



Good Grief: Finding Hope in the Necessary Losses of Being a Caregiver Handout

As a Caregiver you have made changes and adjustments in your life. You may not have noticed that some of the adjustments you have made may also be a loss. Each loss is important as it has affected you as a person. The effect on you may be for the better or at times for the worse. It is important that you honor and acknowledge the losses. This can help you to recognize and deal with your feelings and grow from the loss.

What losses can you name because of your caregiving role?

- Loss of job or career?
- Loss of income or financial strains?
- Loss of closeness with family and friends?
- Loss of goals or dreams for the future?
- Loss of physical or mental health?

What benefits can you name that are the result of your caregiving role?

- Have you learned new skills?
- Have you learned to focus more on your relationships or what matters?
- Have you become more skilled with finances?
- Have you become more confident?
- Have your losses helped you grow as a person?

Healthy Coping Skills When Dealing with Loss

Recognize and express the feeling attached to the loss.

- What feelings or losses do you need to recognize?
- How might you express your feelings related to your losses?
- Who can you share your feelings with?

Live in the moment-There are different practices that can support your inner calm. You gain clarity as you face the losses and strains in the present.

- **Believe in Self**-Believing in you can help you keep perspective. Belief in self helps with a positive outlook. Read positive quotes aloud or write them down daily. These can help with a soothing focus when you are struggling. Use positive self-talk, such as: "I am giving my best," "I am worthy of love."



- **Mindfulness**-To be mindful is a way of living in the moment. There are many ways to practice mindfulness. Stop and bring your attention to the moment. You can focus on your breathing, a picture, or the sounds of nature. You can bring a calm presence to your day.

Focus on gratitude and express it.

- What or who are you grateful for today?

Do what you love.

- What activities do you enjoy or that help you cope?

Connect to others.

- Who might you connect with this week? How will you connect?

Get rest.

- How can you plan to get some rest?

Practice your values and beliefs. Keep up with spiritual practices.

- How do your beliefs and spiritual practices help you make sense of your losses?

Ask for help.

- What help do you need? Who can you turn to for help?

Set goals for yourself.

- What goals do you have that you may want to pursue?

Exercise.

- How or when might you exercise or stretch?

Create a ritual of letting go.

- Name a loss you wish to contemplate and create a ceremony to let it go.