

Grief and Loss Inventory

This exploratory questionnaire describes the reactions that follow the death of a loved one: yearning for the person and thoughts focused on them, emotional pain, difficulty accepting the death, avoidance of reminders, loss of meaning and direction, and difficulty re-engaging with life. Its domains draw on the dimensions of prolonged grief disorder and on the dual process model to identify what is getting in the way of grieving and choose the focus of treatment.

Number of questions	24 questions
Estimated duration	6 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Grief and Loss Inventory
Target audience	Adults
Category	Grief

Preview of the 24 questions

Over the past month, how often has this been true for you?

I miss the person I lost so much that it hurts.

Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very often

Over the past month, how often has this been true for you?

Grief washes over me all of a sudden, when I'm not expecting it.

Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very often

Over the past month, how often has this been true for you?

Part of me refuses to believe that the person I lost has died.

Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very often

Over the past month, how often has this been true for you?

I avoid places that remind me of the person who died.

Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very often

Over the past month, how often has this been true for you?

I feel incomplete without the person I lost.

Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very often

Administer your questionnaires online

Send your patient a link: they answer from their phone or computer, and you receive the scored results by email.

View the questionnaire on mentaal.org ›

Scoring & interpretation

Scoring

Each statement is scored from 0 (never) to 4 (very often) based on its frequency over the past month. Each domain combines 4 statements spread throughout the questionnaire, giving a score from 0 to 16.

Reading the profile

There is no total score. Domains are ranked from most to least elevated, each with a description of what it covers and points to explore in the interview. Yearning and pain are part of all grief; difficulty accepting the death, avoidance of reminders, and difficulty re-engaging with life show instead where grieving is getting stuck. In the dual process model, grieving alternates between confronting the loss and rebuilding one's life: a profile in which only yearning and pain stand out suggests loss-oriented grief, while marked avoidance with little pain suggests grief that is being held at a distance. The time since the death is established in the interview: prolonged grief disorder requires at least 6 months (ICD-11) or 12 months (DSM-5-TR) since the death.

Clinical cautions

The questionnaire contains no questions about thoughts of death or suicide, or about the wish to join the person who died: these are assessed in the interview, especially when the "Loss of meaning and direction" or "Emotional pain" domains are elevated, and after a death by suicide. A sudden or violent death can add traumatic reactions to grief, which can be explored with the Traumatic Experience Inventory.

Limitations

This exploratory questionnaire has not undergone psychometric validation and has no cutoffs. It supports the clinical interview and does not provide a diagnosis.

Scoring example

Scoring

Difficulty re-engaging with life 8 / 16

Difficulty reinvesting in daily life, activities, and relationships, and allowing oneself pleasant moments.

Areas to explore: the activities resumed or given up, the concrete changes the death has brought (housing, money, paperwork, new roles), support from family and friends, guilt about feeling better.

Yearning and preoccupation 6 / 16

An intense longing to see the person who died again, and thoughts focused on them or on the circumstances of their death, to the point of taking up a large part of the day.

Areas to explore: the times when the yearning is strongest (evenings, anniversaries, places), the time spent thinking about the person, what keeps a bond with them (objects, rituals, inner conversations).

See also: A-PGDs.

Loss of meaning and direction 6 / 16

A sense of being incomplete and lost without the person who died, difficulty finding meaning in life and picturing the future.

Areas to explore: the place the person who died held in daily life and in the bereaved person's identity (spouse, parent, child), what still has meaning, how the future is envisioned. A life that seems meaningless calls for a suicide risk assessment.

Emotional pain 4 / 16

Intense sorrow, waves of sadness, anger, and guilt related to the loss.

Areas to explore: the predominant emotions and what triggers them, anger and its targets (health care providers, family, the person who died), what the person blames themselves for, signs of an associated depressive episode.

See also: PHQ-9.

Avoidance of reminders 4 / 16

Efforts to keep at a distance whatever recalls the person who died and the loss: places, objects, photos, conversations, thoughts.

Areas to explore: what is avoided (places, belongings, the grave, anniversaries), what the person is afraid of feeling, what the avoidance keeps them from doing. After a sudden or violent death, avoidance may reflect traumatic reactions.

See also: PCL-5.

Difficulty accepting the death 3 / 16

Difficulty acknowledging the reality and finality of the death: disbelief, a sense of unreality, emotional numbness.

Areas to explore: what remains hard to acknowledge, the circumstances of the death (sudden, violent, no chance to say goodbye), the rituals that did or did not take place.

No validated clinical or psychometric cutoffs have been established for this test yet. The results should therefore be considered exploratory indicators, meant to support the clinical interview, not diagnostic findings.

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 Emily T. - Online CBT Psychologist