

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS SYMPTOMS INTERVENTION

SUPPLEMENTAL SESSION HANDOUTS

The following handouts are included for you to utilize during any session to supplement the basic illustrations and worksheets provided within the sessions:

Handout A: Coping with Traumatic Loss and Grief

Handout B: Feeling Better by Thinking Better

Handout C: Challenging Pessimistic Thinking

Handout D: Three Steps to Taking Charge of Your Feelings
Version 2

Handout E: Angry about a Death

Handout F: Wishes and Regrets Worksheet

Handout G: My Grief Reactions

Handout H: My Relationships before and after the Death

Handout I: Changes in My Daily Life since the Death

Handout J: First Steps to Making Positive Life Changes

Handout K: Ideas for Getting through Special Days

HANDOUT A

Coping with Traumatic Loss and Grief

Emotions

- Feeling sad, sorrowful, or anguished
- Feeling angry, resentful, or cheated
- Feeling irritable, frustrated, or hostile
- Feeling anxious, afraid, insecure, or more vulnerable than before
- Longing or yearning to be reunited with them
- Feeling a strong impulse to search for them
- Feeling an emptiness in the world around me
- Feeling lonely, deprived, or abandoned (e.g., life without them isn't as enjoyable)
- Feeling helpless, powerless, overwhelmed, or out of control
- Feeling dejected, depressed, in despair, or hopeless (e.g., life without them isn't as enjoyable; life without them sometimes doesn't feel like it's worth living)
- Feeling apathetic, or that things aren't enjoyable any more
- Having my emotional range constricted (e.g., I don't feel emotions as intensely as before, I don't feel the same emotions—such as joy—as before)
- Feeling regretful or guilty, or blaming or condemning myself

Thinking or picturing things

- Remembering them and time you spent together
- Preoccupation with thoughts of the deceased; thinking about them over and over
- Bewilderment, disorganization, confusion, or distractibility
- Uncertainty about the future or about adversities I now face as a result of the loss
- Problems with memory or concentration
- Difficulty making decisions
- Disbelief (e.g., it's hard to believe they're never going to come back)
- Disillusionment, aimlessness, purposelessness, pessimism
- Diminished motivation, initiative, and energy for investing in relationships and life activities
- Diminished self-esteem or self-confidence; feeling inadequate

Perceptions (How I view things)

- Sensing that I'm seeing or hearing them
- Sensing their presence nearby (this may feel comforting, or it may feel "spooky" or weird)
- Having the sense that I may lose someone or something else that I'm attached to
- Having dreams (sometimes very vivid ones) that feature the deceased
- Having the sense that what happened (their death) wasn't/isn't real
- Sensing that things around me aren't real
- Sensing that *I'm* not real

Behavior

- Crying or weeping
- Searching for the deceased
- Avoiding loss reminders (people, places, or things)
- Acting absent-minded, distracted, or disorganized
- Not being as productive or effective as before the loss
- Impulsive behavior (e.g., not planning ahead, not making decisions based on long-term goals)
- Neglecting good health habits (e.g., diet, exercise, sleep)
- Increased likelihood of using medicine and/or mood-altering substances like alcohol, cigarettes, or illicit drugs)
- Increased likelihood of “risky” behavior (e.g., substance abuse, fast driving, sexual promiscuity)

Social

- Decreased interest and motivation for relationships and organized activities
- Boredom
- Being critical, angry, or irritated with others
- Withdrawing from others
- Feeling or acting estranged, detached, or alienated from other people
- Behaving jealously towards others who have not experienced similar losses
- Clinging behavior, excessive dependency, or avoidance of being alone
- Reminiscing about them with other people (e.g., “John would have liked this”)

Physical

- Sighing
- Physical agitation, jumpiness, restlessness, hyperactivity
- Energy loss, exhaustion, fatigue, lethargy, weakness
- Increased susceptibility to illness or disease
- Feeling an emptiness or heaviness inside
- Changes in sexual desire (decreased or increased)
- Motor tension (trembling, shaking, headache)
- Physical arousal (shortness of breath, sweating, dry mouth, tension, nervousness)
- Disturbed sleep (too little sleep, too much sleep, interrupted sleep)
- Change in appetite and eating habits leading to weight gain or weight loss

How I deal with things inside my head

- Avoiding or repressing thoughts, feelings, or memories connected to the deceased (I don’t allow myself to think or to have feelings about them)
- Denial (e.g., “I can’t accept it; I can’t bring myself to believe it”)
- “Numbing away” emotions, or not feeling emotions at all
- Protesting the loss (e.g., “it’s not fair” “it’s not right”)
- Searching for meaning (e.g., “why did they die?” “What did they die for?” “What can be done to ensure that they did not die in vain?” “How can I carry on their legacy?”)
- Dreaming of the deceased (reuniting with them in fantasy)
- Searching for them
- Sensing that things around me aren’t real, or that I’m not real (separating myself from reality)
- Acting younger than I am (regression)

HANDOUT B

Feeling Better by Thinking Better

Thoughts and Emotions

The Difference Between Thoughts and Emotions

Although they are connected, thoughts and emotions are very different from each other.

Thoughts are things that *go through your mind* – things that you *think or see in your mind*. They usually take the form of *sentences, words, phrases, or mental pictures*:

- Things will never get better.
- I'm the greatest!
- I'm worthless.
- People love me.
- I'm helpless.
- Having upsetting images of a traumatic experience pop into your mind
- I'm so stupid.
- I'm a loser.
- I can't do anything right.
- Alone...
- Gone...
- Seeing a mental picture of a loved one
- Imagining yourself as a star soccer player

Emotions are things that you *feel*. They can often be described *in one word*:

- Scared
- Angry
- Happy
- Terrified
- Sad
- Excited
- Hopeful
- Nervous
- Furious
- Irritated

Emotions are often experienced as *bodily sensations*. For example, you may experience fear as a feeling of tightness in your stomach, a cold chill down your spine, and a quickening of your pulse. In contrast, you may experience sadness as a pain in your heart and a sinking feeling in your stomach.

Emotions are *descriptions of what you are feeling*. In this sense, they are *objective* (factual).

Thoughts are *judgments or interpretations of the meaning* of something. In this sense, they are *subjective* (personal opinions). Because they are subjective, they can be evaluated to see if they are logically consistent and supported by facts.

Using Thoughts To Change Emotions

There is a great deal of evidence that *what we think determines how we feel*. These findings can be summarized by three points:

- 1) First, *you feel like you think*. In other words, *thoughts generate emotions*: depressive thoughts generate depressed feelings, fearful thoughts generate fearful feelings, happy thoughts generate happy feelings, hopeless thoughts generate hopeless and despairing feelings, and so on.

- 2) Second, *you are free to choose what to believe and what not to believe*. Put another way, you control your thoughts—you have the personal freedom to decide what you believe and don't believe.
- 3) Third, *if you want to change your mood, you must change your thinking*.

These three points can be combined to form a basic guiding rule:

In almost every situation, there is something you can believe that:

- *Is true or factual*
- *Will make sense to you (is believable)*
- *Is a constructive way of viewing things*
- *Will allow you to preserve a sense of hope*

Because emotions are *objective descriptions of what you are feeling*, they should be treated as *facts*. In other words, don't try to argue with your emotions. Why try to reason with a fact as if it were an opinion? Facts don't respond to logic—they are simply descriptions. Thus, if you're feeling sad, you're feeling sad--period. You can't argue yourself out of the "fact" that you are feeling sad by telling yourself, "I can't *really* be feeling sad because I *shouldn't* be feeling sad." If anything, trying to argue with an emotion in this way will make you feel worse, because you're actually questioning your own ability to describe how you're feeling. So, be honest with yourself—if you're feeling an emotion, admit it—even if it is an emotion you don't want to feel. Denying an emotion, saying that it is something else, or pretending that it is not there won't change its nature or make it go away. *Remember that emotions are not the place where you can change your mood—you have to change the thoughts that produce them.*

Because emotions are produced by thoughts, it is best to think of them as *products*. Emotions are "thoughtless" *reactions* to thoughts—they have no capacity to think or reason independently. Emotions simply reflect the content of thoughts without questioning whether the thoughts that produced them were accurate or logical. Thus, it is not helpful to challenge emotions by telling yourself, "*I shouldn't be feeling this way,*" or "*I can't let myself feel this way.*" It is much more effective to argue with your thoughts than to argue with "dummy" emotions.

Because thoughts are judgments and interpretations, they *can* be questioned or challenged on logical grounds because their accuracy is debatable. In other words, you can use your "better judgement" to argue with your thoughts (especially hurtful thoughts), and very often you can win! That is, you can "reason" with your own thoughts by deciding whether the judgments, interpretations, and evaluations they contain are logical and accurate. Thus, it *is* helpful to ask yourself, "Does it make sense to *think sad thoughts* in this situation?" Then, if you find that the sad thoughts are unreasonable or inaccurate, you can challenge and replace them with more "reasonable" and constructive hopeful thoughts and improve your mood.

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How Can I Tell When I'm Thinking a Hurtful Thought?

Learning to identify the hurtful thoughts that create unpleasant feelings is a very important skill. Thoughts can be very difficult to detect because they come almost automatically. They are kind of like breathing—it goes on automatically, so that you don't consciously "think" about each breath. However, if you pay attention, you become aware of each breath, and you can control your breathing--you can make yourself breathe faster or slower, for example. The same goes with thinking—if you become aware of what you are thinking and understand how it makes you feel, you can understand your thoughts and develop the ability to control them.

Capturing these thoughts or images can be difficult because they happen so fast. Sometimes you may just say a single word to yourself that carries the meaning of an entire statement. For instance, a girl who lost her father may find that she says simply "gone" to herself with the meaning "he's gone forever and I'll never get over it." Similarly, a single image may flash into your mind and give rise to strong feelings.

Because your thoughts take place automatically, you have to ask yourself some special questions that help you to become aware of your thinking patterns:

- *What is going through my mind right now?*
- *What did I just say to myself?*

It is especially helpful to ask yourself these questions when your feelings change, particularly if they change to a strong negative emotion. If you examine your thoughts, you will probably find that a hurtful thought just went through your mind. That is, when your feelings change, this is a signal or cue that your thoughts have also shifted. At this point, you can challenge it, come up with a more helpful alternative, and feel better.

“Feeling” True Versus “Being” True

Hurtful thoughts have the nasty ability to *feel* true, no matter how illogical they are or how little objective evidence there is to support their assertions. For example, some extremely depressed people are convinced that *virtually everything* is their fault--including such things as tragic events in faraway countries that they had absolutely nothing to do with. However, because your *thoughts* generate your emotions and not the other way around, you cannot assume that your emotions PROVE that your thoughts are true or untrue. Hurtful thoughts are not true simply because they FEEL or SEEM to be true. *A bad feeling demonstrates only that you are thinking a hurtful thought and believing it—nothing more.* You must rely on your "better judgment" to decide whether the hurtful thought is logical, supported by fact, and useful.

For example, sometimes people think that optimistic thinking is only "fantasy" (an unrealistic distortion of reality) and that negative thinking is "real." However, this is almost always not true. Hurtful thoughts typically involve errors in thinking, such as seeing only the negative and exaggerating, and are thus often *less* accurate than positive thinking. The Table below summarizes 9 different types of thinking errors commonly found in hurtful thoughts.

HANDOUT C

Challenging Negative Thinking

Error In Thinking	Description	'Distressing Thought' Examples
Focusing on the Negative/ Minimizing the Positive	You focus on the negative aspects of a situation while minimizing the positive aspects by ignoring them or making them seem less important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who cares if Sandra likes me—Veronica doesn't! ▪ It doesn't matter that I did well in almost all my classes—I didn't do well in all of them. ▪ Nothing I do turns out right. ▪ My parents' saying nice things don't matter—they have to say that.
Shoulds & Musts	You have strict and (sometimes) unrealistic expectations for yourself, others, and the world. If these expectations are not met, you become upset.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I shouldn't feel this way. ▪ I must get an "A"! ▪ I must never show any weakness. ▪ I must never rely on others, because they might disappoint me and that would be awful. ▪ I must never allow myself to get attached to someone again, because I might lose them, too.
All or none thinking	Seeing things in black and white.(I have to be perfect or I am a failure—there is no middle ground.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Because I didn't get an "A," it means I failed the class. ▪ If talking about what happened makes me feel worse at first, then the program is not working. ▪ If I can't forget what happened, my life will be ruined. ▪ Because I have lost I dearly loved, I can never be happy again.
Then is Now	You respond to a current situation as if it were a traumatic situation from your past.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I can't trust anyone. ▪ I must focus on day-to-day survival, not my future. ▪ I must not get too close to anyone, because they or I could be gone tomorrow. ▪ I can participate in risky behavior, because I probably won't live long anyway. ▪ I should avoid going out at night, because that's when it happened. ▪ I don't need to prepare for the future, because there's no guarantee there will even be one. ▪ Whether I live or die is a matter of fate (my efforts don't influence the outcome). ▪ Danger is everywhere.

<p>Self-Blame <i>(It's my fault)</i></p>	<p>You see yourself as the cause of something bad that has happened when you actually had little or no influence over what took place. Or, you assume too much responsibility for others' feelings or lives and then blame yourself for not fixing their problems yourself.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If it weren't for me, this never would have happened. ▪ If I were stronger, I wouldn't be having these problems. ▪ If I can't make mom feel better, then it will mean I don't love her enough. ▪ Mom is sad because of something I did ▪ It's my fault that... ▪ ...my father was killed... ▪ ...my parents got divorced... ▪ ...my mom is unemployed...
<p>If it FEELS True it IS True <i>(Emotional Reasoning)</i></p>	<p>You take your feelings as proof that something is true.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I feel like my sadness will never end (so it won't). ▪ I have desires for revenge, so I must act on them. ▪ I feel helpless, so I am. ▪ I feel hopeless, so I should end it all. ▪ I feel guilty, so I must have done something bad. ▪ I feel scared, so I must be in danger. ▪ I feel worthless, so I am. ▪ I feel unneeded, so I am.
<p>Self Put-Downs</p>	<p>You put negative labels on yourself and put yourself down.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I'm a loser. ▪ I'm stupid. ▪ I'm ugly. ▪ I can't do anything right. ▪ I'm worthless. ▪ I'm unlovable. ▪ I'm a victim. ▪ There's something seriously wrong with me. ▪ I'm irreparably damaged. ▪ I'm helpless. ▪ Bad things happen to me because I deserve it. ▪ No one will want me after this has happened to me. ▪ Sandra was late to our lunch date because she doesn't think highly of me. ▪ Marco invited me to his party just because he feels sorry for me.

<p>Over- Generalization</p>	<p>Drawing big, sweeping conclusions with very little proof. If something is true once, it will always be true; if things don't go right, they never will.</p> <p>(Look for "extreme" words like always, never, everything, nothing, everyone, no one, completely, totally, and absolutely.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I'm no good at anything. ▪ No one cares. ▪ If talking about what happened makes me feel worse at first, then it will <i>always</i> make me feel worse. ▪ If I haven't been able to figure out a way to solve my problems, then no one else can either. ▪ No one can be trusted. ▪ No one cares. ▪ Because I feel bad now, then I'll <i>always</i> feel this way. ▪ Things will never get better. ▪ If Laurel turned me down, it means that every girl I like will turn me down.
<p>Predicting the Future <i>(Playing "Fortune-Teller")</i></p>	<p>You assume that you can predict the future, and treat your prediction as an established fact. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Predicting that something will turn out badly, and acting like it already did You blame yourself for not preventing something terrible that happened 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I just know I'll fail this test. (So why even try to study?) ▪ I know what my brother will do. (So why waste the effort?) ▪ I just know I won't be able to handle this group work. (So why not just give up now?) ▪ Things will <i>always</i> be this way. ▪ If I start crying, I'll never stop. ▪ I should have noticed <i>something</i> (a bad omen?) that would have told me what was about to happen that day. ▪ I shouldn't have allowed my brother to be outside that day. ▪ I should have known this was going to happen. ▪ I just know we'll have to move again (and I won't be able to stand it!). ▪ I can't forgive myself for not being there to save my friend. ▪ It's my fault my brother died because I wasn't there to protect him.
<p>Mind Reading</p>	<p>You assume that you know what other people think or know (especially about you!), and treat your <i>guess</i> as an actual fact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (Even though they've never said it), I just know my family blames me for what happened. ▪ I just know what Grandma will say, so why try to talk to her? ▪ No one can understand what I've been through. ▪ Unless this has happened to you, you won't know how to help me. ▪ People don't really want to help me. ▪ If I told the group how I really feel, or what really happened, they would reject me. ▪ No one really cares about how I feel. ▪ Everyone thinks this is my fault.

<p>“Catastrophizing”</p>	<p>You predict that the worst will happen; OR, when something bad DOES happen, you tell yourself that it is unbearably awful and “catastrophic”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If I don't pass this test, I won't ever graduate. ▪ I just know I'll totally bomb this test. ▪ If I can't forget this experience, then I'll never be happy. ▪ Nothing matters after what I've lost. ▪ Because my life will never be the same, my life is forever ruined. ▪ Because my life won't go as I had planned and hoped, I can never have a good life.
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HANDOUT D

Three Steps to Taking Charge of Your Feelings (Version 2)

1. WHAT am I feeling?											
Label your emotion(s) <i>(What are you feeling?)</i>											
Rate it's Intensity (0-10) <i>(How strong is the feeling?)</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. WHY am I feeling this way?											
What is happening <u>OUTSIDE</u> of me? <i>(describe the situation)</i>											
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>											
What is happening <u>INSIDE</u> of me? <i>(describe the distressing thought or image-put it into words)</i>											
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>											
3. HOW can I feel better?											
a. Does the distressing thought contain <u>ERRORS IN THINKING</u> ? <i>(check ✓ all that apply)</i>											
<input type="checkbox"/>	Filtering & Discounting <i>(focusing on the negative, discounting the positive)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shoulds & Musts <i>(having high and inflexible rules for how things "should" be)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	All or none thinking <i>(seeing things in black and white, either-or terms)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	Then is Now <i>(responding to the present as if it is the traumatic past)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	If it Feels True it Is True <i>(taking feelings as proof that something is really true)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	Self Put-Downs <i>(You put negative labels like "loser" on yourself and tear yourself down)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-Blame <i>(things are your fault when you actually have little influence over what happens)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	Over-generalization <i>(drawing big conclusions from small bits of information: thinking that if something is true once, it is always true; if something goes wrong, it always will)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	Predicting the Future <i>(assuming you can accurately predict future events)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mind Reading <i>(assuming you know what others are thinking)</i>										
<input type="checkbox"/>	Catastrophizing <i>(thinking that things are much worse than they really are)</i>										

b. What EVIDENCE appears to SUPPORT the distressing thought? (What reasons do I have to believe it?)

c. What EVIDENCE DOES NOT appear to SUPPORT the distressing thought?

d. Choose a helpful thought: *What's a more positive and constructive way of looking at the situation?*

Rerate the intensity of the emotion you are feeling:

Rate the Intensity (0-10) <i>(How strong is the feeling?)</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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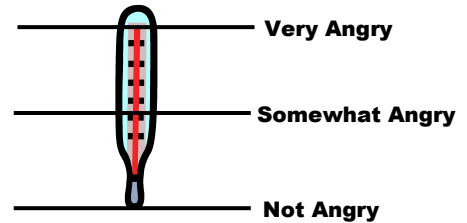
HANDOUT E

Angry About a Death

Please indicate how angry you are about the various issues below by drawing a line across each thermometer:

Line at the Bottom = Not Angry
Line in the Middle = Somewhat Angry
Line at the Top = Very Angry

Example:



Are you angry,



About the Way
They Died



At the
People responsible



At
the World



At
God



At the People
Around Me



At the
Person Who Died



At
Yourself

HANDOUT F

Wishes and Regrets Worksheet

(Adapted from M. K. Perschy)

Directions: *Reflect on your relationship with your loved one as you fill in the following...*

If only I had...	
If only I hadn't...	
It was my fault when...	
I'm so sorry that...	
It still hurts to think about the time when he/she...	
I still cannot forgive him/her for...	
I can't forgive myself for...	
If we had one more day together, I would...	

HANDOUT G

My Grief Reactions

PURPOSE:

This week's practice exercise is intended to help you increase your awareness of the types of events or circumstances that remind you of your losses, and of the grief reactions with which you respond to them. Your task is to describe the loss reminder and the grief reactions it evokes from you.

DIRECTIONS:

Select a specific event or circumstance during this week in which you encounter a **loss reminder**. As you learned in group, a loss reminder can be anything that reminds you of the ongoing absence of a cherished person or possession. The absence may be result of the death or disappearance of a loved one, or due to physical separation from a loved one or cherished possession. The loss reminder may be an:

- Adversity generated by the loss (such as financial hardship, insecurity, loneliness, or other stress)
- Empty situation (such as an empty chair, empty bedroom, or social gatherings in which they are missing)

First, describe the reminder itself (*What happened this week that reminded you?*):

Second, what you were reminded of (*e.g., a death, loss of a cherished possession*)?:

Third, record your reactions to being reminded on the following two pages. Think of your immediate reactions, as well as your behavior in the days following the reminder.

Go to next page



	How Strongly Did You Experience It?				
Emotions	Not at all (0)	A Little (1)	Somewhat (2)	A Lot (3)	Extremely (4)
1. I missed them and longed for them.	0	1	2	3	4
2. I felt sad or sorrowful.	0	1	2	3	4
3. I felt angry, resentful, or cheated.	0	1	2	3	4
4. I felt irritable.	0	1	2	3	4
5. I felt anxious or nervous.	0	1	2	3	4
6. I felt afraid.	0	1	2	3	4
7. I felt a desire to search for them.	0	1	2	3	4
8. I felt lonely, deprived, or abandoned.	0	1	2	3	4
9. I felt helpless or powerless.	0	1	2	3	4
10. I felt discouraged or hopeless.	0	1	2	3	4
11. I felt apathetic (I just didn't care what happened).	0	1	2	3	4
12. I felt emotionally numb (I didn't have strong feelings—either pleasant or unpleasant).	0	1	2	3	4
13. I told myself, "I'm the one who should have died—it should have been me instead".	0	1	2	3	4
14. I felt guilty, or blamed myself for their death.	0	1	2	3	4
15. I felt a loss of pleasure or satisfaction in life.	0	1	2	3	4
16. I felt regretful about things I did, or that I should have done, while they were alive.	0	1	2	3	4
17. I had low motivation to take good care of myself (diet, sleep, personal hygiene).	0	1	2	3	4
18. I felt worthless or inadequate.	0	1	2	3	4
Thinking	Not at all (0)	A Little (1)	Somewhat (2)	A Lot (3)	Extremely (4)
19. I enjoyed good memories of him/her/it.	0	1	2	3	4
20. I felt uncertain or insecure.	0	1	2	3	4
21. I was confused, distracted, or disorganized.	0	1	2	3	4
22. I had problems with memory or concentration.	0	1	2	3	4
23. I had difficulty making decisions.	0	1	2	3	4
24. I felt pessimistic or disillusioned—like life had no real purpose.	0	1	2	3	4
25. I kept thinking that, if my loved one could only come back to life, everything would be OK.	0	1	2	3	4

26. It was hard for me to believe that he or she is really dead.	0	1	2	3	4
27. I felt closer to God (or a Higher Power).	0	1	2	3	4
28. I was uncertain about the future.	0	1	2	3	4
29. I acted impulsively (I didn't plan ahead, didn't think things through before acting).	0	1	2	3	4
30. I couldn't stop worrying that something bad would also happen to other people I care about.	0	1	2	3	4
31. I felt alienated, rejected, or punished by God (or a Higher Power).	0	1	2	3	4
Inside My Body	Not at all (0)	A Little (1)	Somewhat (2)	A Lot (3)	Extremely (4)
32. I felt agitated, jumpy, or restless.	0	1	2	3	4
33. I felt tired, fatigued, or weak.	0	1	2	3	4
34. My body trembled or shook.	0	1	2	3	4
35. I felt an emptiness or heaviness inside my body.	0	1	2	3	4
36. My heart ached for them.	0	1	2	3	4
Perceptions	Not at all (0)	A Little (1)	Somewhat (2)	A Lot (3)	Extremely (4)
37. I dreamed about the person (or possession).	0	1	2	3	4
38. I thought that I saw or heard him/her, or that I could feel his/her presence nearby.	0	1	2	3	4
39. I felt vulnerable—that I could easily lose someone or something else dear to me.	0	1	2	3	4
40. I felt like the death (or loss) wasn't real—that it didn't really happen.	0	1	2	3	4
Intrusive Thoughts, Images, and Emotions	Not at all (0)	A Little (1)	Somewhat (2)	A Lot (3)	Extremely (4)
41. Unpleasant thoughts about <i>how</i> the person died got in the way of enjoying good memories of him/her.	0	1	2	3	4
42. I couldn't stop thinking about someone who died when I wanted to think about other things.	0	1	2	3	4
43. I was reminded of someone who died in ways that hurt or upset me.	0	1	2	3	4
Behaviors	Not at all (0)	A Little (1)	Somewhat (2)	A Lot (3)	Extremely (4)
44. I cried or wept.	0	1	2	3	4

45. I searched for him/her.	0	1	2	3	4
46. I wasn't very productive or effective compared to before his/her death.	0	1	2	3	4
47. I neglected good health habits (exercise, sleep).	0	1	2	3	4
48. I tried to stay away from people, places, or things that remind me of him or her.	0	1	2	3	4
49. I didn't do positive things that I <i>wanted</i> or <i>needed</i> to do because they remind me of him/her/it.	0	1	2	3	4
50. I avoided talking about someone who died because it was too painful to think about.	0	1	2	3	4
Social	Not at all (0)	A Little (1)	Somewhat (2)	A Lot (3)	Extremely (4)
51. I felt detached or estranged, uninterested in spending time with others.	0	1	2	3	4
52. I withdrew from other people I care about.	0	1	2	3	4
53. I didn't want to be separated from loved ones—even for short periods.	0	1	2	3	4
54. I acted critical, angry, or irritated towards others.	0	1	2	3	4
55. I behaved jealously towards others who haven't experienced a loss like mine.	0	1	2	3	4
56. I had low motivation or interest for relationships or positive activities.	0	1	2	3	4
57. Retaliation/vengeance.	0	1	2	3	4

HANDOUT H

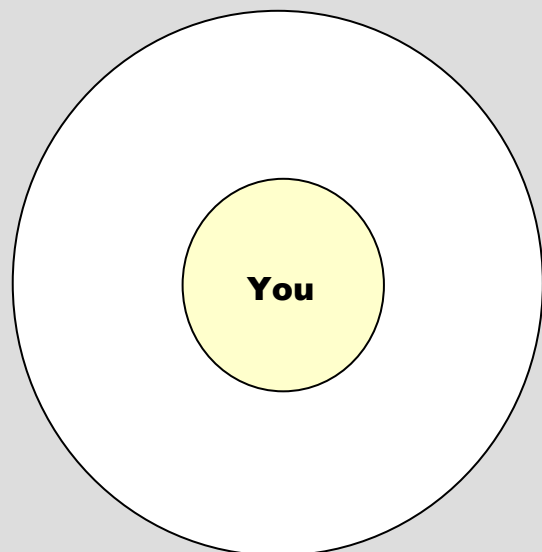
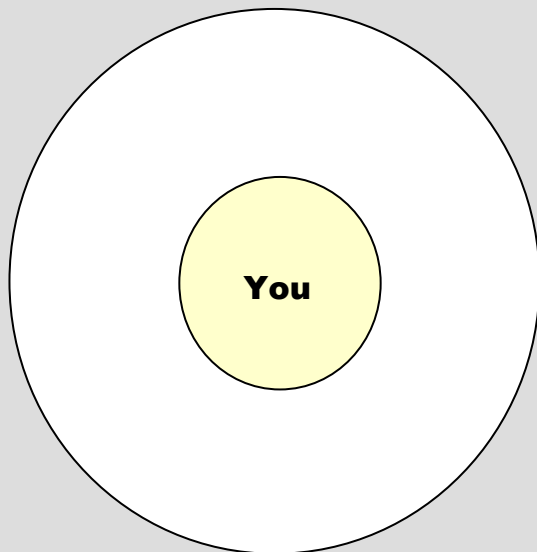
My Relationships Before and After the Death

DIRECTIONS:

- Step 1:** Take one of your colored markers and draw a small square on the circular “before” map for each of your immediate family members. Based on how close or distant each family member was before the death, place their square closer or more distant from you (in the center). **In each square, write in the name of each family member.** (As directed by the Group Leaders, have members draw relationship lines between family members to indicate quality of relationship.)
- Step 2:** With the same colored marker, draw the squares for each immediate family member in the “after” map to show where they are now in terms of closeness-distance from you. (Put in family names and relationship lines as directed).
- Step 3:** Take your second colored marker and draw a square for each of your important friends and extended family members on the before and after maps.

Before the Death

Now



————— Relationship

————— Strong Relationship

——— / ——— Cut-off Relationship

~~~~~ Conflict in Relationship

HANDOUT I

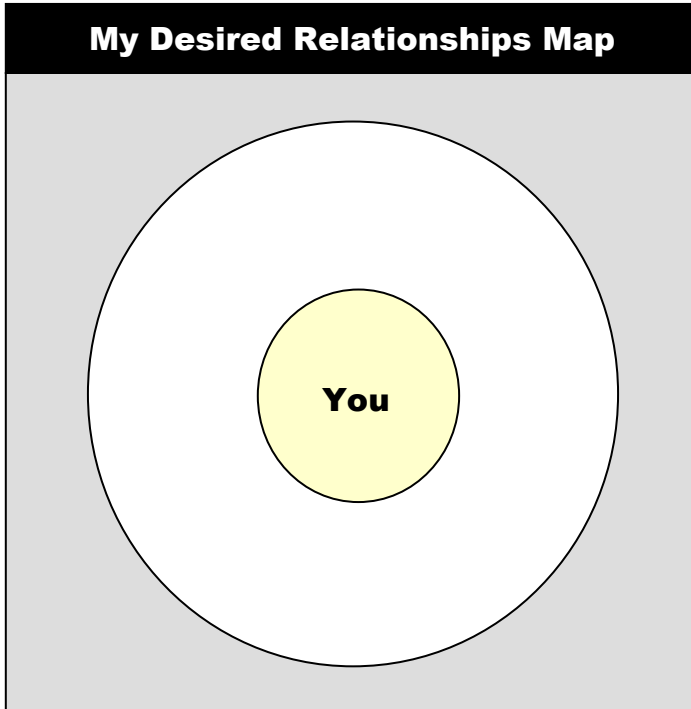
# Changes in My Daily Life since the Death

**Directions** *Discuss ways in which the following aspects of your life have changed since the death of your loved one. Summarize the changes you discuss by making notes beside each value.*

|                                                    |  |
|----------------------------------------------------|--|
| Living situation and finances                      |  |
| Meals                                              |  |
| School and homework                                |  |
| Chores and responsibilities                        |  |
| Day-to-day interactions with my family and friends |  |
| Holidays and other special days                    |  |
| Favorite activities and hobbies                    |  |
| Other ( <i>please fill in</i> ):                   |  |

HANDOUT J

# First Steps to Making Positive Life Changes



- Relationship
- Strong Relationship
- /——— Cut-off Relationship
- ~~~~~ Conflict in Relationship

**Parts of my life that I want or need to change to more fully adjust to the loss...**

|                                 | Overall Change I Want/Need | First Steps I Need to Take |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Living situation and finances   |                            |                            |
| Meals                           |                            |                            |
| School and homework             |                            |                            |
| Holidays and other special days |                            |                            |
| Daily interactions with people  |                            |                            |
| Favorite activities and hobbies |                            |                            |
| Chores and responsibilities     |                            |                            |
| Other (please describe):        |                            |                            |

# Ideas for Getting Through Special Days

Holidays and special family occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, and reunions can be very stressful for people who have lost someone close. Strong feelings may be evoked, and family members may be anxious because usual routines are thrown off. There may also be a deep sense of sadness and loss that goes unacknowledged. Following are some simple ideas for getting through these difficult days.

## **Maintain Good Health Routines**

On holidays or special occasions, normal sleeping, eating, and exercise routines can be thrown off. It is important to maintain healthy routines as much as possible—before, during, and after these events. That means getting enough sleep, avoiding too many sweets, and getting enough exercise.

## **Plan Time with Someone with Whom You Can Talk about Your Feelings**

Sometimes people feel uncomfortable mentioning the deceased or expressing feelings related to the loss. Since these feelings may be evoked for you, it is important to have someone with whom you can share them. Seek out a friend or family member who is comfortable talking about these issues. This may also be an important time for you to write in a journal – to note and further explore your feelings and other reactions to the loss.

## **Plan Fun Activities**

If your family is unable to engage in fun activities at this time, make sure you spend some time with people who are not so burdened. Make specific plans ahead of time to ensure that you get an opportunity to have positive experiences. Try to provide some structure to your days so that you don't find yourself sitting around for long periods of time.

## **Beware of Using Alcohol or Drugs**

Intoxicants of any kinds may intensify sad or depressing feelings and contribute to impulsive, or even dangerous, behaviors. Remember that you may experience a strong desire to “forget about” painful feelings and circumstances by drowning out your feelings with drugs or alcohol. This is a form of traumatic avoidance and can make things much worse for you, in both the short and long term.

## **Use the Coping Strategies Discussed in the Group**

During this group, you have identified coping strategies that you have used on your own, and practiced others that may also help you. Look at your list often, and pick one or more that may help you the most with the problem you currently face.

## **Other Ways to Take Care of Myself**

List other ways that you can support yourself during these special days. Especially now, you should take your needs seriously and treat yourself as a good and caring friend would.

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