

LOSS HISTORY GRAPH EXERCISE

Original Source Unknown

It can be helpful to review all the significant losses you have ever had, in order to discover the early childhood patterns of grieving that you were taught and learned. Very likely, you are using those same patterns to deal with your most recent loss.

Begin by charting your earliest recollection of a death and loss that occurred during your life. It could be a person, pet, object/thing, move, etc. Continue with other losses such as a loss of a friendship, leaving home, divorce, illness, etc. The length of the line indicates the significance of the loss. In other words, the more difficult the loss, the longer the line. You may also include other significant events in your life, both happy and sad – marriage, children, new job, etc.

Under each loss, or significant event, list a few words that come to mind that remind you of how you felt at the time. Remember who was there to talk to you about the loss. Remember how members of your family dealt with their feelings. Recall if others around you understood your needs and gave you the necessary time to grieve. Think back to how and what you were told about the loss.

If you have an emotional response while doing this exercise, don't hold your feelings back. It's ok to cry, be sad, angry, etc.

There is no right or wrong way to do this exercise. No one will judge your work and no one's approval is required. Just be honest and do it in your own way. Take your time. Let your thoughts and feelings flow freely.

Example:

Birth						Present
!	!	!	!	!	!	!
Grandfather died	!	!	!	!	uncle died	!
!	!	mom remarried	!	!	first job	!
promotion	father died	!	Failed grade		!	
	!				!	
	!					
Too young to responsible	Blocked grief	Lots of change	embarrassed	sad/guilty	pride/freedom	
Understand	mom	Turmoil		Finally grieved	father's death	