKSHEET

The Butterfly Hug (BH) is a beautiful therapeutic exercise created to help lower the intensity of high distress when experiencing a trigger, memory, or overwhelming emotion; when self-soothing techniques are ineffective.

Lucina (Lucy) Artigas originated the BH during her work with the survivors of Hurricane Pauline in Acapulco, Mexico. If you'd like to read the full updated article on the BH, understand the multiple uses, and appreciate the science behind the method, please go to Jarero, I., & Artigas, L. (October 10, 2023). The EMDR Therapy ButterflyHug Method for Self-Administered Bilateral Stimulation. Technical Report. Research Gate. <https://tinyurl.com/2dv4yakr>

The following is a brief description of the BH method that can be used outside of therapy. Follow this link for a video: <https://youtu.be/27tD6luv7YU>

STEP 1: If possible, find a quiet space to administer the BH to yourself. It could be somewhere in your home, a private place outside, or your workspace. You can be creative in finding this space. You can lie down, sit in a chair, or even walk around. Find what is comfortable for you and work for the current situation.

STEP 3: Cross your arms over your chest. Place your hands so that your fingers are underneath your collarbone. Fan out your fingers and interlock your thumbs to form the shape of a butterfly.

STEP 4: Pick what feels comfortable to you: Close your eyes completely, keep them partially closed, or look toward your nose. Whatever feels safe and comfortable.

STEP 5: Begin tapping your hands. Alternating each hand. Like a butterfly. Notice your thoughts, feelings, images, sounds, smells, or body sensations. Pay attention to your breathing and use slow deep breaths from your belly. Just observe whatever comes up without judging, changing, or pushing away.

STEP 6: Observe whatever is coming up, as if you're watching a train pass by, watching a movie, or a storm moving through and passing. Use whatever tapping speed is comfortable for you and stop when you feel it has been enough in your body. Repeat these steps as many times as you need.


If you would like another method besides interlocking hands, here are alternative options:

- Cross your arms and alternately tap each side of the arm.
- Fold your arms and alternately tap each side of your arm around your elbow.
- Place your arms on your legs and alternately tap each side of your leg.
- Place your feet on the floor and alternately tap them.

It should be noted that research has only been done on the BH method, not the modifications. However, for those times when you cannot utilize the BH, modifications can still provide a form of relief.

If you would like to track your thoughts, images, feelings, and disturbance level. Write down what you are feeling after each set.

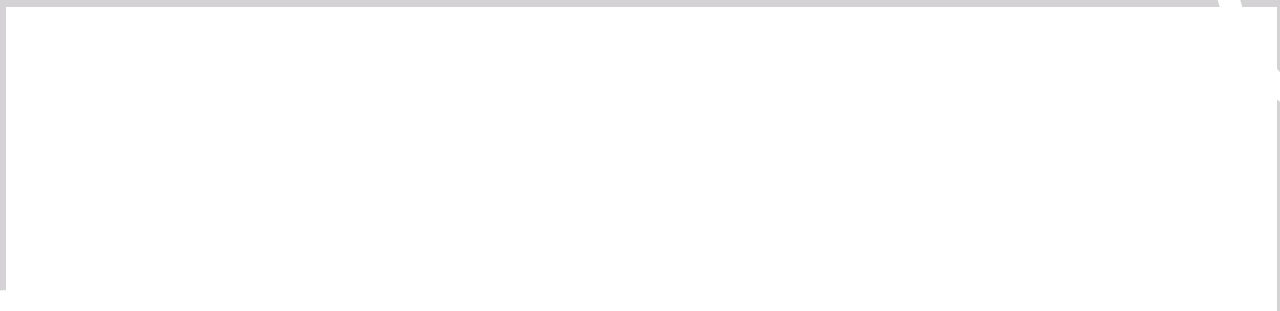
Prior to starting the BH, write down your thoughts, images, feelings, and location of body sensation. On a scale of 0-10, write down your level of disturbance you are feeling. 10 being the highest level of disturbance you have ever felt.



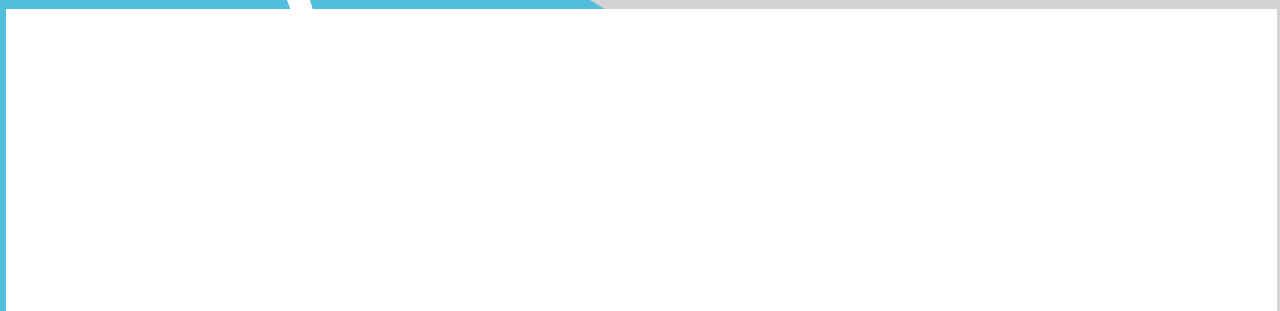
Administer the BH to yourself. Just notice the feelings and how they are passing.

- If desired, answer the following questions after each set of administering the BH.

➤ What images come up?



➤ What thoughts?



➤ What feelings do you notice?



➤ Where are the feelings located in your body?



➤ What is your level of disturbance?



Administer the BH to yourself again if desired. Notice any changes. Continue this process until you feel you are done or had enough.

CHAPTER 22

The power to go on | 206
FINDING CONNECTION, MEANING, AND
GROWTH IN LOSS
By Susan Settler, LCSW

THE TOOL

One of the most painful aspects of losing someone is the loneliness you feel at the thought of being unable to connect with them again. Writing to your loved ones allows you to release your feelings and express thoughts you may need to share. This can be used to encourage closure for more complicated relationships or an opportunity to feel more connected, depending on your relationship with your loved one.

Step 1: Choose a medium such as a notebook, journal, stationary, or laptop.

Step 2: Find a comfortable place to write, such as a quiet room at home, a place that is special to you and your loved one, or somewhere in nature.

Step 3: Write the letter. Allow your thoughts to flow freely, and do not filter them. Write everything you wish to express to that person, everything you've been holding on to. Keep writing till you've gotten everything off your mind. Don't hold anything back, even if it's something negative.

If you struggle with where to begin, here are a few sentence prompts:

• "I want you to know..."

• "I need to know..."

• "What I miss most is..."

• "I have been feeling..."

• "I am angry that..."

• "I regret that..."

• "What I have learned from losing you is..."

What you can do with the letter:

- Read it out loud. This might be done at home, or you might want to visit your loved one's gravesite or another significant place where you feel especially close to them.
- Save it on your electronic device to add to it whenever you are inspired.
- Keep your letters in a journal.
- Destroy or delete the letter once your feelings are released.

CHAPTER 23

The Sound of healing | 215
USING MUSIC TO PROCESS
AND TRANSFORM DELAYED GRIEF
By Cheryl Nix, LCSW

THE TOOL

Using music as a means of processing and transforming grief, can be a powerful and therapeutic approach. Grieving is a unique and personal journey; finding effective tools to navigate this process is crucial. Music can be a powerful aid with its ability to evoke emotions and memories.

1. List three songs that provide connection or memories of your loved one.

2. Create a personalized playlist. A list can have specific themes, such as songs that remind you of your loved one, songs that bring comfort, or those that uplift your spirits. Or you can compile a memorial playlist of songs that hold special meaning or were favorites of the person you are grieving.

3. Choose a song that holds significance for you in relation to your grief. Select a way to play the song you have chosen, CD player, vinyl record, computer, Pandora, Spotify, or any other platform of your choice. Find a quiet and comfortable place where you won't be disturbed. Close your eyes if you feel comfortable doing so. Take a deep breath and exhale slowly, letting go of tension. Listen without judgment. Pay attention to any feelings, memories, or thoughts that arise. Stop the music at any time if needed. After the song concludes, take a few moments to reflect on the experience. Journal any emotions, memories, or insights that surfaced during the listening session.



4. Use music for reflection and mindfulness. Mindfulness is a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations. Set aside dedicated time to listen to music mindfully. Pay attention to the lyrics, melodies, and emotions evoked.

5. Express yourself through music. Write or compose a song expressing your emotions. This can serve as a therapeutic outlet for your grief. Sing along, as this can be a cathartic experience. Joining in with songs that hold emotional weight for you can provide a sense of release.

6. Use music as a companion. Let music be a constant companion in your daily activities. Having it play in the background can provide comfort and solace. Explore the calming effect of instrumental music. It can serve as a soothing backdrop for moments of reflection.

7. Attend concerts or musical events. The communal experience of music can create a sense of connection and shared emotion. Joining a choir or participating in singalongs can be a way to engage with others through music.

Conclusion: Remember, there is no right or wrong way to use music for grief. Find what resonates with you and allow the sound of healing to guide you through the transformative process.

CHAPTER 24

Death out of order | 225
RECOGNIZING AND EMBRACING THE
BOTH/AND
By Misti Klarenbeek-McKenna, LCSW,
LMFT

Write a journal entry or narrative that captures your person in story. Write about what is special to you, what you most miss about them, what you most appreciate about them. Some prompts for your writing include:

Tell me about loss in your life (who died, but also secondary losses like loss of control, who you were before, dreams and hopes, future experiences with your person, etc)

How do you mourn for the life you and your loved one didn't get to live and also hold joy for the life you shared?

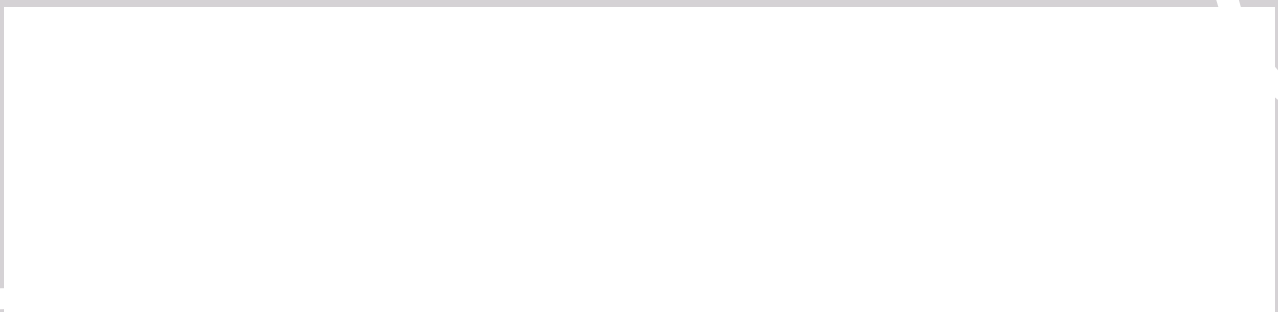
What do you miss about the old you (before) and appreciate about the person you are now?



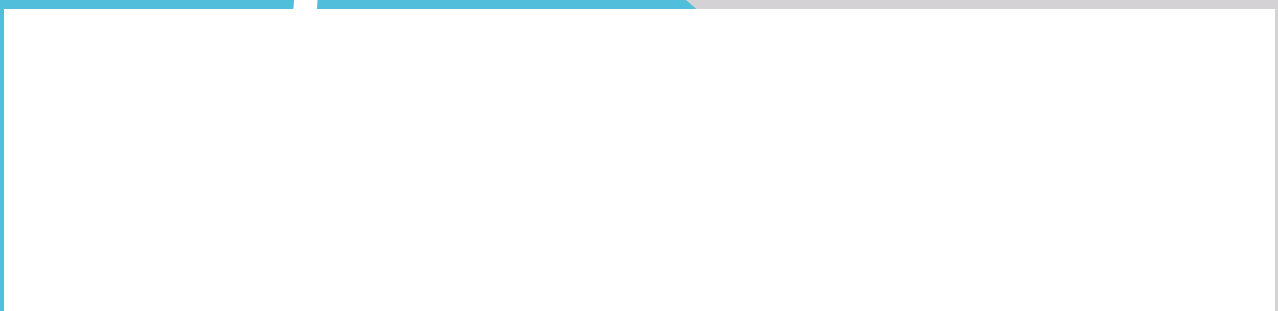
What do you both miss about having your person here with you and how do you maintain a connection to them and carry them forward?



When you read your narrative, what emotions come up? Notice what happens in your body. Where do you feel the sadness? Where do you feel guilt? Where do you feel shame?



Write down each emotion as it comes up and what it feels like in your body. (pit in the stomach, heart hurting, tightness in chest, etc)



- Give yourself permission for all the emotions that come up. Give voice to the parts that may be contradictory like one part that feels guilty, while another part has compassion for yourself or one part that longs for things to be the way they were and another that feels selfish for feeling that, etc.

- Write what you notice about yourself when you think about your person. Write about you without this person. Allow yourself to experience all the emotions that come up. This is a way to include both your memory and love for them and compassion for yourself.

CHAPTER 25

Moving through grief | 234

RECONNECTING TO SELF
THROUGH CONSCIOUS MOVEMENT

By Jean Trehella

MY TOOL

Conscious Movement has helped me in my grief process and in many aspects of my personal growth. Fundamentally, conscious movement is the practice of exploring the connection between mind, body, and spirit through intuitive expressive movement.

This exploration drives a heightened awareness of the body's sensations, reactions, and impulses resulting in an experience of being more present and open to new profound personal insights.

Ready to give it a try?

For a free guided experience go to <https://www.Movement-Insights.com> or choose a five to ten-minute piece of music that resonates with what you are feeling. Something with a flowing melody, soft rhythm, and without distracting lyrics.

You can be seated, or you can be standing.

Close your eyes if you are comfortable with that.

Take a breath and feel your feet on the ground.

Imagine energy flowing through your feet deep into the ground.

With a few more breaths begin to allow movement. Start with slow movements almost too small to be seen.

Notice any tightness or holding in your body.
Allow your breath to open these areas.

Allow a little sway to start to emerge.
Notice your body in space.

Let your head rock from side to side.
Release any tension or holding.

Feel your feet. Feel them grounded to the earth.
Breathe.

With each exhale feel your energy flowing down into the earth.
Allow any stress to ripple through your sway and melt down into the earth.

Maybe bend your knees if it feels right.
Breathe out as you bend down and breathe in as you rise.

Let the breath come up and roll into your shoulders.
Notice how the slow movements feel in your body.

Make a sign of openness. Reach one arm out and then the other.
Imagine you're opening a curtain in front of you.
Open, open, open.

There are no wrong movements.
Your movements are perfectly yours, perfect for this moment.

Open deeper into your body.
Feel your heart open.
Welcome breath and spirit to enter you.

Make a motion of calling in.
Calling in the energy of the universe.
Calling in from the heavens.
Calling in from the ground beneath your feet.
Calling in of the souls who love you.

Calling in.

Calling in.

Calling in.

And hold that energy within you.

Let it swirl with your body with your hips, maybe a circle or a figure eight emerges. Allow movement to happen without judgment.

Play with starting your movement from different parts of your body.
Maybe your elbows, your shoulders, your chest, your back.
Let the movements grow bigger. Start traveling through the space.

Play.

Play.

Play.

Come back to your center.
Touch your hand to your heart, your other hand to your belly.
Connect to yourself.

Imagine letting go and allowing yourself to float in the air.
You're supported.
Moving through the air.
You're flying like a free bird. Effortlessly.

Is there something holding you back?
Somewhere in your body where you feel tight?

Move into that space.
Pushing back, pushing left, pushing right.
Pull yourself forward and give a wiggle into the tightness.
Let go of the holding.
Release the tension.

Return to center.
Connected. Once again. To you.

Settling, feel the movement of your body.
Always feeling your breathing.
Notice your movement even in stillness.

Connecting. Internally. Externally.

Calling energy up from the earth, through your body, and
up to the sky.

Feeling the connectedness through your feet to Mother
Earth. Mother Earth who cares for you. Who supports you.

Trusting.
Connecting,
Knowing.
That you are whole.
You are loved.
You are love.

Namaste.

Jean

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