PositiveTalk
Good Conversations, Better People.

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH LOSS

LOVE STILL HAS A PLACE

BOOKLET



A guided journey of remembrance and hope

GRIEF IS NOT A CHECKLIST. YOU ARE ALLOWED YOUR OWN WAY THROUGH.

BOOKLET 05 / THE FIVE GRIEF LENSES

Love Still Has a Place

Living with the reality of loss while keeping meaningful connection

A NOTE BEFORE YOU BEGIN

THE FIVE-STAGE MODEL IS A LENS, NOT A TIMELINE. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross originally described common responses among people facing death. The framework was later widely applied to bereavement. Grief does not follow a required order, a fixed schedule, or five mandatory feelings. You can experience several responses together, repeat them, or not recognize any particular stage. These booklets are invitations to reflect, not tests to pass.

You may start with any booklet. None is a level you must pass before opening another. If an exercise feels too intense, skip it, take a break, or do it with a trusted support person. The Scripture references invite reflection rather than promise a schedule for recovery.

READ IN YOUR OWN TIME

Keep a pen nearby. Circle what resonates. Leave blank what does not. You may revisit a page months or years from now and find different words. That does not mean you have returned to the beginning; it means you are a person whose love and circumstances continue to change.

SCRIPTURE FOR REFLECTION

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; John 20:11-18; Revelation 21:1-5

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

- Read the three brief teachings without rushing.
- Try one gentle exercise, not necessarily every exercise.
- Use the journal pages for your own words.
- Choose one act of care, connection, or remembrance.

ACCEPTANCE & CONTINUING LOVE

A Gentle Beginning

Acceptance is often misunderstood as being finished with grief. It is not forgetting, approving of what happened, or no longer missing someone. Acceptance can mean acknowledging the reality of loss and learning to make room for a changed life. A day of peace does not cancel the days of longing that may follow. Love can remain meaningful without requiring pain to stay at its highest intensity.

Before the Reading

What brought you to this particular part of the series today? You can answer with a single word, a sentence, a memory, or a blank page. There is no correct amount of sharing.

TEACHING 1 / ACCEPTANCE & CONTINUING LOVE

A changed life is not a betrayal

After loss, there may be decisions you never imagined making alone. You might rearrange a room, move, return to work, celebrate a holiday, form a new friendship, or take a trip. Any of these choices may stir guilt. You may wonder whether moving forward means leaving the person behind. Acceptance offers a different possibility: you can acknowledge that life has changed and still honor what the relationship gave you.

One way to begin is to name what remains part of your identity. Perhaps the person taught you generosity, passed along a recipe, made you laugh, challenged you to be courageous, or loved you through a hard season. You can carry those influences into tomorrow. You also have permission to discover new interests that the person never knew. Your future is not an insult to your past.

Ecclesiastes 3 holds mourning and celebration within a larger human life. The poem does not require a neat transition between them. You can experience different seasons at the same time.

Pause and Reflect

After reading A changed life is not a betrayal, what feels most important or difficult to hold today? You may write an insight, an objection, or a prayer.

TEACHING 2 / ACCEPTANCE & CONTINUING LOVE

Continuing bonds: memory with room to breathe

Some people keep a photograph, cook a favorite meal, tell stories, visit a meaningful place, or support a cause associated with the person who died. These practices can become loving connections rather than attempts to deny the loss. Other people prefer quieter remembrance and no public ritual. Neither is more faithful.

Try asking two questions: “How do I want to remember this person?” and “How do I want to live with what their life meant to me?” The answers may shift over time. A ritual should serve your values and emotional capacity, not become another performance others expect from you. You can change a tradition if it becomes too painful or no longer fits.

In John 20, Mary Magdalene grieves by the tomb before recognizing Jesus. Christians understand this story through their faith in resurrection; it should not be used to minimize the pain of ordinary bereavement or promise a particular outcome on earth. It can invite readers to honor love and grief with honesty.

Pause and Reflect

After reading Continuing bonds: memory with room to breathe, what feels most important or difficult to hold today? You may write an insight, an objection, or a prayer.

TEACHING 3 / ACCEPTANCE & CONTINUING LOVE

Hope without a forced happy ending

Hope can mean a decent morning, a renewed friendship, the willingness to make plans, or simply believing that a difficult anniversary can be survived with support. It does not require you to say that everything happened for the best. Sometimes the greatest growth is the capacity to hold a painful truth and keep acting with compassion.

Consider a one-year map that includes both remembrance and living: important dates, people who can support you, traditions you want to keep or change, and one goal unrelated to grief. You may revisit the map as circumstances change. Acceptance is not a finish line; it is one possible way of living with reality at a particular moment.

Revelation 21 offers Christians an image of ultimate renewal and an end to sorrow. Honor it as a statement of Christian hope, not as a deadline for the reader to stop crying. Faith can hold longing and gratitude at once.

Pause and Reflect

After reading Hope without a forced happy ending, what feels most important or difficult to hold today? You may write an insight, an objection, or a prayer.

A Story from Ordinary Life

Room for a Human Story

On her father’s birthday, Maya made his favorite meal and invited friends over. She laughed at a story about him, then cried while washing dishes. A year earlier she would have considered laughter a betrayal. Now she understood that neither the laughter nor the tears diminished her love.

Faith and Honesty

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; John 20:11-18; Revelation 21:1-5. These references are invitations to encounter the passages in context. They do not claim that faith makes grief predictable or painless. Consider where compassion, patience, honesty, or hope appears in what you read.

What would you say to someone living this story?

YOUR REFLECTION

Four Questions Worth Sitting With

1. What memory or value do I want to carry forward?

2. Which parts of life need a new rhythm after this loss?

3. Where have I mistaken a moment of joy for disloyalty?

4. What would a compassionate next chapter look like?

GUIDED EXERCISE

A Living Legacy Map

Draw three circles labeled REMEMBER, CONTINUE, and BEGIN. Fill them with memories, values, traditions, relationships, and future actions. Mark one item you can practice this month without forcing yourself to feel ready.

PRIVATE LETTER

Words You May Never Need to Send

Write a letter that begins, “What you gave me still lives in…” and ends, “Here is one way I will keep living.”

This page belongs to you. You do not have to share it, finish it, or keep it.

A QUIET PRAYER

An Honest Place to Begin

Lord, teach me to honor what was loved without living only in what was lost. Help me cherish memories, receive moments of joy, and take the next faithful step. Hold my sorrow and my hope together. Amen.

Three Possible Next Steps

- Create one remembrance ritual that fits your values.
- Make one plan for a coming anniversary or holiday.
- Choose one future-facing action that does not demand forgetting.

A permission slip

You are allowed to close this book today. You are allowed to laugh, cry, rest, remember, or ask for help. None of these actions erases the love that brought you here.

CARE & SUPPORT

You Do Not Have to Do This Alone

This faith-based educational workbook is not therapy, diagnosis, or crisis care. You may skip prompts that feel overwhelming. Consider a trusted friend, faith leader, licensed grief counselor, or clinician for support. If you feel unable to stay safe or are in immediate danger, call local emergency services. In the U.S. call or text 988 for crisis support.

Getting Support

- Ask for company without advice: “Could you sit with me or take a walk?”
- Tell someone what practical help would be useful, such as a meal, errand, or phone call.
- Consider a grief support group or bereavement counselor, including community or faith-based options that respect your needs.
- If sleep, appetite, functioning, or feelings of hopelessness worry you, speak with a licensed health professional.

Sources and Further Reading

American Psychological Association — Grief: Coping with the Loss of Your Loved One (apa.org/topics/death)

Cruse Bereavement Support — Understanding the Five Stages of Grief (cruse.org.uk)

NHS — Get Help with Grief after Bereavement or Loss (nhs.uk)

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross Foundation — Five Stages of Grief (ekrfoundation.org)

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