

Grief Workbook for Loss of a Spouse or Partner

Reflection, practical support, remembrance, and a 30 day guided journal

My name _____ Date started _____

This workbook offers room to name the loss of a spouse or life partner and the daily changes that follow. You can use its worksheets to ask for help, plan for difficult dates, remember your partner, and attend to your own needs. Work in any order and leave any page blank.

Grief has no required stages or timetable. You may miss your partner and still experience rest, laughter, or a sense of possibility. You may also need extra support. None of these experiences measures the depth of your love.

How to use this workbook

Choose one page that feels useful today. Write, draw, dictate, or simply read. Stop when you need to. Return to the journal prompts whenever you wish.



My relationship and my loss

Your partner was a person, and your relationship was its own story. Begin wherever you can.

My spouse or partner was

Our relationship mattered to me because

What I miss most right now

One thing I wish others understood about my grief



The many changes after a death

A partner’s death can affect routines, finances, caregiving, intimacy, identity, friendships, and imagined plans. Mark only what fits.

What has changed	How it affects me	Support I may need
Companionship and routines		
Home and practical tasks		
Money or shared decisions		
Family and social life		
Future plans and identity		

The change I feel least understood about



Feelings and hindsight

Shock, anger, guilt, sadness, loneliness, and moments of peace may overlap. There is no order to complete.

A feeling or thought that keeps returning

What I blame myself for	What I could control	What I could not control

A more compassionate statement I can practice



A minimum care plan

On a difficult day, caring for basic needs and asking for help can be enough.

Need	One manageable action or person who can help
Food and water	_____
Rest and sleep	_____
Medication or health care	_____
One urgent task	_____
Connection or company	_____
Comfort or quiet	_____

One task I can ask someone else to do this week



Remembering my partner

A memory, ritual, value, or shared story can remain part of your life. Choose what feels welcome.

Three words that describe them

A favorite ordinary moment

Something they taught me

A tradition or value I want to carry forward

A letter to my partner

Begin with “I wish I could tell you...” or write freely.



Difficult reminders and dates

Holidays, anniversaries, songs, routines, and ordinary places may bring comfort, pain, or both.

Reminder or date	What may be hard	What may help
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

A date I want to plan for

What I would like to do or avoid

Who can support me that day

A comforting plan for afterward



Grief and daily life

Some days you may want to focus on the loss. Other days, practical rebuilding may take more of your energy. Moving between these needs is natural.

Time for grief	Time for daily life
Remember, cry, talk, write, or rest	Manage one task, learn a skill, or connect
My choice: _____	My choice: _____

One small step that would make this week easier



Identity and support

You may be learning who you are in a changed life without having to settle the answer now.

A part of myself I want to reconnect with

One need I am ready to name

A small future step I might consider

Person or resource	What they can offer	How I can reach out

Words I can borrow: “I do not need advice right now. Could you listen?” “Could you help with one practical task?” “Please say my partner’s name.”



Weekly reflection

Use this page as often as it helps. You can photocopy or print it again.

Week of _____

What was hardest this week

What helped, even slightly

One person I connected with

One task I completed or moved forward

One way I honored our relationship

One kind thing I can do for myself next week



When more help would be useful

Grief is not an illness, but you deserve care when daily life or safety becomes difficult.

Consider speaking with a primary care clinician, therapist, grief counselor, hospice bereavement program, or trusted support person if sleep, eating, hygiene, medication, relationships, or responsibilities feel persistently unmanageable; if depression, trauma symptoms, or substance use increase; or if intense grief continues to severely disrupt daily life.

If you think about harming yourself, feel unable to stay safe, or face immediate danger, call or text 988 in the United States for crisis support. For immediate danger, call 911 or go to an emergency department. Outside the United States, use local crisis services.

My support plan

One person I can contact

A clinician or group I might contact

The first step I can take if I feel unsafe



30 day guided journal

These prompts are optional. Use them in any order or repeat one that helps. A few words can be enough.

Day 1: Naming the Loss

Write your spouse's name. Describe who they were to you and what your relationship meant.

“ _____ was my _____.”

Day 2: Our Story

Write about how you met, became close, or built a life together. Choose one part of your story that feels important to remember.



Day 3: What I Miss Today

What do you miss most today? It may be a person, a shared routine, a conversation, physical closeness, their presence in the home, or a future you expected to have.

Day 4: Ordinary Moments

Write about an ordinary thing you used to do together that now feels different.



Day 5: What Others May Not See

What part of losing your spouse is hardest for others to understand?

Day 6: A Memory I Want to Keep

Describe a memory you do not want to lose. Include small details: where you were, what you noticed, what was said, or how you felt.



Day 7: My Body and Grief

How has grief shown up in your body? Consider sleep, appetite, fatigue, tension, pain, restlessness, illness, or changes in energy. What is one act of care your body needs today?

Day 8: What I Wish I Could Say

Write a letter to your spouse beginning with: "What I wish I could tell you today is..."



Day 9: Love and Gratitude

What did you appreciate about your spouse or your life together? You do not have to force gratitude; simply notice what feels true.

Day 10: Anger and Unfairness

What feels unfair about this loss? If anger is present, let yourself name it without judging it. "I am angry because..."



Day 11: Guilt and “If Only”

Write down one regret, guilt, or “if only” thought. Then consider: What was within my control? What was outside my control?

Day 12: The Hardest Time of Day

When does grief feel strongest: morning, mealtime, evening, bedtime, weekends, or another time? Create a small plan for that time: One comforting activity:



Day 13: The Practical Reality

What responsibility did your spouse usually handle that now falls to you? What is one small next step you can take, and who could help?

Day 14: Letting Others Help

What help would make life easier this week: meals, errands, paperwork, repairs, childcare, companionship, pet care, transportation, or someone to sit quietly with you? Complete this sentence: "It would help me if someone could _____."



Day 15: A Place That Holds Meaning

Write about a place that reminds you of your spouse. This may be your home, a favorite chair, a restaurant, a garden, a vacation site, or a place of worship. What feelings come up there?

Day 16: Living With Their Belongings

Are there belongings, clothing, photos, or spaces that are difficult to approach? You do not have to make decisions today. Write about one item or space and what it means to you.



Day 17: The Life We Imagined

What plans, hopes, or future experiences are you grieving? This may include travel, retirement, family milestones, aging together, or simply daily companionship.

Day 18: Who Am I Now?

Losing a spouse can affect identity. Complete these sentences: "Before this loss, I saw myself as

_____."



Day 19: Loneliness

Describe what loneliness feels like for you. Is it emotional, social, physical, practical, spiritual, or something else? What might make today feel even slightly less lonely?

Day 20: A Person Who Can Hear Their Name

Who can you talk with about your spouse? What would you like that person to know about your need to remember and speak about them?



Day 21: What They Taught Me

What value, lesson, habit, phrase, tradition, or strength did your spouse bring into your life? How might you carry that forward?

Day 22: Difficult Dates and Triggers

Identify one upcoming holiday, anniversary, birthday, event, or reminder that may be difficult.



Day 23: Moments of Relief or Peace

Have you had a brief moment of calm, connection, laughter, pleasure, or relief? If so, describe it. Feeling a moment of peace does not mean you are leaving your spouse behind.

Day 24: My Support Circle

List people and resources that can provide different kinds of support.



Day 25: Caring for My Home and Health

What is one small way you can care for your body or home today? Examples: eat a meal, refill medication, take a shower, schedule an appointment, open one piece of mail, go outside, make the bed, or rest.

Day 26: A Ritual of Remembrance

What ritual could help you honor your spouse? Examples: lighting a candle, playing meaningful music, making a photo album, cooking a favorite meal, visiting a meaningful place, donating, praying, planting something, or sharing stories. My remembrance ritual:



Day 27: Making Room for Both Grief and Life

Name one grief-focused activity and one life-focused activity you can do this week. Grief adaptation often includes moving back and forth between attending to the loss and attending to daily responsibilities, relationships, and future life tasks. 1

Day 28: A Future Step

You do not need to have a complete plan for the future. Name one small step that could support you in the next week or month. “One small step I am willing to consider is...”



Day 29: Self-Compassion

Write to yourself as you would to a close friend who had lost their spouse. "This is painful because

_____." "I am allowed to
_____."

Day 30: Carrying Love Forward

Complete this reflection: "My spouse will always matter to me because

_____." "The love we shared continues in
_____."



End of month reflection

Notice what has changed without needing to judge your progress.

What did I learn about my grief

What helped me cope, even slightly

What remains difficult

What support do I need next

One compassionate message to myself

