

^{Top}

Guide Sheets for Pack 4 'The winding road'

The Guide Sheets are intended to provide a learner with more understanding about the Grief Card topics being discussed. As described, they are a guide only and are not intended to be prescriptive. The content does not have to be followed in any particular order. Grief is not linear. The Grief Cards help to open up creative conversations around grief. One of the greatest gifts we can give someone is that they feel truly heard.

Description of the Grief Cards

Each guide sheet relates to an individual GRIEF CARD. The following points relate to the elements that are found on the front and back of a Grief Card:

1. NOTES: These bullet points bring more learning about grief and open up ideas and concepts around the Grief Card. This is a fuller, but not exhaustive, exploration of the learning points that may be gained about each topic.
2. QUESTIONS: Additional questions are given to broaden the thought processes for a grieving person to consider where they are in their journey.
3. ACTION POINTS: Two action points are also included that may help a person to consider how they may begin to bring movement back into their lives.

	TABLE OF CARDS
Card No.	Title of Card (Click on link below and go to bookmark link)
37	The bereavement journey
38	It feels hopeless
39	Living on the edge
40	Taking meaningful action
41	Don't lose hope
42	Touch and the poverty of grief
43	Choices
44	Other people's grief
45	Grief energy
46	Ebb tides... easing
47	Working slowly and deeply
48	Tune in to your heart

CARD 37 The bereavement journey



NOTES:

- A journey we never wanted; it's like we have just boarded a flight.
- It's not a short-haul, it's a long-haul flight.
- We are also not sure when or where it is going to land.
- It will be an unexpected destination; a very different place.
- We will probably have to learn new skills to live in this place.
- There will be new people to meet, a new language to master.
- Grief is not something we "get over". We learn to live with it.

QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of flight is it for you?
2. Who else is on your plane?
3. When do you think you may land?
4. What could you use to help you fly the plane?
5. What do you want your destination to look like?

ACTION POINTS:

- Gather things for your flight
- Find places to refuel/get help

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

CARD 38 It feels hopeless

It feels hopeless



No one understands

It feels hopeless



No one understands

NOTES:

- Feeling hopeless is a natural response after the loss of a loved one.
- Why would we not feel like this?
- We can feel as though life is completely hopeless. We can lose direction and purpose
- People can get into a very dark place and feel as though it is not worth carrying on.
- Suicidal thoughts are not uncommon for the bereaved.
- We all need help sometimes in our lives. This is the time to seek professional help. The GP is a good place to start.
- It's good to talk about our feelings. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness.

QUESTIONS:

1. Have you felt hopeless?
2. How are you coping?
3. What does it feel like for you?
4. Have you had any suicidal thoughts?
5. Could you talk to your GP?

ACTION POINTS:

- Have some realistic and definite goals.
- Socialise, don't isolate.

SAMARITANS: Call 116 123 for free, anytime

CARD 39 Living on the edge



NOTES:

- It can really feel as though we are living on a knife edge.
- You may not know which way to turn or what to do next.
- Running or hiding away may feel like a good option, especially with strained relationships.
- There are often very strong feelings. They can feel so uncomfortable.
- Gradually things change. We have small victories along the way.
- It's important to look after ourselves.
- It helps to seek out places of rest from grief.
- Can we find places of rest or distraction from grief?

QUESTIONS:

1. Where is a safe place for you?
2. What did you do in the past to relax?
3. What does your 'edge' look like?
4. How do you look after yourself?
5. How do you rest now?

ACTION POINTS:

- Identify safe places and people to connect with.
- Give yourself some time to do something for you.

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

CARD 40 Taking meaningful action



NOTES:

- Something terrible has happened. This has led to emotional chaos.
- Like a stone has been thrown into a pond, every area has been affected.
- Gradually the ripples calm down on the surface of our pond.
- But questions come: What do I do now? What should I do next?
- Imagine that you're somewhere on the outside of the circles. The centre is the place you want to get to.
- We just need to move one ring at a time, not two or three. It's all about taking small steps. Often in reality there is no rush.
- By breaking things down into smaller bits they are easier to achieve.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the next small step that you could do to move forward?
2. How could you do something to move towards your goal?
3. Is there someone who would help?
4. Where could you get some information to help me make a decision?
5. What do you need to do to move towards your goal?

ACTION POINTS:

- Break things down into smaller chunks
- Tackle one thing at a time.

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

CARD 41 Don't lose hope



NOTES:

- Life can feel hopeless at times
- We don't want to carry on.
- This is a common feeling for the bereaved.
- The pain does ease, things will improve.
- Perhaps you can look back and recognise that you have moved forward ever so slightly.
- Being with others who are on a similar journey helps. Seeing others further down the road gives us hope.
- It will be possible to live again. (There will be stars shining in the night sky.)

QUESTIONS:

1. Is there a sense of hope in your life?
2. Are there any things you can be thankful for?
3. What can you look forward to tomorrow?
4. Have you any plans for the future?
5. Who could you connect with?

ACTION POINTS:

- Could you consider doing something for someone else at this point?
- Find things to be thankful for.

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

CARD 42 Touch and the poverty of grief



NOTES:

- When grief comes, we experience a wide range of emotions and feelings.
- Further down the road, we realise that there are many other losses.
- Suddenly we are experiencing “poverty” in many areas of our lives.
- Physical touch is often something so sorely missed by the bereaved.
- This is a basic human need.
- Finding appropriate ways and places to physically connect is important.
- Some circumstances can isolate us even more in grief.

QUESTIONS:

1. Where are you experiencing poverty in the above?
2. How do you meet those needs?
3. What new ways can I explore?
4. “Widows/Widowers fire” - What do you do with your sexual drive?
5. What are your “Love languages?”

ACTION POINTS:

- Hug more people. Learn how to hug well.
- Touch animals.

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

CARD 43 Choices



NOTES:

1. We all have choices to make in life.
2. The decisions we make impact our lives in the long term.
3. When we are bereaved, suddenly we are having to make decisions on our own.
4. Ultimately, we have to make the choice, but often it is possible to get advice.
5. When we are overwhelmed we can make poor decisions/choices.
6. There are seldom issues that need urgent answers. Trusted people can give an objective view and are often happy to help.
7. Go gently with yourself. Know that you may not be making good choices in given situations, seek advice.

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you have significant issues to deal with?
2. Are you at a crossroads?
3. When might they need to be resolved?
4. Have you sought advice?
5. What could be your next steps?

ACTION POINTS:

- Find a trusted person/people.
- Get financial advice from a number of advisors.

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

CARD 44 Other people's grief



NOTES:

- We have the shock of a bereavement.
- Then we have all the funeral arrangements to sort out.
- Then comes all the administration to deal with: the will, registrar, certificates, tax office, passport office, etc. (all the paperwork!).
- At some level or another, we have to also manage other people's grief as well. This may not just be the children.
- People: cross the street, don't know what to say, say the wrong things, tell you what to do. It all takes energy.
- Do we mention their name or not? Often, people are also unsure.
- Often we are dealing with the "Un-bereaved". Without a common vocabulary for grief, our society struggles to get it right.

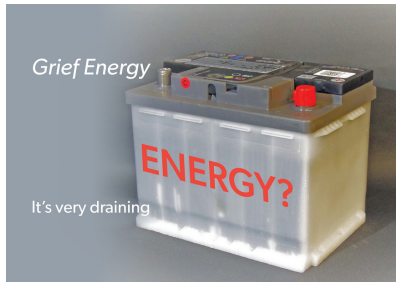
QUESTIONS:

1. What experiences have you had?
2. What do people say?
3. What would be a better thing to say?
4. What would you say to someone now?
5. How could you start the conversation?

ACTION POINTS:

- Manage our expectations.
- Think things through, how to approach settings.

CARD 45 Grief energy



NOTES:

- People talk about time as a limiting factor.
- More often it is actually our energy that limits us, especially in bereavement.
- Grieving takes a lot of energy.
- People can often be depleted when they are grieving; they have less capacity.
- It is important to manage our energy levels and expenditure well when grieving.
- Take a nap if you need one - they are good for us.
- Recognise what or who drains us.

QUESTIONS:

1. How are your energy levels?
2. When did you last feel full of energy?
3. What things re-energise you?
4. Are you doing 'self care'?
5. Are you sleeping well?

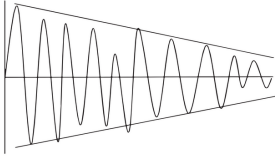
ACTION POINTS:

- Find things that restore or re-energise you.
- Have good 'sleep hygiene'. Rest.

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

CARD 46 Ebb tides... easing

Ebb tides... easing



Things will change

NOTES:

- As we progress through grief the highs and lows become less amplified.
- The intensity of our emotions eases.
- People are not so overwhelmed.
- Life feels less unstable.
- This is a different life, one without the person who has died.
- There is sadness but life keeps happening.
- Life continues.

QUESTIONS:

1. Where are you?
2. What triggers strong emotions for you?
3. Can you see any diminishing of the intensity of your emotions?
4. Do you need extra help and support?
5. Where could you look for support?

ACTION POINTS:

- Connect with others who have benefited from grief support.
- Be encouraged to engage with an Intentional Grieving process.

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

CARD 47 Working slowly and deeply



NOTES:

- Grief work is not done quickly.
- Neither is it easy. It is quite the opposite.
- Engaging in an 'Intentional Grieving' process helps people to grieve well.
- This requires a choice - it doesn't just happen.
- It can feel as though we are travelling through treacle - for days, weeks, months even.
- Be encouraged to stick with the process; it will become less difficult.
- This all takes energy at many levels: physically, emotionally and spiritually.

QUESTIONS:

1. How well do you think you are doing?
2. What might you do to 'Intentionally Grieve'?
3. Have you started to move down the road of grief?
4. What directions are you going in?
5. Have you made a conscious choice to grieve as best you can?

ACTION POINTS:

- Find places to get grief support.
- Meet with others in a similar position.

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

CARD 48 Tune in to your heart



NOTES:

- We are holistic beings: mind, body and spirit.
- It is important when we experience grief to listen to our hearts.
- It can be detrimental to our health not to take note of the heart pain and to try to bury or avoid it. Our hearts are telling us something. We need to listen.
- Pain is a natural response, because we have loved so much.
- Finding ways to express the pain is an important element to recovery.
- Suppressing or ignoring the pain can make the journey longer.
- It is possible to live again after heartbreak.

QUESTIONS:

1. What things have you done to listen to your heart?
2. When do you feel the pain the most?
3. Where do you go for comfort?
4. What ways can you express the pain?
5. Who can listen to your pain?

ACTION POINTS:

- Find ways to express your pain.
- Draw a picture of your heart.

[Back to 'Table of Cards'](#)

[Back to Top](#)

For more resources visit: LossandLife.org

If you need wider support visit: AtaLoss.org