



HOPE AND HEALING GRIEF Meeting Format

This document is a suggested meeting format.

Amend the meeting format per group conscience as desired.

All referenced documents are available at the end of the format and on the website.

[INTRO] Welcome to this [NAME OF] meeting of Hope and Healing Grief. My name is _____, and I am the chair for today's meeting.

Overview

This is a closed meeting for those on a healing path from grief, or those exploring whether this program may be helpful. Hope and Healing Grief is non-professional. It is not therapy, a social club, or a place for dating. If anyone approaches you in a way that feels inappropriate, we encourage you to share this with another member.

What we are is a place to share our own experience with grief and listen with respect. We welcome all people and beliefs. All forms of loss are welcome, all feelings are honored, and everything said is held in confidence. Most important, here, no one grieves alone.

May I have a volunteer read **The Preamble**?

May I have a volunteer read the **12 Truths of Hope and Healing Grief**?

Introductions

It's now time for introductions.

Are there any newcomers here today?

[IF SO] Please introduce yourself by your first name only so that we may welcome you. Welcome. Everyone here will have a chance to share today, so if you'd like to tell us more about your story you may do so later. But there is no requirement for anyone to speak at any time. We suggest those new to Hope and Healing Grief attend several meetings before determining if this program is right for them.

Let's take a moment to introduce ourselves. My name is _____ and I am here for hope and healing. [OTHERS INTRODUCE THEMSELVES]

Weekly Topic / Lead

Each week, we invite someone to offer a Hope and Healing Grief lead, sharing their experience, strength, and hope. If we have no volunteers we have a reading, topic, or lead. Do we have a volunteer who is willing to give a lead of up to 15 minutes?

[IF SO] Thank you, [LEAD VOLUNTEER]. Do we have someone willing to serve as timer today? Thank you, [TIMER VOLUNTEER]. May we hear the time's up sound? [Or see the time's up warning]. Our timer will give a 5 minute warning. Please help me welcome, [LEAD VOLUNTEER].



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[IF NO VOLUNTEER]. Since we have no volunteer and today is the X week of the month we will:

[1st] Read from the **12 Ways Grief Impacts Our Life**. Do we have a volunteer to read that?

[2nd] Read from the **12 Signs of Feeling Hope and Healing from Grief**. Do we have a volunteer to read that?

[3rd] Select 3 topics from the **100 Topics for Hope and Healing Grief**. May I have 3 different people choose a number between 1 and 100. [THE NUMBERS ASSOCIATE TO EACH OF THE 100 TOPICS.] The topics selected are [READS TOPICS].

[4th] Read from the **12 Signs of Growth from Grief**. Do we have a volunteer to read that?

[5th] Read from the **12 Spiritual Principles of Hope and Healing Grief**. Do we have a volunteer to read that?

7th Tenet

In accordance with the 7th Tenet, each meeting is “sustained by voluntary member contribution and mutual support.” The Venmo code will be placed in chat during the sharing portion of the meeting. Contributions support the meeting domain and website, web hosting, rent, and other program expenses. Please give what you can. And if you can’t, keep coming back. We need you more than your money. Newcomers please be our guest. We’re just glad you’re here.

Sharing

This is the time of the meeting when we share. In sharing we focus on the reading, topic, or lead, and our progress with hope and healing. We avoid crosstalk, which means we do not comment directly on another group member’s comments. If anyone feels uncomfortable during a share, they may quietly raise their hand, and the speaker is asked to respect that signal. Please keep shares to 3 minutes or less. A timer will sound when three minutes are up. Shares will end 10 minutes prior to the meeting’s close to allow time for burning desires and closing readings.

The floor is now open for comments.

10 Minutes Before Meeting Close

It’s now 10 minutes before the meeting’s close. Are there any newcomers who haven’t yet had a chance to speak and would like to? Are there any 1 minute burning desires?

Meeting Closing

We remind you of the many free resources at HopeHealingGrief.org. These include Hope and Healing Daily Meditations as well as resources for those who would like to start their own meeting.



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Are there any meeting, business, or fellowship announcements? [IF THERE IS AFTER-MEETING FELLOWSHIP, IT IS ANNOUNCED HERE.]

Would someone please read the ***Promises of Hope and Healing Grief?***

Promises of Hope and Healing Grief

If we are honest, open, and willing on our healing path, we will come to know acceptance. We will learn to face our grief without fear. Hope will awaken within us, and we will learn to trust life again. Where pain once closed our hearts, we will find faith in what is possible. Courage we did not know we had will emerge, and we will begin to grow in places that once felt barren.

By sharing our stories and listening to others, we will feel heard and understood, and know we are not alone. As we release guilt, regret, and expectations that no longer serve our healing, freedom and compassion will gently return.

Renewal and purpose will take root. We will reconnect with ourselves and with others, rediscovering our capacity for love. And having experienced hope and healing, we will share these gifts with those who still grieve, becoming reminders that no one heals alone.

These are not extravagant promises; they unfold among us when we work for them — one day at a time.

Thank you. This has been a regular meeting of [MEETING NAME].



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MEETING DOCUMENTS

Reference Readings

Not all are read at each meeting, and each is available on the website.

Preamble

At Hope and Healing Grief we gather as equals, guided by compassion as we navigate the pain of loss. No grief is too small to be felt or too great to heal, and here, no one grieves alone. We heal individually through the Twelve Truths and create hope collectively through the Twelve Tenets. With no governing leaders, we follow collective wisdom rather than individual will.

Anonymity protects what is shared, ensuring a space that is safe for everyone. Inspired by the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, Hope and Healing Grief is a softer, gentler path created specifically for those navigating loss. All who seek relief from grief are welcome here, exactly as we are and wherever we are on our healing journeys.

12 Truths of Hope and Healing Grief

1. We became honest with our grief – acknowledging that its pain was shaping our lives.
2. Came to believe that compassion and connection with ourselves, others, and a power greater than ourselves could restore our hope in a better tomorrow.
3. Made a decision to open our hearts to healing, trusting that life could hold meaning beyond our sorrow.
4. Courageously took an honest look at our grief – its roots, its weight, and the many losses we carried.
5. Shared our realizations and understandings with ourselves, another person, and our Higher Power.
6. Became willing to let go of the beliefs, regrets, and expectations that kept us tied to our pain.
7. Humbly invited hope, love, and resilience to heal the broken places within us.
8. Made a list of all those our grief had distanced us from – including ourselves – and became willing to reconnect.
9. Extended compassion and made amends where possible, recognizing that grief is a universal human experience deserving of gentleness.
10. Committed to regular reflection, self-care, and honesty to continue nurturing our healing.
11. Sought through mindfulness, meditation, and prayer to deepen our sense of connection with life, love, meaning, and hope.
12. Having experienced hope and healing, we shared this gift with others who grieve – reminding them that no one has to heal alone.



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12 Ways Grief Impacts Our Life

- 1. Preoccupation With What We Have Lost** – We constantly think about the person or thing that was lost, leading to difficulty focusing on other aspects of our life.
- 2. Avoidance of New Relationships or Experiences** – We fear that doing so would betray the memory of what was lost or that history would painfully repeat itself.
- 3. Emotional Numbing** – Our relentless focus on what we have lost suppresses our emotions, disconnecting us from ourselves and others.
- 4. Idealization of the Lost** – We view what we have lost through an overly positive lens, often minimizing any of its flaws or challenges.
- 5. Self-Isolation** – We withdraw from social connections to continue privately focusing on our grief in order to avoid confronting reminders of moving on.
- 6. Inability to Imagine the Future** – We are unable to envision or plan for a future that doesn't include what we have lost
- 7. Seeking Substances or Behaviors for Comfort** – We use substances and behaviors to soothe our pain, sometimes in ways that become obsessive or harmful.
- 8. Guilt or Self-Blame** – We feel responsible for our loss or feel guilty for not being able to “move on.”
- 9. Obsessive Revisiting of Memories** – We obsessively revisit photos, places, or items associated with our loss, reinforcing our sadness and pain.
- 10. Physical Symptoms** – We experience sleeplessness, fatigue, anxiety, or panic attacks as physical manifestations of our grief.
- 11. Attachment to Pain** – We become attached to our grief, fearing that releasing it would mean losing our connection to what we have lost.
- 12. Resistance to Closure** – We avoid rituals, conversations, or personal growth work that could bring closure, believing doing so would diminish the meaning of our loss.



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12 Signs of Feeling Hope and Healing from Grief

1. **Acceptance:** We acknowledge our loss and are grateful for the willingness to face it.
2. **Awareness:** We have developed a greater understanding of our emotions and how to express them.
3. **Reconnection:** We connect with ourselves and others in ways that feel genuine and meaningful.
4. **Self-Care:** We prioritize our own well-being, knowing we must first care for ourselves before we can care for others.
5. **Surrender:** We trust the process of healing, knowing it unfolds whenever honesty and willingness are present.
6. **Boundaries:** We establish and maintain healthy boundaries, giving ourselves the time and space needed to heal and grow.
7. **Forgiveness:** We forgive ourselves and others, knowing that resentment is an unnecessary burden on our healing.
8. **Support:** We actively seek support and offer it to others.
9. **Spirit:** Through our healing, we enliven the best of our spirit and the world around us.
10. **Presence:** We focus on living in this moment and celebrate the abundance that fills each day, recognizing that our loss, though it may still be with us, belongs more to our past than our future.
11. **Hope:** With new-found perspective, we look forward toward tomorrow, knowing that healing is possible even within our grief.
12. **Service:** We give back what we have freely received so that others may also live their best journey as they go — and grow — through grief.



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Topics

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|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Acceptance | 36. Finding Gratitude | 69. Living With |
| 2. Acts of Kindness in Grief | 37. Finding Meaning After Loss | Unanswered Questions |
| 3. Aging and Loss | 38. Forgiveness | 70. Loneliness |
| 4. Anger in Grief | 39. Friendship in Grief | 71. Loss of a Pet |
| 5. Asking for Help | 40. Guilt in Grief | 72. Loss of Control |
| 6. Beauty in Brokenness | 41. Grieving a Lost Future | 73. Loss of Faith |
| 7. Being Present | 42. Grieving as a Process | 74. Loss of Home or Community |
| 8. Betrayal and Healing | 43. Grieving Changes in Identity | 75. Loss of Identity |
| 9. Blessings in Disguise | 44. Grieving Unmet Expectations | 76. Loss of Innocence |
| 10. Body Image and Grief | 45. Grief and Addiction | 77. Loss of Security |
| 11. Boundaries in Grief | 46. Grief and Anxiety | 78. Loving Through Pain |
| 12. Breath as a Healing Tool | 47. Grief and Creativity | 79. Making Amends |
| 13. Caregiving Losses | 48. Grief and Spirituality | 80. Making Meaning of Loss |
| 14. Change and Transition | 49. Grief in Nature | 81. Men and Grief |
| 15. Childhood Grief | 50. Grief Rituals | 82. Milestones and Anniversaries |
| 16. Choices in Healing | 51. Growth Through Loss | 83. Moving Forward |
| 17. Chronic Sorrow | 52. Healing in Community | 84. Navigating Family Dynamics |
| 18. Compassion for Ourselves | 53. Healing Through Connection | 85. Navigating New Roles |
| 19. Community Support | 54. Healing Through Creativity | 86. Newfound Strength |
| 20. Coping with Holidays | 55. Healing Through Faith | 87. Numbness and Disconnection |
| 21. Courage to Grieve | 56. Healing Through Movement | 88. One Day at a Time |
| 22. Creating New Traditions | 57. Healing Through Music | 89. Opening the Heart |
| 23. Creative Expression in Grief | 58. Healing Through Service | 90. Overcoming Fear |
| 24. Death of a Dream | 59. Hope in Hard Times | 91. Patience With the Process |
| 25. Denial and Avoidance | 60. Hope Restored | 92. Permission to Grieve |
| 26. Depression in Grief | 61. Honoring Memories | 93. Physical Symptoms of Grief |
| 27. Disenfranchised Grief | 62. Inner Strength | 94. Practicing Self-Compassion |
| 28. Displacement and Loss | 63. Invisible Grief | 95. Rebuilding Hope |
| 29. Dreams of Those We've Lost | 64. Isolation in Grief | 96. Rediscovering Joy |
| 30. Emotional Honesty | 65. Joy After Loss | 97. Resilience in Loss |
| 31. Endings and Beginnings | 66. Keeping Memories Alive | 98. Rituals for Remembrance |
| 32. Estrangement | 67. Letting Go vs. Holding On | 99. Signs and Symbols |
| 33. Faith in Darkness | 68. Life After Loss | 100. Trust the Journey |
| 34. Family Expectations | | |
| 35. Fear of Future Loss | | |



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Signs of Growth from Grief

- 1. Accepting Reality:** We accept the truth of our loss and acknowledge the pain it brings, without denying or avoiding the emotions that arise.
- 2. Emotional Regulation:** We practice healthy ways to express and calm our emotions, managing distress without self-destructive behaviors.
- 3. Seeking Support:** We reach out to trusted friends, family, or communities for understanding, connection, and shared healing.
- 4. Setting Boundaries:** We set and maintain boundaries that protect our emotional well-being, stepping back from people or situations that deepen our pain.
- 5. Engaging in Self-Care:** We prioritize practices that nurture physical, emotional, and spiritual health.
- 6. Finding Meaning and Purpose:** Through creativity, relationships, and service, we rediscover meaning and purpose beyond loss.
- 7. Cultivating Resilience:** We recognize grief as a natural part of being human, but not the definition of who we are or what lies ahead.
- 8. Living in the Present:** We celebrate life by noticing joy and gratitude in the present moment, rather than dwelling in the past or fearing the future.
- 9. Practicing Forgiveness:** We forgive ourselves and others, releasing resentment and anger that block our healing.
- 10. Continuous Growth and Learning:** We open to new experiences, deepening wisdom through challenges and celebrating progress along the way.
- 11. Honoring the Memory:** We cherish the memories of what we grieve, welcoming them as a reflection of love that endures and expands.
- 12. Serenity:** We are at peace with ourselves and the world around us, knowing that, in this moment we are just where we need to be.



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12 Spiritual Principles of Hope and Healing Grief

Each Spiritual Principle of Hope and Healing Grief is connected one of the 12 Truths. As we moved forward on our healing path, we became aware that these Spiritual Principles were tools that not only helped us with healing from grief but were foundational values that helped us in all areas of our life. These are the 12 Spiritual Principles of Hope and Grief.

1. Acceptance — By accepting that we alone cannot stop our pain we are ready to reach out for the support of others.

2. Hope — We came to believe that compassion and connection with others could help restore our hope for a better tomorrow.

3. Faith — We placed our trust in the belief that life could hold meaning beyond our sorrow.

4. Courage — As we courageously explored our grief in detail, we discovered that the loss that prompted us to begin our recovery journey was one of many that affected us.

5. Honesty — We experienced that honestly sharing our realizations and understandings with ourselves, others, and our Higher Power is not just freeing, it is life changing.

6. Willingness — A willingness to let go of the beliefs, regrets, and expectations that kept us tethered to our pain was the true beginning of healing.

7. Humility — We humbly reached out to others for support in replacing our broken places with hope and light.

8. Love — With love we connected to those – including ourselves – our grief had prompted us to push away.

9. Forgiveness — Knowing that grief is part of the human experience, we are gentle as we reconnect with those our grief had seen us distance from. Especially ourselves.

10. Perseverance — We continually exercise our spiritual muscle so we may live our life fully and be of the greatest service to others.

11. Awareness — We regularly find quiet moments to become mindful, meditate, or pray as we seek the next right thing to do to continue to grow our healing journey.

12. Service — Our journey of spiritual awakening has been supported by many. We bring our hard-earned hope and healing to all areas of our lives and share it with those who still suffer in their grief, assuring them they are not alone.