

Tasks of Mourning

Tasks of mourning is a framework by J. William Worden, PhD, ABPP, that can help you navigate grief and loss. It's important to remember that grieving is not a linear process—everyone experiences it differently.

Directions: Use this worksheet to reflect on your grief and identify steps to process and adapt to your loss.

Task 1: Accept the reality of loss

Reflection questions

- What helps you acknowledge that your loss is real and irreversible?
- How have you honored your loved one (attending a funeral or memorial)?
- Do you notice any feelings of disbelief or avoidance?

Action steps

- Write a letter to your loved one expressing your feelings about their passing.
- Share memories with a trusted friend or family member.
- Create a meaningful way to symbolize your loss (keepsake or memory box).

Task 2: Process the pain of grief

Reflection questions

- What emotions are you experiencing about your loss?
- How do you currently express your grief? Are you avoiding these emotions?
- Are there distractions or habits (overworking, substance use) you use to suppress your pain?

Action steps

- Journal about your feelings each day, focusing on the range of emotions you experience.
- Allow time to cry, talk about your loss, or create art to express your emotions.
- Identify one safe person to share your grief with this week.



Task 3: Adjust to a world without your loved one

Reflection questions

- What roles or responsibilities have changed since your loved one's passing?
- How has your sense of identity been impacted?
- Are there beliefs or values you've re-evaluated since your loss?

Action steps

- List new skills or responsibilities you've taken on and write down steps to manage them.
- Reflect on who you are now and how your loved one influenced your life.
- Identify one small change you can make to adapt socially, emotionally, or spiritually.

Task 4: Find an enduring connection while moving forward

Reflection questions

- How do you maintain a connection to your loved one?
- Do you feel guilty about moving forward or making new connections?
- What traditions or rituals honor your loved one's memory?

Action steps

- Create a tradition or ritual to honor your loved one (light a candle on anniversaries).
- Set a personal goal that lets you look forward to the future while keeping their memory alive.
- Reflect on new relationships, routines, or goals you've developed.

Notes for my therapist:

