

Grief Exercises

Finish the following sentences.¹

The thing that makes me feel the saddest is

If I could talk to the person who died I would ask....

Since the death my family doesn't....

My worst memory is....

If I could change things I would...

One thing that I liked to do with the person who died was...

When the person died I....

Since the death my friends....

After the death, school/work....

When I am alone....

Is there anyone you want to share this with?

¹ Modified by Marvin Vandenhoeck (M.C., C.C.C.) from: Dougy Center: National Centre for Grieving Children and Families. (2016). Retrieved from: <http://www.dougy.org/grief-resources/activities/>

Grief Exercises

The following exercises build on the ideas described in my book “Transcending Loss: Understanding the Lifelong Impact of Grief and How to Make it Meaningful.”

Acute Grief Exercises (Earlier Stages of Grief)² Exercise Supplement to Part 1

1. Letter writing exercise – This exercise is designed to connect you to your loved one and to help you process feelings about your loss.

Part A: Write a letter to your deceased loved one. Tell them how you’re doing, how you feel, describe your life without them.

Part B: Write a letter from them back to you. Allow your mind to quiet and your spirit to settle as you imagine what they would write back to you. Put your pen on the paper (or your fingers on the keyboard) and let them ‘write you back’. See if they have any comforting words for you.

2. List exercise – This exercise is designed to help you remember ALL the qualities of your loved one that made them unique. It’s not useful to idealize your loved one or put them on an unrealistic pedestal. Embrace all that they were . . . forgive them for all that they were . . . love them for all that they were.

Part A: Make a list of 20 things about your loved one that you miss.	Part B: Make a list of 20 things about your loved one that you don't miss.

² Modified by Marvin Vandenhoeck (M.C., C.C.C.) from: Bush, A. (2016). *Coping with Grief: Exercises to supplement the book “Transcending Loss”*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ashleydavisbush.com/articles/grief/grief/>