WORKSHEET 141 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

My back and forth

Between moments for the loss and moments for life

AIM

Observe the balance between loss-oriented moments and restoration-oriented moments (dual process model), and rebalance if one of the two takes up all the space.

WHO IT IS FOR

Anyone who is grieving, especially those who avoid everything that recalls the loss or, on the contrary, allow themselves no break from their grief.

DURATION

5 min each evening for a week

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Introduce the dual process: oscillating between loss and restoration is healthy, including taking breaks from grief.
2. Each evening, the person notes one loss-oriented moment and one restoration-oriented moment.
3. At the end of the week, look at the balance, without looking for an “ideal” proportion.
4. If one side is missing, choose together a small step to give it room.

POINTS TO WATCH

> The balance varies from person to person, with the time elapsed and across cultures. Grief is not an illness: these worksheets offer support and must not push the person to “move on”. Watch for signs of prolonged grief (at least 6 to 12 months of intense, pervasive yearning with impairment) and for suicide risk, especially the wish to be reunited with the person.

REFERENCES

Stroebe, M. & Schut, H. (1999). The dual process model of coping with bereavement: Rationale and description. Death Studies, 23(3), 197-224.

Stroebe, M. & Schut, H. (2010). The dual process model of coping with bereavement: A decade on. Omega: Journal of Death and Dying, 61(4), 273-289.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 141 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

My back and forth

Grief is often a back and forth: moments for thinking about the person and feeling their absence, and moments for dealing with life, breathing, doing something else. Both are useful. Being distracted isn't forgetting.

1. Each evening, note a moment when you thought about the person or felt their absence.
2. Also note a moment turned towards life: a task, an outing, a rest, a laugh.
3. At the end of the week, look at the balance.
4. If one side is missing, choose a small step to give it room.

Day	A moment for the loss	A moment for life

The side I am missing a little right now, and a small step:

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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