

## LOSS & RESTORATION MODEL

The loss and restoration model of grief can be illustrated through the metaphor of a river. Picture your grief as a flowing river. On one riverbank lies the side of loss, while the other represents restoration. There are times when you may find yourself crashing hard against the loss bank, feeling as though you're being pulled under, nearly drowning in your sorrow. Other times, you may drift toward the restoration bank, lingering there so long that what began as a healthy distraction turns into an escape from facing your grief. "Good" grief is a healthy balance between the two. Finding this balance is not always easy, and what is healthy for you at this point in your grief is something you can only discover by experimenting with how you sail along.



- | Loss   | Restoration  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Looking at photos</li><li>• Bringing up memories</li><li>• Crying</li><li>• Talking about it</li><li>• Listening to music</li><li>• Writing or drawing</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sports &amp; Outdoors</li><li>• Structuring your day</li><li>• Sleeping &amp; relaxing</li><li>• Seeing friends</li><li>• Going out</li><li>• Studying</li></ul> |

As you reflect, ask yourself: Where has my sailing boat been navigating these past weeks? Have I spent too much time on one side, neglecting the other? What can I do in the coming weeks to gently tend to both banks of the river? What helps me to restore my energy and balance? And what are my internal signals that it is time to give space for my loss?

## Information & Sign up

More information on activities and registration can be found at the WUR webpage for grief. There you can also read more about the life coach sessions and make an appointment. Next, it has a resource page with articles, books, documentaries, podcasts. Each student is welcome to schedule up to 3 life coach sessions a year.



## Contact

Life Coaches for Student  
Training & Support WUR



### EVELIEN MEIJS

Loss and grief are natural parts of life, but their impact can be profound. Grief takes many forms—you might mourn the death of a loved one, the end of a relationship, an illness, or the loss of future possibilities. How do you process? How do you recover? It's important to make room for your emotions and to share them with someone who truly listens. My coaching style is warm and supportive, providing an inclusive and safe space for you to process and heal.  
[evelien.meijs@wur.nl](mailto:evelien.meijs@wur.nl)



### MARLOES HARKEMA

Embracing grief in all its emotional, mental, and physical aspects is challenging—sometimes even daunting—but it can also bring relief. When we allow ourselves to fully experience grief, we often create the space needed to live again, with renewed energy and resilience. Students have described my approach as "empathic, clear, and calm." I am the author of a book on grief and lead monthly grief and writing workshops.  
[marloes.harkema@wur.nl](mailto:marloes.harkema@wur.nl)



'Tis a Fearful Thing

'Tis a fearful thing  
to love what death can touch.  
A fearful thing  
to love, to hope, to dream, to be –  
to be,  
And oh, to lose.  
A thing for fools, this,  
And a holy thing,  
a holy thing  
to love.

For your life has lived in me,  
your laugh once lifted me,  
your word was gift to me.  
To remember this brings painful joy.  
'Tis a human thing, love,  
a holy thing, to love  
what death has touched.

— Yehuda Halevi

# How to grieve

For BSc, MSc & PhD students Wageningen University  
Life Coaches Marloes Harkema & Evelien Meijs

# Grieving during your studies

## LOSS

Coping with grief and loss casts a shadow over your life and your studies, making it challenging to fully engage with everyday life. It's normal to feel sad, angry, remorseful, or numb. You may also feel depressed and struggle to find meaning in your daily life. Memories of loved ones and painful flash-backs can create a constant emotional tug-of-war. Grief is a journey that can ebb and flow over years.

## Five stages of grief

Elizabeth Kubler Ross



## DIFFERENT VOICES WITHIN US

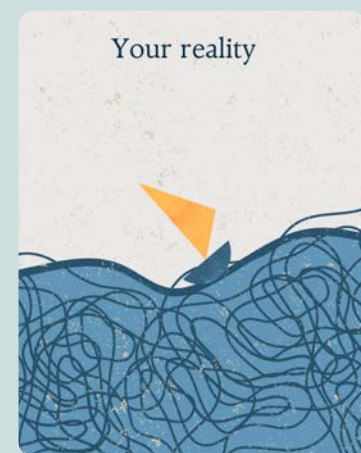
It can be challenging to identify each specific stage in your grief. A helpful way to approach this model is to view the stages as different voices within us that can emerge at various times throughout the day, weeks, or even months. It might be helpful to reflect if and when you notice moments of avoidance, irritation, overwhelm, or are exploring new plans in your life. Be assured: if you feel your grief is chaotic and confusing, you are grieving normally.

## REGAIN ENERGY

Your physical well-being may also be affected. Exhaustion, poor concentration, weakened immunity, difficulty sleeping, feeling cold; it is as if you have lost your sense of self. With time and support, you can integrate the loss, cherish memories, regain energy, and embrace life again. It is important to acknowledge both the loss and the path to healing.

## GRIEF STAGES

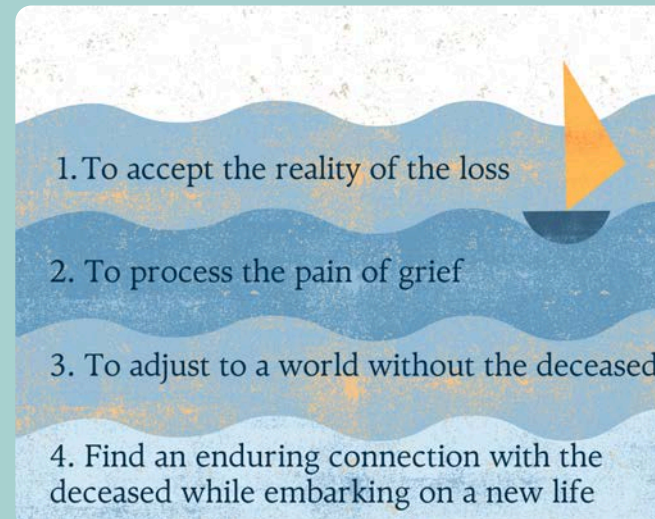
One widely recognized grief model is the Five Stages of Grief. During the grieving process, we may experience denial, anger, depression, bargaining, and acceptance. Although these stages are often depicted as a linear progression, it is important to understand that grief is more like a rollercoaster: chaotic, messy, and confusing.



Learn more about the five stages

# Four Grief Tasks

J.W Worden



## ACTIVE PROCESS

The Four Tasks of Grief model by Worden can be a helpful way to understand and reflect on your grief. Which tasks are more natural for you, and which ones are currently difficult? What is nice about this model is that it speaks of 'tasks,' emphasizing that grief is an active process. It might also explain why you are so tired...



Learn more about the four tasks

# Reflection & Journaling



I could use more of...

I could use less of...

I am grateful for...

My favorite memory of my loved one is...

My most difficult memory of my loved one is...because...this memory makes me feel...



Whenever I start to feel overwhelmed by pain, regret, guilt, or despair, I will...

To be more compassionate towards myself, I am willing to try...

Some of my grief triggers are...



Today, I am really missing...

I have been feeling a lot of...

I feel most connected to my loved one when...

I can honor my loved one by...

A comforting memory of my loved one is...

## Grief&Writing workshop

Every last Sunday of the month  
3:30 - 5:30 PM | Online / F2F

Creative writing exercises can help to express grief, share memories, and connect with others, fostering healing and new insights as you navigate loss.

Led by Marloes Harkema

## Lost a Parent Support Group

Every second Monday of the month  
8:00 - 9:30 PM | @Spectrum Attic

Organised and led by and for students. Informal way of sharing experiences and finding ways to make space for grief in your life. Facilitated by student platform Spectrum.



## Student experiences

"People around me can't understand the intensity. Everyone says it will be fine. But I don't have the energy for selfcare. I want someone to take me by the hand"

"When I cried in the kitchen, my housemates took me to the pub to cheer me up. They meant really well, and I went along with it, but it wasn't what I needed"

"I can't be alone in this phase, but at the same time I don't want to burden people"

"I'm confronted with all the parts in my life that my dad won't be there, and can't support me, like my graduation. It also hurts to ask others for help with tasks that he used to help me with. Like putting up shelves"

"I live my daily life without too much pain and grief, partially because I stay too busy to think about it. But special days are still hard"

"Carving out moments in my year helps to make space for sorrows that I can't face when I need to focus and be productive during the year"

