

Grief – Healing DERAILERS

We can experience healing milestones at different times and in various ways, and our ability to cope can be derailed (Shear, 2020).

The following worksheet helps you identify what is derailing your healing process and reflect on how you can make changes in your life.

Consider each of the following D.E.R.A.I.L.E.R.S. and think about what can do to make them less damaging (modified from Shear, 2020):

Doubts: What doubts do you hold regarding whether you did enough for the person that died?

List the doubts

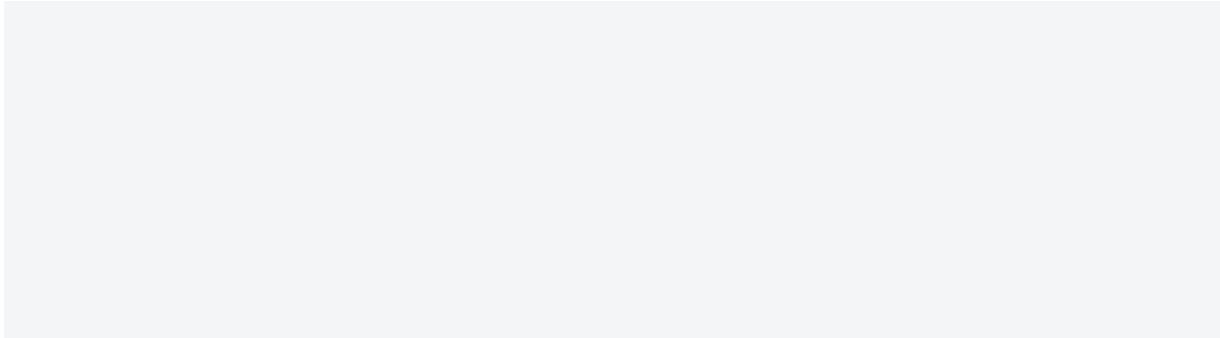
List the most important things you did for that person.

Embracing: What beliefs and ideas can you embrace that make you want to regain control from your grief?

List the beliefs and ideas (for example, “she would want me to continue living for the sake of the children.”)

Repeatedly: Do you keep imagining “what if” situations?

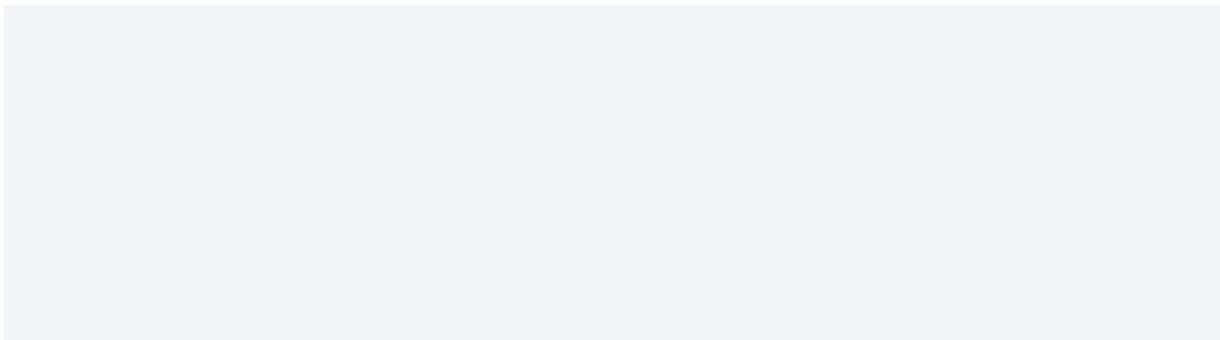
List the thoughts you have regarding what you could have done to stop that person from dying:



- Recognize that you have no control over the past.

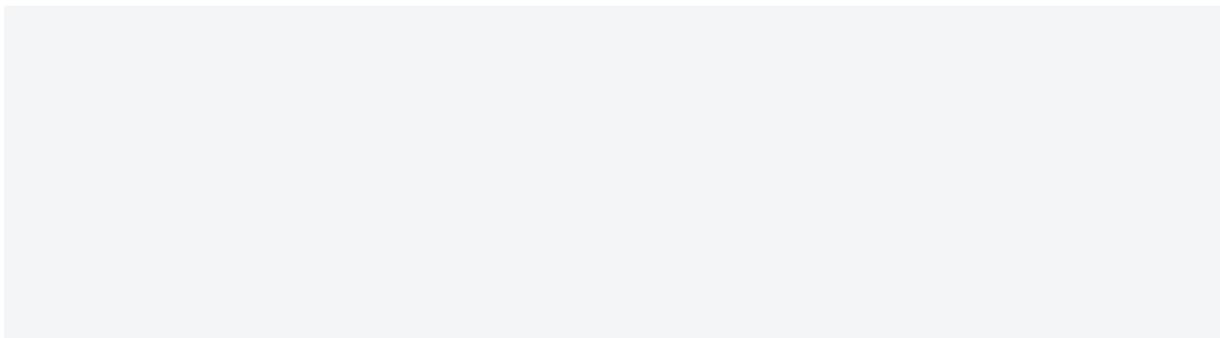
Anger: Are you holding on to anger and bitterness?

What anger and bitterness are you not letting go of?



Insistent: Are you holding onto thoughts that the death was unfair and shouldn't have happened?

List those thoughts.



- Recognize that life is not always fair and focus on all the good times you shared together.

Lack: Do you believe you are not capable of adapting to a new future?

What could you do in your future that you have never previously dared to imagine?

Excessive: Are you excessively avoiding reminders of their loss?

List what you are avoiding:

Imagine if that person were here; what might they be saying to you?

Rejecting: Are you rejecting the support of others?

List what support you are rejecting:

How might you begin to let people support you?

Survivor: Do you feel guilty that you survived, and they didn't?

List your feelings:

Would the other person be thankful that you survived? What would they say to you?

References

- Shear, K (2020). *Healing milestones*. Retrieved December 20, 2021, from https://complicatedgrief.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/HEALING-Milestones_-What-Grievers-Can-Expect-with-Covid-19-Addendum.pdf