



# Supporting you through your journey



### **Forward**

On behalf of myself and the entire Eversight team, I want to express our deepest sympathy for the loss of your loved one.

As an organization that takes great pride in serving donor families, we are honored to support you as you begin your journey through grief. While that experience will be unique to you, we have consulted grief professionals, mental health clinicians and those who have personally experienced loss to compile information and resources that they have found helpful. We hope that in these resources you will find some tools that serve as a guide to help you navigate the path ahead. This journal is one such resource, but additional resources can be found on our website at eversightvision.org/donorfamilyresources.

Donation is an act of incredible compassion and generosity that leaves an enduring and profound legacy. We are humbled and eternally grateful that your family put their faith in us to be responsible stewards of the precious gift of sight. Our most sincere hope is that you take some comfort in the knowledge that through their extraordinary gift, your loved one will provide others a renewed sense of hope, healing and a chance to reclaim a full and vibrant life.

Diane Hollingsworth President/CEO

Alaie Hollergurk

Eversight





# A note about grief

The loss of someone that you love and the grief that follows is one of life's most difficult experiences. Sadly, it is also something that touches us all at one point or another. At times the pain of loss can feel overwhelming and impact every aspect of our being including our hearts, minds and bodies. It can make us feel empty, lost, angry or isolated. Sometimes we feel every emotion,



making grief an unbearable weight. As uncomfortable and difficult as grief can be, it is also important to know that grief is a healthy and normal response to loss that we need to experience so we can adjust to life without the person we love.

Loss and grief may be universal to human experience, but how each of us encounters and processes it is unique to each of us and our relationship with the person we lost. There are plenty of theories about how people experience and move through grief; you may have heard about the Five Stages of Grief, for example. While that and other theories can help us frame our grief and identify our feelings, they shouldn't be thought of as sequential stops on a linear path toward healing.

Simply stated, there is no 'right' way to grieve. There is no right or wrong way to feel. There is no timeline, and the loss of someone we love isn't something we simply 'get over.' Instead, grief is a journey that, with time and intention, can eventually lead us from heartache to hope. What is most important is to remember to be gentle with ourselves while we navigate that path and explore a new world living without the person we lost.

## Why journal?

Much like grief, this journal is unique to you and your experience. There is no right or wrong way to do it. The rules of grammar and spelling don't apply here, and there is no minimum or maximum word count. What you write doesn't have to be particularly profound or complex. It just needs to come from your heart.

While we are in the middle of it, grief can feel unbearably heavy. Even in the best of times we still feel the weight of loss. This journal is a place to slow down your thoughts and express yourself without fear or judgment. It is a place where you can unburden yourself, take your most heartfelt and difficult thoughts and emotions, and release them by putting them on a page.

# Before you begin

Here are a few tips that might make the experience a little more impactful for you:

- Find a quiet space where you are comfortable and are unlikely to be disturbed.
- Turn off your phone and other electronics.
- Don't censor yourself. Be honest—you are writing only for yourself, so there is no judgment here. This journal belongs to you alone.
- There are no rules. You can write however feels right for you. You can write complete sentences, short paragraphs, a continuous flow of thoughts or individual words. You can even draw if that feels right.
- Try to dedicate about 15-30 minutes to writing each day. You can write for less time, but if you find yourself writing for longer than 45 minutes it might be good to pause and come back to complete the entry the next day.
- Be kind to yourself. When you write you may feel strong emotions. You may cry, feel angry or become upset. You may not feel any of those things. Remind yourself that:
  - » There is no right or wrong
  - » Whatever you feel is valid
  - » What you are feeling right now in the moment won't last forever
- If you begin to feel overwhelmed, take a break. This isn't a race and there is no deadline to meet. Step away, take a deep breath and give yourself a little grace and compassion.
- Give yourself credit! This is hard. Regardless of what you write, or don't write, you are setting time aside for yourself, which is worth recognizing and celebrating.
- For many people, the weight of grief can be too heavy to carry alone. If you find that your feelings of grief are making it difficult to do anything at all, impacting your work or personal relationships or you feel hopeless, please reach out to a medical professional. You can also find organizations that specialize in grief support on our website at eversightvision.org/donorfamilyresources.



"There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief and of unspeakable love."

- Washington Irving, author

# One last step-breathe!

Before you begin writing, take a few minutes to pay attention to your breathing. Take a deep, slow breath through your nose and hold it for three counts. Now gently exhale through your mouth and hold for three counts. With each breath try to focus on how your chest gently expands and contracts, or the feeling of your body pressed down against the chair. If your mind wanders, gently bring your thoughts back to your breath. When you are ready, take one last deep breath through your nose, and release it through your mouth.

BREATHE IN
For 4 seconds, slowly and intentionally breathe in through your nose with your lips closed.

For 7 seconds, hold your breath, focusing on clearing your mind and regulating your heart.

BREATHE OUT
For 8 seconds, exhale to clear your lungs. Consciously think about your breath.

# **Journaling prompts**

For many people sitting down to write or journal, a blank page can feel intimidating. That is particularly true when setting out to write about something as complex, all-encompassing and difficult as the loss of a loved one. The prompts, questions and quotes in this journal are intended to help guide you through that barrier.

Not every prompt will resonate with you, and that's okay. They also aren't presented in any particular order. You may choose to do them in order, or you might choose to skip around until you find a prompt that speaks to you and inspires you to write. Throughout your journey you may complete every prompt in this journal, or you may decide to write about the same prompt multiple times. You may even find that you don't need any prompts at all. Again, there is no right or wrong. There is only the journey. Our most sincere hope is that this journal offers you the opportunity to chart a path that eventually leads from heartbreak to hope. Again, there is no right or wrong. There is only the journey. Our most sincere hope is that this journal offers you the opportunity to chart a path that eventually leads from heartbreak to hope.

#### **PROMPTS**

#### A Wounded Heart Will Heal with Time

"A journey of the thousand miles begins with a single step." – Lao Tzu, philosopher

You are here because you lost someone that you love, and that is one of the most difficult things that a human being can experience.

As difficult as it may be to feel pride right now, you should give yourself credit for starting this journey. Your heart is aching, yet here you are, willing to face the pain and sorrow. That alone is worth acknowledging and celebrating.

- The journey through grief is difficult and on some days, it may feel impossible, but with time and intention, you will begin to see glimmers of light through the darkness.
- While the point of grieving is not to forget or lose sight of who you lost, you will start to live again. Steadily, you will notice that the good days outnumber the bad days. You will laugh and feel joy again. Wherever you are on your journey through grief today, just write. Write whatever you are feeling in your heart.

• What are you experiencing at this very moment?			



#### **Your Sacred Love**

"Love doesn't die with death. Love is like liquid; it pours out, it seeps into others' lives. Love changes forms and shape. Love gets into everything. Death doesn't conquer all. Love does. Love wins every single time. Love wins by lasting through death." – Kate O'Neil, author

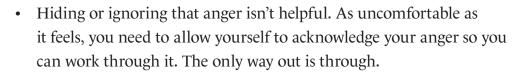
Love is a powerful force that is not lost because of death. While grief is painful, the bond that you feel with your loved one is more enduring than death. The people who we love are part of us forever. Love is unique and everlasting. At its core, that is what grief is—love. It is love with no place to go.

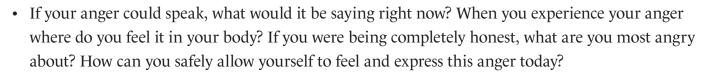
•	• Today, take some time to think about the love you shared and to reflect on how beautiful love can be. How has this love enriched your life? How can you continue to show your love for your person? What can you do to let this love live on in those who are still with you?			

## It is Okay to be Angry

"I sat with my anger long enough until she told me that her real name was Grief." — Isaac Rowe, author

Anger and grief often show up together. You might feel anger toward your loved one for leaving, anger for things left unsaid, anger for the injustice of it all or you may find that you feel anger for no reason at all.







## **Describing Your Grief**

"To lose someone you love is to alter your life forever. You don't get over it, because 'it' is the person that you loved. The pain stops, there are new people, but the gap never closes. How could it? This hole in my heart is the shape of you, and no one else can fill it. Why would I want them to?"

- Jeanette Winterson, author

With this loss, your life has been changed forever.

Sometimes you probably feel like people will never understand what you are experiencing. Today, write about the things you wish other people knew about grief, and the pain you have experienced since the loss of your loved one.

experienced since the loss of your loved one.				

## **Your Grief is Legitimate**

"It hurts because it mattered." – John Green, author

Grief is a difficult and lengthy process. The journey through grief is different for everyone, and you must recognize that what you are feeling is valid; it is understandable and legitimate. It hurts because you lost someone who meant something to you.

Today, write a letter to yourself that validates what
you are feeling. Describe the love that you hold in your
heart for your person, and what your journey in the future
looks like without them. Write about your experience
so far.



feelings, or do you worry that doing so would make other people uncomfortable? Describe how those feelings are worthy, reasonable and natural.

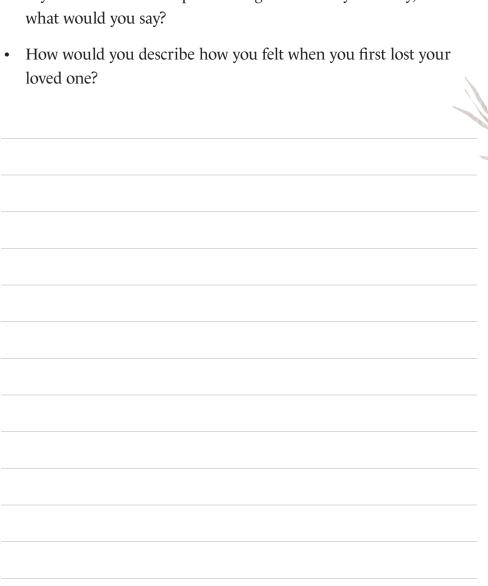
• What have you felt? Anger? Blame? Resentment? Do you feel comfortable expressing those

#### The Pain of Grief

"We must embrace pain and burn it as fuel for our journey." – Kenji Miyazawa, poet, author

Most people don't think of grief as a full body experience, but the reality is that the pain and heartache of loss are often more than just emotional. It can sometimes feel like an intensely physical condition.

• If you were asked to explain how grief feels in your body, what would you say?







"All connections are infused with dreams of what is possible in the future. When we lose someone important to us, we aren't just grieving the loss; we are grieving the shattered dream." – Dr. Bill Crawford, psychologist

You hurt not just because you lost someone special, but because you also lost the hopes, dreams and plans you shared about the future, and the experiences that will now never be.

- To ache for that future is natural. Your heart is broken and you don't deserve to feel this pain. However, to heal you must allow yourself to sit with your grief, to feel it and to acknowledge all that you have lost.
- What are some of the hopes and dreams you have lost along with your person? How can you move forward and honor those hopes and dreams as a tribute and memorial to the person you have lost?

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## **Hope Springs Eternal**

"A rainbow is a prism that sends shards of multicolored light in various directions. It lifts our spirits and makes us think of what is possible. Hope is the same—a personal rainbow of the mind." — Charles Snyder, psychologist

The moonflower is a beautiful flower with white petals. Unlike its sister flower, the morning glory, the moonflower only blooms in darkness.

In the middle of grief, hope oftentimes can feel impossible, but just like the moonflower you too can grow despite the darkness you might be feeling. To do that you need to search out the light.

- You may not realize it, but by writing in this journal you are actually searching for that ray of light in the darkness. By writing, you are proving that you are open to hope and you are actively searching for a path through your grief.
- Today, write about that search for hope.
- Have you noticed any flashes of light since your loss? If so, what were they? What gives you even the smallest glimmer of light? What or who helps you to grow despite the darkness?



## **Searching for Answers**

"It is not the answer that enlightens, but the question." - Eugene Ionesco, playwright

Why did they have to leave? Why them? Why us? Why now? What could I have done differently? How do I go on? Those are questions that may never have an answer. That is okay.

• To start healing it is important to acknowledge that you have questions. Even if those questions don't have answers, they are still valid. They matter.

•	• What questions have you been wrestling with? Which questions occur to you most often? What can you do, if anything, to find answers to your questions? How might you bring a sense of peace even if there are no answers?		
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#### The Value of a Moment

"What is there to do when people die, people so dear and rare, but to bring them back by remembering." – Mary Sutton, author, poet

While grief is always difficult, sometimes loss helps us understand the value of our relationships. Life is busy, and we can often lose track of those things that are most important to us.

- When the moments you shared become memories, their true impact becomes clearer.
- Today, take a moment to think back on some of the moments you shared with your loved one. Maybe at the time they didn't seem significant or special, but with reflection they are memories that you cherish.
- What are some of those memories? What made them special or meaningful to you? What can you learn from them? How can you keep those memories with you?

#### **A Brave Face**

"Grief is like living two lives. One is where you pretend everything is okay. The other is where your heart silently screams in pain." – Unknown

One of the harshest truths about grief is that your loss will probably make other people feel uncomfortable. Often, they express a lot of sympathy in the initial days of your loss, but while their lives quickly return to normal, yours is forever changed. Some people may not be able to understand why you haven't just "gotten over it."



- At times during your journey through grief you may feel like you are grieving wrong or taking too long. You may feel pressure to "feel better" and to keep your true feelings to yourself because you feel pressured.
- But that isn't real life. You cannot simply 'feel better' to meet the expectations of others. This is your journey and your experience, and the only person who matters through this process is you.

you	<ul> <li>Have you felt pressure from others to put on a brave face? Do you put pressure on yourself to downplay what you are feeling? How does it feel to be pressured in this way? What would it look like to grieve honestly?</li> </ul>				

#### The Guilt in Grief

"Guilt is perhaps the most painful companion to death."

– Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, psychiatrist, grief expert, author

Guilt and grief often go hand in hand. Why didn't I say "I love you" more? Why not me instead of you? Why did I start that argument? Why didn't I insist they go to the doctor sooner?

• Those and a million more questions are natural and everyone that experiences the loss of a loved one has them. But hanging on to those questions brings a weight that you can practically feel in your body.

To heal, you need to find a way to put that weight down and relieve yourself of the burden of guilt.

- Today, write about guilt.
- Have you felt guilt or remorse? What guilt are you holding onto? How does it make you feel? Have you blamed yourself for things you can't control?

#### What We Learn from Grief

"His grief he will not forget, but it will not darken his heart. It will teach him wisdom." – JRR Tolkien, author

Despite the pain that comes with grief, mourning the loss of someone you love can teach some valuable lessons that will help you grow in the future.



- The value of being present when we are with people we love, gratitude for the love we shared with the person we lost, and for the love we share with those who are still with us, that joy and pain can be experienced at the same time.
- What lessons have you learned through your grief? What has this loss taught you about yourself? How can you apply what you are learning in the future?

## **Rising Up**

"A heart filled with love is like a phoenix no cage can imprison." Rumi, Sufi, poet

Although grief often feels hopeless, there is always hope if you are intentional about seeking it out. Today we invite you to do just that.

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## **Finding Strength**

"In the Japanese art of Kintsukori, one repairs broken pottery by filling the cracks with gold, silver or platinum. The choice to highlight the breaks with precious metals not only acknowledges them, but also pays tribute to the mutability of life. The previously broken object is considered more beautiful for its imperfections. In life, too, even greater brilliance can be found in the mending." – Dr. Michele Harper, The Beauty in Breaking, author

At some point during your journey, you will more than likely be told how strong you are, or how strong you have been. You may not feel it right now, but strength looks different depending on how you are experiencing it. It is possible, even frequent, for people to do incredibly brave and strong things while simultaneously feeling scared, sad, alone or even broken.

- In this case, strength is every little act of bravery you have taken from the first moment you lost your loved one that has allowed you to move forward from day to day. Despite the pain, your heart is still beating. Despite the loss you have experienced, you carry out small acts of courage every day. You hurt, but here you are actively seeking a path forward. That is strength.
- Take a few minutes to reflect on the strength you have found since you experienced loss.

  What does that strength look like? How does it feel?

# **Being Human**

"Sometimes the most healing thing we can do is to remind ourselves over and over; other people feel this too." – Andrea Gibson, poet

No matter how much you are hurting right now, you are not alone. Loss is something that everyone faces in life. While grief has no blueprint and your pain is unique to you, the pain you feel is part of being human.

Take time today to remind yourself that you are a part of the collective. Write about how you are not alone in your experience. How does grief connect you to others? Who in your life makes you feel connected?		

# If Only You Were Here

"Where you used to be, there is a hole in the world, which I find myself constantly walking around in the daytime and falling in at night. I miss you like hell."

– Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet, playwright

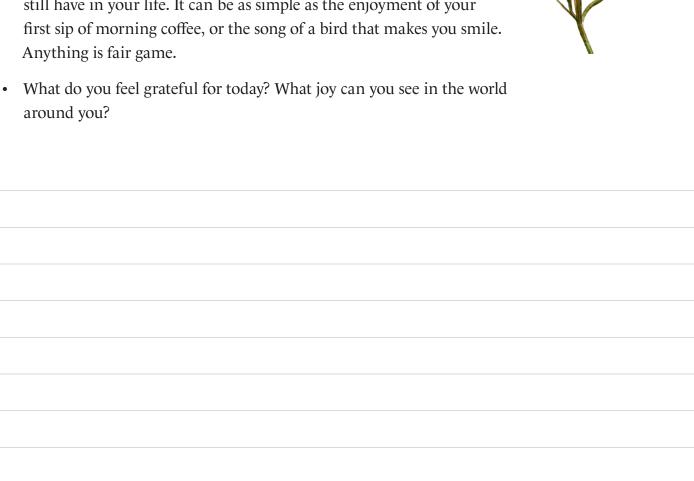
While grief and heartache go hand in hand, the intense yearning and sorrow you feel are a testament to the love you shared with your person. If you had just one more moment togeth what would you say to your loved one?		
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#### **Grief and Gratitude**

"As long as I can, I will look at this world for the both of us. As long as I can, I will laugh with the birds, I will sing with the flowers, I will pray to the stars, for both of us." - Unknown

Although grief and gratitude may feel like they have no obvious connection, grief and gratitude can sit side by side. If you make the effort to search for it, gratitude can help you heal. Despite your loss, good still exists in the world and there are still things for which to be grateful.

• Take a few minutes to remind yourself that there is still happiness in the world. Write about the good things that you still have in your life. It can be as simple as the enjoyment of your first sip of morning coffee, or the song of a bird that makes you smile. Anything is fair game.



### **Just Write**

"Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart." – William Wadsworth, author

Today, just write. It can be about anything that you want. If you feel moved to draw, you can do that too. Write about your favorite color, or the weather or something that makes you smile.

• What are you feeling at this moment?	

#### **A Love that Endures**

"Death ends a life, not a relationship." – Mitch Albom, Tuesdays with Morrie, author

It happens to everyone; we forget the sound of their laughter, the details of their face, the warmth of their touch. Some days the memories are clearer than others, but eventually the sharpness of those memories fade. While that is normal, it is natural to worry that moving through your grief means letting go or moving on, but that trivializes the bond that you shared. Your loved one is here with you because you loved them, and they will always be a part of you.

- While those things may be normal, they can also be terrifying. When those things start to happen, you may worry that moving through your grief means letting go or moving on from the person who you love.
- That is not the case. Those types of thoughts may be natural, but they trivialize the bond that you shared. Your loved one is here with you because you loved them, and they will always be a part of you.

•	Take time today to write about all the ways your loved one is still here with you now, and how they will always be with you in the future.

# **Facing the Unknown**

"The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest fear is fear of the unknown." – HP Lovecraft, author

Losing a loved one doesn't just strip you of a future that you once imagined; it can feel like it has washed away the foundation on which you have built your life. You have lost a sense of security, and that is often replaced with fear. Is there anything more frightening than the unknown?

there anything more frightening than the unknown?	
• Today, face the unknown and try to give your fear a name.  What frightens you today? What fears do you have for the future?  What, if anything, can you do to ease these fears?	

#### Life After Loss

"The weird, weird thing about devastating loss is that life actually goes on.
When you are faced with a tragedy so huge that you have no idea how you
can live through it, somehow the world keeps turning, the seconds keep ticking."

– James Patterson, author

Carrying on after you lose someone can be completely disorienting. You will see people around you are moving on and getting back to life, but for you, the idea of moving on might feel scary. Sometimes the idea of moving ahead can even feel like disloyalty or betrayal.

•	You can never replace what has been taken from you, but you can be open to the possibilities that
	might be ahead. Today, write about how you might start to live a little more.

•	What is stopping you from really living? What would help you move past these barriers? What can you do to make peace with living the next chapter of your life?

#### The Bonds That Remain

"When someone is mourning there is nothing you can say to alleviate their pain. Just sit with them, hold their hands, and be present." – Anoir Ou-Chad, therapist, poet

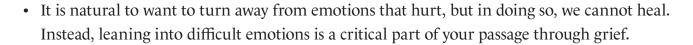
A hug, a squeeze of the hand, or a meal prepared by a loved one may not seem like much to some, but you probably know how important these seemingly small acts can be as you move through grief. The people who are there for you, who open their arms and hearts to you may surprise you.

- Sometimes grief—and friendship—are not that simple. You may be surprised by the people who step up in ways that you never imagined, and you may also be disappointed by some people that you feel aren't doing enough. The truth is that many people have no idea how to support even their closest friends when they have experienced a loss.
- Today, write about friendship. What has your loss uncovered about your friendships? Have some people pulled away or been unable to give you the support you feel you need? Have you felt able to ask for support? If you could be completely honest with them, what would you tell them? Conversely, who are the people who have been there for you when you needed them? How have they supported you? What can you do to express your gratitude for their support?

#### What Lies Beneath

"Crisis is what suppressed pain looks like; it always comes to the surface. It shakes you into reflection and healing." – Bryant McGill, author

When you touch something that is really hot and burn your hand, your automatic reflex is to pull away before you burn yourself worse, right? For most people, the reaction to emotional pain is the same. Something hurts, so they withdraw.



• While you write today try to lean into the pain and heartache by expressing the emotions that lie beneath the surface—the feelings that sometimes bubble up from nowhere and threaten to overwhelm you.

•	• What are those emotions? How does it feel when you experience them? How does it feel to give them a name and acknowledge they exist?					

### **Stepping Forward with Intention**

"All things break, and all things can be mended. Not with time, as they say, but with intention." – LR Knost, author

When people grieve it is very easy to slip into autopilot and hope that over time things will eventually get better. While this can shield people from the intensity of grief, ignoring feelings related to grief won't lead anywhere positive. As difficult as it can be, it is important to try to find ways to be intentional about managing your grief.

- Living with intention means being an active participant in life. It means taking responsibility for yourself and your future. It means instead of thinking of yourself as a passenger on the journey through life, you can be a crew member. Instead of passively waiting for things to happen to you, you can take action to make things happen for you.
- While we can't control things like loss, you can do things that will help you move through your journey. By writing in this journal, you are doing just that. You are becoming an active participant in moving through your grief.

• What does intentionality mean to you? What are a few small goals you can set for yourself, and what can you do that helps move you closer to those goals?					

#### The Paradox of Grief

"I see people as they approach me, trying to make up their minds whether they will say something about it or not. I hate it if they do, and I hate it if they don't." – CS Lewis, theologian, author



One of the many paradoxes of grief is that it can lead to isolation and loneliness that can feel unbearable, while also making you feel like all you want in this world is to be left alone. Grief is isolating—with your loss you can feel as though your world has come crashing down, yet life moves on. It can hurt to see people moving on when your life feels anything but normal. It hurts to be left alone with your grief, and it also hurts when people ask about it.

- While it may feel that way, most people who have experienced loss most likely understand the invisible blanket you occasionally put on to separate you from the rest of the world. They can never know your exact experience with grief, but they will understand the journey you are traveling. Others may want to offer support but don't know how they can help.
- How has your grief left you feeling isolated? Have you felt like you want to be left alone, but still crave the company in your life? Who are the people who may want to support you, but maybe aren't quite sure how? What could they do to support you? How do you think you could express exactly what you need to them?

### **Finding Meaning in Loss**

"The ultimate meaning we find is in everyone we have loved. I can only invite you to be curious about the rest of the story of your life." – David Kessler, grief and loss expert, author

Your loss has created a hole that may seem impossible to fill. It will take time, and although it may not seem likely right now, finding meaning through loss is possible. You have lost so much, and searching for meaning can be a long and difficult journey but it makes life more worthwhile.

- How can you begin your search for meaning even though at this moment you may not be able to see the end of your pain? For example, you can look for meaning in the way your loved one lived, or in the lasting impact they have left on the world or on you.
- What did your loved one leave behind? What did they value? In what ways can they still impact your life? How did your love for them change you?

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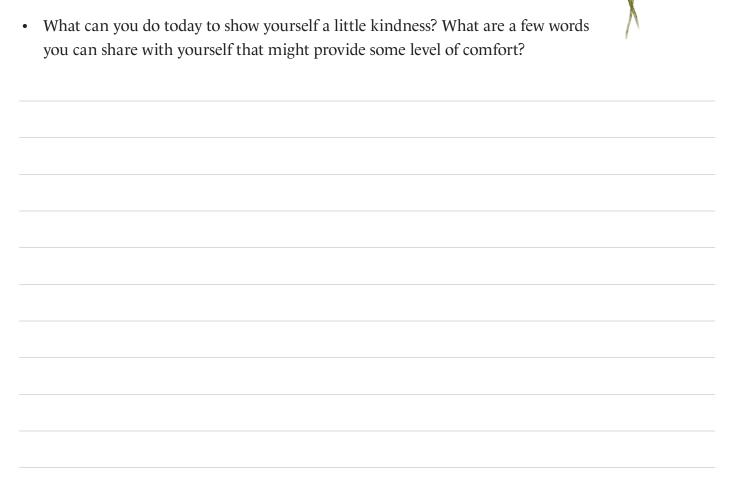
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### **Taking Care of Yourself**

"You can search throughout the entire universe for someone who is more deserving of your love and affection than you are yourself, and that person is not to be found anywhere. You, yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe deserve your love and affection." — Mahasi Sayadaw, Buddhist monk

What you need right now is to show yourself some love and kindness. Often in grief people can be their loudest critic. Today, try to silence that voice. Don't judge yourself or make apologies for how you feel. Just allow yourself the opportunity to grieve without judgment. Being kind to yourself can help you move through your grief.

• If you were talking to someone you love going through a similar loss, what would you say to them? How would you treat them? Have you shown yourself the same compassion as you would show them?



## The Power of Vulnerability

"Being open to the wounds of life means being open to the bounty and beauty. Don't mask or deny your vulnerability; it is your greatest asset." – Stephen Russell, playwright, actor

Even in the best of times, allowing yourself to be vulnerable takes a lot of strength and courage. It means opening up and fully feeling your pain and heartache, while also letting other people witness it. It also means running the risk that someone's response to your vulnerability may disappoint you. Despite that, vulnerability can also be the source of great healing.

• Write about vulnerability. What does that mean to you? If you vulnerable with someone, what would you tell them? How will vulnerability with others? Have you allowed anyone to witness	ing are you to share your
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### The Courage to Love

"It takes a great deal of courage to see the world in all of its tainted glory and still love it." – Oscar Wilde, playwright, author

The thought of love in the face of loss can feel impossible or strange. To open yourself to love means opening yourself to the possibility of more heartbreak.



- Would your loved one want you to close yourself off to love? Or would they, as someone who knew the power of the love you shared, want you to continue to love?
- What might prevent you from loving now that you have experienced loss? How can you use the love in your heart to make the world a better place?

## **Staying Afloat**

"In the beginning, the waves are 100 feet tall and crash over you without mercy. They come 10 seconds apart and don't even give you time to catch your breath. After a while, you'll find the waves are still 100 feet high, but they come further apart. When they come, they will still crash all over you and wipe you out. But in between you can breathe." – Unknown

Grief can feel like you have been left adrift in an endless ocean, unaware of the storms that lay ahead. On some days, you may feel like the waves are more like a tsunami, knocking you off your feet. On others, you may feel like you are just treading water, barely keeping your head above.

- As hard as it may feel right now, eventually, you will be able to swim.
   While grief is scary and unpredictable, you must allow the waves to crash over you and do your best not to let them sweep you away.
- What do the waves of grief feel like to you? What might help you face the next wave? What can you do to help yourself from being swept away? Who in your life can help you to weather the storm?

### Smile Because it Happened

"When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure." — Unknown

Reminders of the person you lost are everywhere and unavoidable. When you lose someone special to you, the memories you shared that brought joy can now bring heartache.

• But here's the thing—the person you love lives on in those memories, and eventually those memories will once again bring a smile to your face. You will start to look back and feel grateful for the time you shared, instead of grieving the time you lost. It won't happen easily or quickly and will more than likely bring tears.



- But what if you spent a little time today remembering some moments with your loved one? Wouldn't that be a wonderful way to honor their life by looking back on your time together with gratitude in your heart?
- Today, try to lean into that thought and write about one memory you are grateful to have shared with the person you love.

## **Forget Me Not**

"Those that we love never truly leave us. There are things that death cannot touch." – Jack Thorne, playwright

Our loved ones live on through us. We create a space inside of us that keeps them close and carries them with us. One day, the memories that once caused great heartache and pain will provide great comfort.

hold them close? What memories do you treasure most? What parts of them live on in you?						

### **Acceptance Isn't Forgetting**

"You will not 'get over' the loss of a loved one, but you will learn to live with it. You will heal, and you will rebuild yourself around the loss that you have suffered. You will be whole again, but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same nor would you want to." – Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, psychiatrist, grief expert, author

Acceptance doesn't mean 'getting over' your loss. It is not a betrayal, and it has nothing to do with forgetting the person you love.

- Instead, acceptance is about coming to terms with your new reality, having more good days than bad days and allowing pain and joy to coexist. It is an understanding that you have experienced an unspeakable loss but knowing that you will be okay.
- Spend some time thinking and writing about the things that grief has made you accept.

#### What Have You Learned?

"Have you ever lost someone you love and wanted one more conversation, one more chance you make up for the time when you thought they would be here forever? If so, then you know you can go your whole life collecting days, and none will outweigh the one you wish you had back."

– Mitch Album, author



When you are faced with the loss of someone you love it is natural to yearn for one more conversation, one more hug or one more chance to say, "I love you so, so much." It is easy to look back at the time you shared with your loved one and see opportunities you think you missed, or to scold yourself for being too complacent or oblivious.

• You, just like humans everywhere, are perfectly imperfect. You deserve unconditional self-love and self-forgiveness. What do those things mean to you? Have you shown yourself the same amount of unconditional love you show others?					



#### **About us**

Eversight is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our mission is to restore sight and prevent blindness through the healing power of donation, transplantation and research.

Operating in Arizona, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio and South Korea, Eversight works in collaboration with surgeons, researchers, academic medical centers and eye banks across the United States and abroad. In addition to recovering, evaluating and providing donated eye tissue for sight-restoring transplants and promoting public donation awareness, we advance research into the causes and cures of blinding eye conditions and provide humanitarian aid to people around the world in need of corneal transplantation.

Join the Eversight community. Change the lives of those who are losing their sight or are blind, and the future for millions more all over the world through research into treatment and cures.











