

**Personal History of Grief**

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## Introduction

The loss of a loved one, a relationship or something is a painful and difficult experience that almost everyone will encounter at some point in their life. Coping with grief is a unique and personal journey that can have a profound impact on our mental, emotional and physical well-being. In this article on the personal story of grief, I have the opportunity to explore my own experience of loss and reflect on how it has shaped me as a person. It can be a cathartic process that helps me process my emotions, better understand my own coping mechanisms, and find meaning in the face of tragedy. In this paper, I will explore the loss of loved ones, relationships, and other losses that affect me greatly. By writing about my grief, I can not only honor the memory of my loved ones, but also gain a deeper understanding of myself and the human experience.

## The 7 most significant losses I have suffered in my life.

1. The loss of my grandmother
2. The loss of my father's sister
3. The loss of my mother's sister
4. The loss of my first girlfriend
5. The loss of one of my mother's eyes
6. The reduced mobility of one of my big brothers
7. The loss of my scholarship

## 1. The loss of my grandmother

**Description of the loss:** My grandmother and I (my mother's mother) had a very close relationship. She was blind and I often accompanied her on her outings to guide her when she wanted to see a friend, go to church and other activities. The fact of always being with her allows me to develop a great attachment with her. In May 2009, she fell ill and one morning when I was going to school, she called me and told me that she had something important to tell me later. It was 11 a.m. when one of my older brothers came to the school and told me that I had to go home because they needed me. When I arrived home, I saw a lot of people in front of the house, and when I entered the house I saw that my grandmother was dead.

**Coping strategies:** The death of my grandmother was a shock to me that I couldn't believe because she had something important to tell me and she died without telling me. I felt a sense of anger, because I wanted to know what she had to tell me. I spent a lot of time thinking about her and it hurt a lot every time I thought about her and without knowing what she had important to tell me. To relieve me of the sadness that invaded me, there is a river behind my parent's house and every day I went to the riverside to cry and sing, because my grandmother liked to sing with me. Every time I sang, there was a force that made me cry and cry harder and I felt a kind of comfort in those moments. In addition, my father who is an evangelist organized recreational activities at church, and I engaged in these activities which brought me great comfort. Among these activities was a singing competition, and I participated in it as a singer, which helped me a lot, because I like music very much. Finally, one evening while I was sleeping, I saw in a dream my grandmother dancing with the angels and she was dancing with a beautiful smile on her face. Since that day, I feel free from the pain I felt for his death.

## 2. The loss of my father's sister

**Description of the loss:** The relationship between my parents' children and my aunt was a bit complicated. We were very distant, because my aunt was a little jealous of us. Once she said to one of her daughters who was close to us and that one of my sisters was living with them for study reasons that we, the children of my parents are blessed philosophers, why does she lodge my sister and does she spend her money on her. That day, my sister cried a lot and decided to leave her daughter's house. Since that day, because of previous stories and this story, we haven't had a good relationship. During the year 2020, my aunt is affected by a serious illness which caused her to suffer a lot, but since we did not have a good relationship, we did not know the situation from the beginning. She didn't have enough money to get treatment for her illness. When we got to know his situation, it was very late. Although we did what we could, she passed away in October 2020.

**Coping strategies:** In the death of my aunt, blame and guilt are experiences that affect the outcome of my grief (Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy, fifth edition, P. 21). I had the feeling that what was happening could have been prevented.

As a result, blame and guilt overwhelmed me for a long time. To feel relieved, I decided to have a more secure relationship with his son and daughters. I call them every week to hear from them and see if everything is going well. In addition, I practice self-compassion. I tried to be kind and compassionate to myself during this difficult time, because I figured that when we found out about the situation, we did what we could to save her, but we couldn't. I put in my mind that it was God's will that she die the moment she dies.

### 3. The loss of my mother's sister

**Description of the loss:** My aunt was a person with whom all the sons and daughters of my parents had a very strong attachment, because her house is next to my parents' house. On August 14, 2021, a terrible earthquake hit the city where we lived. When my aunt was crossing the street, a piece of concrete from a house hit her and broke her left leg. She was taken to hospital for treatment, but the doctor was unable to operate to repair her leg due to a lung infection caused by the beatings she had received. The doctor gave her medicine to treat his lungs before proceeding with the operation. A month later, on September 13, at 10 a.m., the doctors operated on her. That day, I accompanied her from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and she looked good. She was talking, singing and praying with me. In the night, it was 1 am, one of my older brothers called me and told me that my aunt had died.

**Coping Strategies:** That moment, I spent more than 3 minutes without saying anything, because it was a shock for me. Two of my cousins and I were going to the hospital to see if it was real, because we couldn't believe it. Upon arriving at the hospital, we asked the responsables to let us see her, and we spent more than 10 minutes trying to resuscitate her with manual CPR but without success.

At his funeral on September 24, 2021, I cried like a child. I spent several months looking at one of her photos which reminded me a lot of her and which also made me cry. After a few months, I decided not to look at the photo anymore so as not to mourn his death. I listened to a lot of music whenever I felt overwhelmed by sadness, to find comfort, and I had one of my sisters who

always told me that I had to console myself because she would never come back again. I tried to gradually adapt to reality until I found joy again.

#### 4. The loss of my first girlfriend

**Description of the loss:** I was 23 when I met my first girlfriend in July 2014. She was for me the woman I had been waiting for for a long time because I really loved her very much. Unfortunately her mother didn't want me for her, according to her I didn't have enough money to marry her daughter. My ex-girlfriend was in 2nd year of nursing school and her mother decided not to pay school fees anymore because she didn't want to leave me to take the man she had chosen for her. When I found out, I decided to pay my girlfriend's school fees and all the other expenses that go with it for the next two years, because she studies last 4 years. Some time after graduation, I saw that there was a change in our relationship. One day I called her and said, *"Honey, why did you change with me? Am I doing something wrong?"* She replied: *"You haven't done anything, I just want to be alone to think of myself"*. Finally in February 2018, she called me and said, *"Esaierson, I can't be with you anymore, because paying for school wasn't enough for me."* I was so surprised and frustrated that I said, *"Okay, I promise you, I will never ask you to get back together"* because she left me more than 3 times after graduating.

**Coping strategies:** I felt betrayed and destroyed for a long time. The pain was so bad for me that I couldn't sleep and lost my appetite. I spent most of my time locked in my room crying. Music is a very important element for me, because it helps me a lot in my moments of sadness. Music is an important aspect of sound in our lives. Used correctly, it can be a powerful health-promoting tool (MUSIC THERAPY BY PRABIR DATTA, P. 4). At that time, music was not enough for

me, because I felt a void that only music could not fill. Looking for a solution, a month later, in March 2018, I decided to take another girlfriend with the intention that she could bring me comfort. Even though I loved her, I was still dominated by my ex-girlfriend. Eight months later, in November 2018, we decided to end our relationship. On the advice of my siblings and my parents, I went two years without having a girlfriend. During these two years, I managed to free myself completely from the sadness that I had, and to accept that it was no longer in my life. Finally, in November 2020, I built a relationship with the woman who is in my life and with whom I want to spend the rest of my life.

### 5. The loss of one of my mother's eyes

**Description of the loss:** My mother comes from a family with an inherited eye disease. His mother was blind from this disease called glaucoma. Therefore, my mother whom I love very much inherited this disease which caused her a lot of problems. In 2018, she lost sight in her left eye. In 2019, the eye got infected and caused him a lot of pain. One morning the pain was so excruciating that my mother was crying and her eye was bleeding. Unfortunately, in the province where we lived, there is not even an eye center, no ambulance and the road to go where you can find an eye hospital is in very bad condition. This morning, my big brothers weren't there and I couldn't bear to see Mama crying bitterly; I took the motorcycle I had in Haiti and took it to the hospital. When we arrived at the hospital, the doctors immediately took Mom to the operating theater to remove her eye.

**Coping strategies:** The day when they removed my mom's eye, sadness overwhelmed me and I cried saying, "Why Lord, why did you let this happen to mom? Why didn't you spare her from

this fate?". Suddenly I was angry and saddened at the same time. It was a problem for me every time I saw my mother without her left eye and only saw the eye socket. We decided to buy an ocular prosthesis so that mom regains the shape of her face. However, the prosthesis should be cleaned every two weeks. I asked the doctors to teach me how to do it, because it is difficult to go to the hospital. Fortunately, the doctors understood the situation and taught me how to remove it, clean it, and put it back. Every two weeks, I made sure to clean it.

Finally, to make sure it will still be clean after I leave to come here, I taught my siblings and my dad how to take it out, clean it, and put it back in the cavity. Until now I always call to know if they clean it.

## **6. The reduced mobility of one of my big brothers**

**Description of the loss:** Wenchel P. Ladouceur, is my father's second son among my father's six children and I am the youngest. On July 13, 2021 my brother came from the hospital with his wife and one of his children on a motorcycle had a terrible accident in which his right leg was badly fractured, because the part above the knee was crushed and her son's left arm was also fractured. It was a shock for the whole family. My brother spent two days unconscious. He did not know when he had been taken to the hospital or when the doctors had operated on him. A few months later, the fractured bones were reformed. However, my brother's knee can no longer bend.

**Coping strategies:** The mobility reduction of my brother means a lot to me because he is my musical companion and he has accompanied me to churches that have invited me to worship. This situation dominated me a lot for several months. But what comforted me was my brother's

courage in the situation he was going through. He always keeps his smile on and shows no mental affection. His courage inspires me a lot and gives me the strength to accept the situation, even if we plan to have him do another operation to bend her knees again.

## 7. The loss of my scholarship

**Description of the loss:** In April 2021, a friend put me in touch with an organization that gave scholarships. I decided to follow the steps to get a scholarship because I have always dreamed of doing my masters degree in the USA. I had to take 3 tests to get the scholarship, and I passed them with more than 80%. After the exams, I had to invest more than 10,000 US dollars to meet the requirements that the organization imposed on me. To find this money, I had to sell everything I had and with the support of my family, because 10,000 American dollars in my country are worth 1,554,000 gourdes. All these sums had been deposited in the organization's account. On February 15, I managed to leave Haiti to come and fulfill my dream. Since the day of my arrival in the USA, I have never managed to find the people in charge of the organization. I send them emails, phone messages and calls, but I find no response. Their office is located in Mexico. The University has sent me several emails informing me that the organization does not make payments for me.

**Coping strategies:** At the beginning of the situation, I did not know what to do. Sometimes my body is present in the classes, while my mind is not there, because I was thinking about what I should do? After several emails from the University, at the beginning of March, I decided to tell the University everything. It was very difficult for me, because I didn't know what decision the University was going to make and I couldn't pay the tuition because it was too expensive for a

foreign student who can only work 20 hours a week and only on campus. Also, my parents don't have enough money in Haiti to help me pay these fees. Indeed, I told everything to the University and I gave all the proof of the payments that I made on the account of the organization and the documents proving that I obtained a full scholarship from the organization, including subsistence, accommodation and transportation costs for one year. Thank goodness, after telling everything to the university and in all honesty, the university gave me half a scholarship. At that moment, I was very surprised and happy, because I didn't expect that. Therefore, I have a debt that I must pay for this semester. To do this, I am not taking classes this summer, because I have to work for the spring debt. It is very difficult, but I thank God for giving me a way out of this situation and I pray that all kinds of blessings will be showered on Alliance University.

### C. Family Of Origin that influence Grief

**Family systems:** The way families are structured and function can impact how grief is experienced and expressed. At the death of my aunt, my father's sister, I could not express my sorrow, because the whole family knew that me and my aunt had no closeness. I hid my grief so they wouldn't think I was faking it.

**Communication Style:** How a family communicates about the loss can impact how a person grieves. In my family, even though grief overwhelms us, my parents say it's only God's will. It helps us a lot, because we love God.

**Past experiences of loss:** Past experiences of loss within the family can also impact how a person grieves. The way my parents teach us about past losses helps us a lot.

**Conflicts or unresolved issues:** Conflicts or unresolved issues within the family can complicate the grieving process. At the death of my dad's sister, we had a difficult relationship with the deceased, I especially had trouble mourning because of this background. (Grief and Counseling and Grief Therapy, pp 131-135).

**Beliefs about death:** Different cultures have different beliefs about death and what happens after death. These beliefs can influence how individuals perceive the meaning and significance of their loss (Grief and Loss Across the LifeSpan, P. 134). In my family, we believe in what the Bible says about death. The dream I had after my grandmother died was the result of our belief

### Ethnicity factors that influence grief

**Cultural norms and beliefs:** Culture and grief have been extensively studied, and research has shown that cultural beliefs and practices can significantly influence the grieving process (Bennett & Wong, 2014; Lee, Neimeyer, & Keeshin, 2014).

**Support systems:** Social support can play a crucial role in the grieving process, and research has shown that individuals from different ethnic backgrounds may have different support systems available to them (Holland & Neimeyer, 2011).

**Discrimination and racism:** Experiences of discrimination and racism can impact a person's experience of grief. Research has shown that people who have experienced racial discrimination may be more likely to experience complicated grief, such as the case of George Floyd (Neria et al., 2008).

## Analyze of strengths in deficits

### The strengths

- I took time for mourning and grief. It has helped me deal with and accept the situations of loss that I have experienced.
- I took part in cultural and religious activities like the song contest I talked about when my grandmother died. These activities brought me comfort and support during the grieving process.
- I honor the memory of the deceased which gives me a sense of closure and healing.

### The deficits

- Especially in the loss of my first girlfriend, I isolated myself from others, because I didn't want anyone to see that I was crying. This exacerbated the negative emotions I was feeling and had consequences.
- I was not looking for support or professional help. This lengthened the grieving process and made it more complicated.

## The most significant points of learning

1. The most significant learning points in grief therapy are the "mourning tasks". Tasks help normalize reactions to grievances and allow clients to see grievance as an active process

that they can go through, rather than a passive process that happens to them. These tasks include:

- **Accept the reality of the loss:** This task involves accepting the fact that the loved one is gone and will not return.
- **Dealing with the pain of bereavement:** This task involves feeling and overcoming the emotional pain that accompanies bereavement.
- **Adapting to a New Reality:** This task involves learning to adapt to life without your loved one.
- **Finding a new connection with the deceased while moving on:** This task involves finding a way to maintain a connection with the deceased while moving forward in life (Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy, P. 41-50)

2. **Recognizing and Expressing Emotions:** One of the most important things I learned from grief therapy is the ability to recognize and express emotions related to loss. Many people may feel the need to repress their emotions or put on a brave face in the wake of a loss, but grief therapy provides a safe and supportive space for individuals to express their emotions openly and without judgment. . . . It can help individuals deal with their emotions in a healthy way and prevent them from bottling up their feelings.

3. **Moving on while honoring the loss:** Although it may seem impossible in the early stages of grief, grief therapy emphasizes the importance of moving on in life while honoring the loss. This may involve finding ways to remember and celebrate the life of the deceased or finding new ways to pursue goals and aspirations that were important to

the deceased. By finding a way to move on while honoring the loss, individuals can find meaning and purpose in their grief and begin to build a new sense of normalcy in their lives.

4. **Understand the stages of grievance:** Grievance therapy teaches me to teach the stages of grievance, which can include denial, anger, negotiation, depression, and acceptance. These steps can help individuals recognize their emotions and feelings and provide them with tools to process their grievance in a healthy and productive way.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the experience of bereavement is a complex and deeply personal journey in which it can be difficult to navigate. However, by sharing my story and reflecting on my experiences, I find comfort, healing, and meaning in the face of loss. Writing a personal story on grief paper is a powerful way to process my emotions, honor the memory of loved ones, and connect with others who have experienced similar pain. While the grieving process never truly ends, Games can find comfort in knowing that I am not alone on my journey and that my loved ones will always hold a special place in my heart. As I move forward, I can take the lessons I learned from my grief with me and use them to live more fully, love more deeply, and cherish every moment I spend with those who are dear to me.

**References**

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