

Journaling Your Grief

Journaling can be a powerful to release and process powerful emotions in a way that is both private and safe. Many people have reported experiencing profound beneficial effects from the practice of journaling.

Getting Started

- ~ Decide whether you want to write in a physical journal or keep it electronically.
- ~ Decide when is the best time of day for you to write.
- ~ Remember that you don't have to write a lot, a few sentences or even a few words can be enough. Just write until you feel you've gotten out what needs to be said. Some days you may have more words than others.
- ~ Privacy. Because journaling can sometimes provoke powerful emotions, ensure you have a private place where you can journal. If tears come, allow them to come. If you get upset or angry, allow yourself to feel it, and keep journaling through those emotions.

How . . . and what to journal?

If you have experience journaling in the past in way that was helpful, trying using what you know already works for you. You can also write in a free-form style if that works for you, meaning, start writing and let whatever wants to come out, come out; let the words flow. Remember that journaling is a tool for you, so use that tool in whatever way is most helpful to you.

Here are some guides that can help you write, whether you are an experienced journal-writer, or not:

- ~ What thoughts or particular memories kept popping in your mind today and why do you think they have significance to you?
- ~ Was there anything particularly difficult for you today? What was it, what made it difficult, and how did you cope with it?
- ~ Were there surprises today (good or bad) that you weren't expecting or prepared for? What were they and how did you handle them?
- ~ Was something easier or better than you expected it to be today?
- ~ Did you see or hear anything today that profoundly impacted you, like a song or a written statement or passage somewhere? What was it you heard or saw?
- ~ What did your grief teach you today?
- ~ What is something you are grateful for, and why?
- ~ Make a short list of 10 special memories you have

✎ Write an entry to your loved one, like a letter. Talk to them like they are still here and will read the letter. Tell them anything you would want them to know, and say what you need to say to them.

✎ Use any of the following prompts to get started, and then allow yourself to freely explain your answer. You can use them as many times as you want in your journaling

If my grief were an animal today, it would be a _____.

If my grief were a color today, it would be _____.

What is it that I need to let go of? What will help me to let go of it?

What is it that I need to keep hold of? How will I keep hold of it?

Who am I now that you have died?

These are three things I can do to still feel connected to you _____.

My most common feelings today were _____.

For additional help or resources, there are many different websites related to grief and journaling on the internet, and a brief search will return many different results. There are also many structured grief journals available for purchase, also available online.