



## GRIEF EVALUATION

Below is an evaluation to help you see (acknowledge) how you are doing with the different challenging experiences that grief brings. At this stage in the journey, it is tempting to begin comparing your loss with others. Inevitably, we begin to think, “Others have it so much worse than me. Why am I down?”

Resist the urge to compare your loss with the loss of others. Just because Person A got hit by a truck does not mean that Person B’s knee surgery hurt any less. The purpose of acknowledging the history and realness of your grief is not to give you a tool to downplay your loss (that would be another form of denial). The purpose is to help you identify the terrain that you will walk with the Good Shepherd (Psalm 23; John 10:1-21).

**Instructions:** Read the following descriptive statements. As you read them, consider your response to your recent loss or losses. If your grief is not for a physical death, some of these questions may not apply directly and this will affect the scoring at the end of this evaluation. Mark the answer that best fits how you respond:

(N) almost never, (R) rarely, (S) sometimes, (F) frequently, or (A) almost always

For the most accurate results, ask one person from each major sphere of your life (i.e, home, work, social, church small group, etc...) to complete this survey on your behalf and compare results.

Additional copies of this evaluation can be found at: [equip.summitrdu.com/equip/grief-seminar](http://equip.summitrdu.com/equip/grief-seminar).

1. I have a hard time accepting that my loss really happened.	N	R	S	F	A
2. I accidentally use present tense verbs to speak of who/what I lost.	N	R	S	F	A
3. When I remember my loss it is fresh, like it just happened.	N	R	S	F	A
4. I try not to be sad.	N	R	S	F	A
5. I distract myself from grief by caring for others.	N	R	S	F	A
6. I have parts of my life or home I refuse to change.	N	R	S	F	A
7. When I think about my loss I get angry.	N	R	S	F	A
8. I am more short-tempered with people now than before my loss.	N	R	S	F	A
9. I am cynical or ambivalent about things I enjoyed before my loss.	N	R	S	F	A
10. My relationship with God has become more cold or distant.	N	R	S	F	A
11. I take a “functional” approach to life with things I enjoyed before my loss.	N	R	S	F	A
12. I find myself bracing against life or people letting me down.	N	R	S	F	A
13. It is harder to trust people because I might lose them.	N	R	S	F	A
14. I avoid making plans because life now feels uncertain.	N	R	S	F	A
15. My general level of anxiety is higher than what is normal for me.	N	R	S	F	A
16. I try to avoid being alone.	N	R	S	F	A
17. I am second guessing decisions more than what is normal for me.	N	R	S	F	A
18. I dread the morning because I have to get through the whole day.	N	R	S	F	A
19. I dread being alone and feel like my friendships are different now.	N	R	S	F	A
20. I feel “broken” and like no one would want to be with me.	N	R	S	F	A
21. I think having fun with others would betray the one I lost.	N	R	S	F	A
22. My life feels empty and meaningless now.	N	R	S	F	A
23. I fear getting close to someone again because I don’t want to lose them.	N	R	S	F	A
24. I am getting in too close, too quickly in relationships to counter my grief.	N	R	S	F	A
25. My days, weeks, and months have lost any sense of rhythm.	N	R	S	F	A
26. Planning is something I have stopped or don’t know how to do.	N	R	S	F	A
27. I no longer have dreams, hopes, or ambitions for the future.	N	R	S	F	A
28. I have stopped keeping a budget and bills are overwhelming.	N	R	S	F	A
29. I am facing major decisions that I do not know how to make.	N	R	S	F	A
30. I no longer enjoy the things I did before my loss.	N	R	S	F	A
31. I am not sleeping well or in a normal sleep cycle since my loss.	N	R	S	F	A
32. I am experiencing frequent headaches.	N	R	S	F	A
33. My eating habits have become less healthy or my appetite has changed.	N	R	S	F	A



34. I have been sick more frequently since my loss.	N	R	S	F	A
35. I am fatigued even when I get my normal amount of sleep.	N	R	S	F	A
36. I am frequently experiencing an upset stomach or constipation.	N	R	S	F	A
37. I am unsure how to introduce myself or talk to new people.	N	R	S	F	A
38. I don't feel like I know who I am anymore.	N	R	S	F	A
39. Decisions that once seemed obvious are hard to make now.	N	R	S	F	A
40. I don't know what "group" of people I belong to now.	N	R	S	F	A
41. I am questioning beliefs that I have held for a long time.	N	R	S	F	A
42. I don't know how to define what makes me productive or useful now.	N	R	S	F	A
43. I have begun to use food, work, or hobbies in unhealthy ways.	N	R	S	F	A
44. When I feel down because of grief I use alcohol or drugs.	N	R	S	F	A
45. I have become (more) avoidant of unpleasant emotions or conflict.	N	R	S	F	A
46. I have allowed a new relationship to take the place of grief.	N	R	S	F	A
47. I am keeping myself so busy I do not have time to think about grief.	N	R	S	F	A
48. All I want to do is sleep.	N	R	S	F	A
49. I fantasize about being with my loved one in heaven.	N	R	S	F	A
50. I wish I could die.	N	R	S	F	A
51. I have made plans about how I would kill myself.	N	R	S	F	A
52. I have a specific plan for how I would kill myself.	N	R	S	F	A
53. I have the things necessary to kill myself.	N	R	S	F	A
54. I am planning to take my own life.	N	R	S	F	A

**Key to Survey Scoring:** Give yourself one point for an "S" response, two points for an "F" response, and three points for an "A" response. If your total score matches the total number of questions, that is an area of concern. If your total score exceeds or doubles the total number of questions, it is a significant concern. If your total score more than doubles the total number of questions, it should be considered a life-dominating struggle.

**Grief and Depression:** Depression is not one of the nine expressions of grief listed below, because of the significant overlap in the two experiences. Depression also contains elements of anger, fear, loneliness, and identity transition. One way (helpful, although incomplete) to think of grief as "depression triggered by loss."

- Questions 1-6: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 6 questions)

This set of questions describes grief that is disrupting life through **denial**. This means that the reality of your loss has not been acknowledged in a way that allows you to take the rest of the journey of grief in a healthy way. If your loss is more than one to two months in the past, this is a reason for concern.

- Questions 7-12: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 6 questions)

This set of questions describes grief that is disrupting life through **anger**. Grief is a response to something that was wrong. People were not made to die. Health was not made to break. Relationships were not made to be abused. These are products of the Fall. Anger is an appropriate response. Anger as a response within grief (John 11:38 – the Greek for Jesus being "deeply moved (ESV)" is speaking of anger) should not be confused with sinful anger in response to a desire not being fulfilled (James 4:1-3).

- Questions 13-18: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 6 questions)

This set of questions describes grief that is disrupting life through **fear**. Grief brings many kinds of uncertainties. It also reminds us of the brevity of life. In the face of grief we ask many questions about the purpose of life and whether our life is accomplishing anything of eternal significance. These are intimidating realities and reflections. Unless this fear begins to impair one's ability to live effectively, then it should be considered a natural response to the magnitude of grief.

- Questions 19-24: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 6 questions)

This set of questions describes grief that is disrupting life through **loneliness**. Grief is often because of the loss of a significant relationship and grief always changes relationships by changing the griever. Loss often affects our



willingness to trust or love others. So for obvious and less obvious reasons, one struggle that often accompanies grief is loneliness.

- Questions 25-30: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 6 questions)

This set of questions describes grief that is disrupting life through **life disruption**. Grief changes (directly and indirectly) our finances, schedule, social relationships, decision making process, and many other facets of life. We are forced to adapt to these changes while carrying the burden of heavy emotions. For many people this personal chaos inside an emotional firestorm is overwhelming.

- Questions 31-36: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 6 questions)

This set of questions describes grief that is disrupting life through **health impact**. Grief is an extremely stressful process and season of life. One of the significant effects of stress is that it suppresses our immune system. The body cannot give more energy to grieving without taking those resources from somewhere else. Unless this is understood a grieving person can feel like they are under severe oppression when they keep getting sick in the midst of their grief.

- Questions 37-42: (Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 6 questions)

This set of questions describes grief that is disrupting life through **identity transition**. We tend to define ourselves by the people and things we love. Often these things come with “titles”: parent, spouse, pastor, banker, athlete, achiever, successful, etc... When these are lost or redefined, we can struggle with our sense of identity. This does not mean that everything we loved was an idol. It does mean that we must learn to love and serve God in ways or roles that are new to us.

- Questions 43-48: (Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 6 questions)

This set of questions describes grief that is disrupting life through **escapism**. It is not bad to avoid pain. It is bad to avoid pain in a way that creates greater pain or life disruption. It is wrong to avoid unpleasant experiences if the lessons we must learn through them are essential to a healthy, God-honoring life. If you scored high on escapism, then you need to look carefully at what you are running to as you run from the pain of grief.

- Questions 49-54: (Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 6 questions)

This set of questions describes grief that is disrupting life through **suicidal thoughts**. Grief naturally brings death to our mind. Someone or something that we loved dearly is now on the other side of eternity and we would like to be with them. That is not irrational. However, if you score high on this scale, then you need to speak with a pastor or counselor immediately. Until you can do so, contact family or friends to stay with you, do not consume alcohol or drugs, and separate yourself from objects with which you could harm yourself. While your feelings are understandable, your solution is not. There is hope even if you cannot find it right now.

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**Post-Traumatic Stress:** Many forms of grief can overlap with post-traumatic stress. If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms three months or longer after your loss, you may want to seek counseling for PTSD as you process the grief of your loss.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Intrusive recollections of the events surrounding your loss.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recurrent dreams associated with your loss.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Flashbacks where you feel like you are re-experiencing the events surrounding your loss.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Intense distress when you experience things that remind you of your loss.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Feelings of detachment from others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Difficulty concentrating at your normal levels.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hypervigilance – always looking for what is about to go wrong

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The full seminar for this resource can be found at [www.bradhambrick.com/griefseminar](http://www.bradhambrick.com/griefseminar).