

Grief / Depression Assessment Inventory

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There are a series of paragraphs below that are paired: One describes how a person who is *depressed* might respond, the other a person who is actively *grieving* an important loss or life change. For each paragraph, check the statement that best describes your response. Not all the statements will apply. You may wish to underline statements within a question that do apply.

At the end choose which of the two paragraphs comes closer to describing your present state: *grieving*, *depression*, *both*, or *neither*. Sometimes you'll choose neither. Sometimes, it might be both. By the end of the inventory, you'll have an idea whether you are grieving, depressed, or experiencing some of both.

This inventory should NOT be used in place of more comprehensive diagnostic methods, nor is it intended to provide a professional diagnosis.

If there has been a loss or a significant change in your life, how long ago did it occur or begin to affect you?

- A week or less.
- Less than a month.
- One month to six months.
- Seven months to a year.
- Less than two years.
- Two to five years.
- More than five years.
- It happened while I was growing up.

The loss(es) were:

- One(s) I could anticipate.
- Sudden and unexpected.
- Due to a chronic situation / condition.
- Caused by a traumatic event(s).

1. How have you experienced this loss or a significant change?

Grief: The way I am feeling makes sense in light of what has happened. These losses or changes are the sources of what I am going through. Others have validated my losses.

Depression: I don't understand why I am feeling this way. Nothing makes sense. No one considers what has happened as deserving of a second thought or any feelings on my part. I am not sure myself whether a loss has occurred.

For me this item is most like:

- Grief Depression Both Neither

2. How have you been behaving since this began?

Grief: I am easily distracted. I wish I looked better. Sometimes I look better than I feel. Sometimes I feel better than I look. Some people have avoided me since this loss. Others have been insensitive. I am more cautious. I am aware of life's fragility as a result of what has happened.

I have tried to lose myself in my job, hobbies, and sports or in caring for my children but it doesn't always work. At times I prefer to be alone. At times, I feel lonely even when I am with others. Being with others can wear me out. It is an effort to do things.

Depression: I am often preoccupied. I don't care how I look—*or*, I have to look perfect or else I feel terrible. Nobody suspects or for that matter really cares how I am really doing. Danger makes me feel real *or* I don't take any risks. I refuse to take antidepressants. I don't always take my antidepressants *or* I can't function without my antidepressants.

Work/my children is/are my life. I keep busy all the time *or* I can't find anything to occupy me. I constantly watch television. I hate being alone *or* I hate being with others. I don't see the point in trying.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

3. How has your thinking been affected?

Grief: It's hard to concentrate but I can if I have to. Sometimes I don't know how I got somewhere. Time drags. There are times when I am startled that time has passed. I avoid listening to the radio or watching TV, for fear it will remind me about what happened. At times, I can think about other things than this—only to find myself right back in it. I've lost the best part of me. If only I had been able to do something different, this would not have happened.

Nothing can ever bring back what I have lost. I am often aware of what I have lost or what has changed. I am often preoccupied with the thoughts and memories associated with my loss. Just when I think it couldn't get any worse, it does.

Depression: I am so preoccupied I can lose days or weeks. The newspaper/TV seems unreal, like I am in another world from it. I can't stop thinking about why this has happened to me. This proves how worthless I am. I am to blame for what has happened. Someone must be punished for this. I will not rest until that happens.

I operate as if nothing has changed. I don't think about it if I can help it. Thinking makes me feel worse. Things always get worse.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

4. How have your feelings been affected?

Grief: My heart feels broken. I can get very angry about this. I can be very sad. The tears are hard to stop. At times I am so upset I could throw up. I yearn to be able to love again. There are times when I can laugh. I can feel joy. There are times when my feelings overwhelm me. There are times when I feel better. Sometimes my feelings are so intense I'm not sure I can stay with them. I am ashamed because of what happened and how I reacted to it. I feel numb. I have a hard time being around others. There are times when I feel terrific. There are times when I feel love.

Depression: I am not angry. I shouldn't feel angry. I don't cry. I don't feel sad. I have no right to feel sad. It's best not to get upset. There's nothing to be upset about. I know I will never be able to love again. I feel down when others seem happy. I wouldn't know what joy or happiness is. I avoid feeling anything about this. I never feel better. If I let myself I would get so upset I couldn't stand it. I could never admit how badly I've reacted to all this. I feel nothing. I never feel terrific. I never feel love.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

5. How do you feel physically?

Grief: I can start out a day feeling OK, and get wiped out during the day. Any sustained effort exhausts me. I feel lethargic, totally drained, lacking in energy. I have a hard time concentrating for more than a few minutes at a time. It's hard to go to sleep. I have trouble staying asleep. My heart hurts. I can't get enough rest. I feel better after I exercise. I do better when I'm active. I've never felt/looked better.

I don't pay attention to what I'm eating. Sometimes I don't feel like eating. I've felt nauseous after I eat. I don't feel like eating but make myself at times. Eating helps me escape. How well I eat makes a difference. I have lost weight since this loss. I have gained weight since this loss.

Drinking can give me temporary relief. I watch how much I drink. I'd rather not be taking drugs. The escapes I find are only temporary sources of relief. Prescription drugs for depression give me clarity about what I am dealing with.

Depression: I have no energy. I am in always in a fog or twilight zone. I can't seem to sleep more than four hours a night. I sleep more than ten hours every night. I always feel exhausted. I exercise constantly (more than two hours a day) or I don't exercise at all. I've never looked/felt worse.

I don't care if I eat too much. I don't care if I don't eat. I throw up what I eat. I weigh less than I ever have. I weigh more than I ever have.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

6. How do you feel pain and pleasure?

Grief: The pain comes and goes. When it is bad, it has never been worse. There are times when I don't seem to enjoy anything, but at other times I'm OK. There are times when something that is ordinarily pleasurable gives me pain. I feel more relief from the pain than real pleasure.

Except when I am reminded of my loss, I can enjoy life. I have a sense of humor. My sense of humor can be pretty dark these days. I can laugh. I enjoy being in nature. I watch sunsets and/or sunrises. Sometimes a time of joy produces tears and sadness.

Depression: I drink alcohol to drown the pain. I use drugs to escape. The only time I feel OK or can escape the pain is when I'm drinking/ taking drugs. I'm sick a lot. I am in pain a lot. I can't remember the last time I really enjoyed anything. When I have sex it feels like I can escape my problems temporarily.

Pleasure is not a part of my life. I feel numb. Nothing seems funny. I have an especially hard time when others have fun.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

7. How has this affected you spiritually?

Grief: I pray for strength to get me through this. I wonder if there is any hope for me. This loss seems so unfair. I am angry with God. I was naive to think this couldn't happen. I have lost my sense of innocence. I am confused by what this means. I have lost something essential. My life story has lost its thread of meaning. It's hard to imagine life ever having meaning again. My religious faith (God) is getting me through this *or* I'm changing (or know I must change) some of my most cherished beliefs—perhaps even my religion.

I don't know if I can ever be forgiven for this—or—if I can ever forgive others. I do believe forgiveness is possible. Forgiveness would require the grace of God—or something equally miraculous. I feel connected to something beyond me —e.g., a Higher Power, God (or love). Getting through this will heal me—something better lies ahead. Being in nature restores my soul. Sometimes I lose sight of my faith—but I am sustain by knowing others believe in me. I don't yet know what meaning this loss has.

Depression: My life is hopeless. I am a broken person. I am being punished. This proves how worthless I am. Nothing meaningful can come from this. What has happened is totally unfair. God is punishing me. I deserve to go to hell. I had it coming *or* I don't deserve this. I find no comfort in prayer or religion.

I can never forgive. I can never be forgiven. I can't accept why this has happened to me. My beliefs have not given me any answers.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

8. What are your dreams like?

Grief: I dream a lot but I don't usually remember them. I long to dream of the one I lost but can't. I've been too tired to dream. It's only in my dreams that I seem to be dealing with this. My dreams since the loss are vivid and clear, and they are often comforting. They make it easier to understand what has happened. In my fantasies, I remain connected to the person/object I lost. I have "imaginary" conversations (daydreams) with the one I lost.

Depression: I don't dream. When I do dream, I have nightmares. My dreams about the loss are disturbing. I dream of the destruction of the one I lost. My dreams actually keep me from sleeping. Voices from my loss can tell me to do things I ordinarily wouldn't do.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

9. How has this affected how you feel about yourself?

Grief: This loss has put me in touch with my "best self." It has caused me to question some of my values and beliefs. There are things about this loss that I need to process. There are some things I need to rectify. I've alienated people I wish I could reconnect with. I have been hurt by other's insensitivity. I have hurt others by being preoccupied. This loss has more meaning to me than others acknowledge. I am doing the best I can. I have been deeply moved by how some people have supported me. I am at peace with myself.

Depression: I don't care what happens. I've not been myself—I can't seem to do what I need to do. I can't seem to snap out of it. People have injured me since this loss. Those I have injured could never forgive me. There is nothing meaningful about this. I can't deal with it. Generally, other people don't affect me. If people really knew me, they wouldn't like me. I resent people trying to get me to feel better or to give up what they think are my bad habits or my self-destructiveness. Life is sheer torture to me.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

10. What kinds of support do you have?

Grief: I feel comforted when I'm with sympathetic people. I get uncomfortable when the conversation centers on me. I respond when someone is warm, persistent, and reassuring. I enjoy listening to others. Sometimes I feel like I talk too much. Sometimes I am vulnerable in ways I wouldn't be otherwise. At times I appreciate being left alone.

If someone has a good heart, I can overlook faults. I have lost some old friends. I am reassured by the presence of friends who will listen to my story. I feel connected to people with similar losses. I've made new friends who accept me as I am. I miss being loved or opportunities to love. I am in love again.

Depression: I say things to get others off my back. I never talk about what happened. I deliberately hurt others. I want others to suffer as much as I have. Others take advantage of me. When I'm alone, I feel frightened and abandoned. I hate being around people who are optimistic and superficial. I find it impossible to tolerate mistakes or incompetence.

Others don't care. I wear people out—they get irritable with me. People get angry with me. I have been assaulted verbally and/or physically. No one listens to my story. I feel disconnected. I've worn out my support system. I don't have a support system. I feel unloved. It's better to be punished than ignored. I feel incapable of loving anyone.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

11. How has this affected your will to live?

Grief: If life were to continue like this, it wouldn't be worth living. I have thought of what it would take to not to have this pain. I would not commit suicide because of this: My religious beliefs, the effect my death would have on the people who love me or having a something to live for keeps me going.

Depression: I'm looking for a way out. I cannot say I wouldn't commit suicide. I have nothing to live for. Life isn't worth living. Others would be better off without me. I deserve to die.

For me this item is most like:

Grief Depression Both Neither

How To Calculate Your Profile

Repeat below your responses to each of the items above. Total your checks in each section and find the total below:

	Grief	Depression	Both	Neither
1. Loss	—	—	—	—
2. Behaving	—	—	—	—
3. Thinking	—	—	—	—
4. Feeling	—	—	—	—
5. Physical	—	—	—	—
6. Pain and Pleasure	—	—	—	—
7. Spiritual	—	—	—	—
8. Dreams	—	—	—	—
9. Self	—	—	—	—
10. Support	—	—	—	—
11. Will-to-Live	—	—*	—	—
Totals	—	—	—	—

How To Interpret Your Scores

Uncomplicated grief: If you scored “grief” in all areas, you are clearly grieving normally, and probably do not need professional help, although you may wish to talk with someone.

Complicated grief: If you score mostly for “grief,” but also have some “depression” items checked in any area, you should consult with your family doctor, therapist, or clergy.

Depression: If most items are checked as “depression,” professional help is highly recommended.

Notes:

* **Item 11:** If you checked “depression” on “Will to Live,” professional help is urgently recommended.

If this way of responding to your loss(es) has lasted *less* than six months, it is natural for both grief and depression to be present. If your loss and your reaction to it has lasted *longer* than six months, depression items should have diminished.

These guidelines usually apply only to losses that were anticipated. Traumatizing losses will take longer (multiply by years). Also multiple losses will take longer as well (each loss x six months or more, though time is not an accurate measure.) Sudden losses also can take much longer. Chronic health conditions produce chronic grief, so little diminishing will be seen over time. However, in any of these situations, being able to “look good” to others can begin to appear after six months, and some progress can be noted in moving from the “depression” items even if it’s at a slower pace.