



WELCOME TO THE THE SPARK OF LIFE GRIEF RECOVERY COURSE

This workbook gives a detailed guideline of each video lesson in the course. Follow along with the workbook while watching the corresponding videos.

At the end of each lesson, find an “Aha Moments” and “Vital Points” section. We encourage you to write down any “aha” moments you experience while watching the videos.

Follow along with the exercises to put these principles into practice. Print out this workbook. Keep it in a safe place.

We specifically formulated these topics and questions to ensure you receive the most out of this course. We encourage you to track your growth throughout the entire course. You may be surprised at the changes that occur.

Do not skip ahead. Everything works together in a specific flow of information.



COURSE CONTENT

Our course follows 12 topics with a video and workbook section for each:

1. There is Always Hope
2. The Absolute #1 Foundational Principle – Permission
3. The Absolute #2 Foundational Principle - Ownership
4. Changing My Brain Box
5. What is Really Keeping Us Stuck?
6. Building Block #1 – Discovering Who I Am – Identity
7. Building Block #2 – Really Forgiving Myself and Others
8. Building Block #3 – Completion – Your Story
9. Building Block #3 – Completion – Your Relationship
10. Building Block #3 – Completion – Doing All You Can Do
11. Building Block #4 – The Simple Gratitude Attitude
12. Building Block #5 – The Search for Meaning that Changes Everything



WATCH Video 1 before continuing through this section.

LESSON ONE: THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE

THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE

Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness do not mean that you are hopeless and helpless.

3 KEY CONCEPTS

1. Purpose of this course: To help you discover the power within yourself to find hope to live forward after loss.
2. There is a difference between 'existing forward' and 'living forward.'
3. Hope is the ability to conjure up hope when I believe there is no hope.

EXERCISE ONE:

Rate what you believe your 'Hope Level' is at this moment – your hope to live a rich and fulfilling life again. On a scale of '0' – no hope – to '10' – totally hopefully. (Put one number from 0-10 in the blank below).

My hope currently: _____

If you are currently barely a 'one' on the scale of hope, ('0' being totally hopeless and '10' being totally hopeful), and by the end of this course, you get to one notch above where you started, on this hope scale, then that would be good, really good.

EXERCISE TWO:

In thinking of your loss, please describe the most difficult aspect of the loss that has affected your life. What are the 3 most difficult things you are dealing with?



EXERCISE THREE:

List any feelings that you have felt as you have grieved this loss. If you need help in finding the right feeling words, scroll down to the list of feeling words at the end of this course. Find those feeling words that you have felt and write them here.

NOTE: You might have both positive and negative emotions as you experience your loss. That is natural and normal.



Vital Points or AHA moments from the video

Example:

One vital point: Commitment to total honesty is a necessity in any kind of recovery – especially in Grief Recovery – Giving voice to your pain can help lessen the pain.

List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways from video 1.



Watch Video 2 before beginning the next section.

LESSON TWO:

The #1 Foundational Principle - Permission

PERMISSION TO GRIEVE

5 KEY CONCEPTS

- 1. Realizing that grief is normal helps us strategize to find hope.**
- 2. Defining Grief - A Fresh Look at Grief**

Grief is the normal response one has when one experiences loss of any kind.

“An abnormal reaction to an abnormal situation is normal behavior.” Victor Frankl, Man’s Search for Meaning

Grief is the price we pay for love. When we lose someone or something we love or used to love, we may and probably will experience deep grief.

Grief occurs when we experience a change or an end to a normal way of living, and often has conflicting emotions.

Earl Grollman - *“Grief is not a disorder, a disease, or a sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical, and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve.”*

Doug Manning – “You give yourself permission to grieve by recognizing the need for grieving. Grieving is not weakness or absence of faith. Grieving is as natural as crying when you’re hurt or sleeping when you’re tired. It’s nature’s way of healing broken hearts.

Viktor Frankl – *Man’s Search for Meaning* - “But there was no need to be ashamed of tears, for tears bore witness that a person had the greatest of courage, the courage to suffer.”



EXERCISE ONE:

Write here any thoughts you have about the definitions of grief above:

'Major Losses' – Who determines what a 'Major' loss is? _____

What are some non-death 'losses' that could be major losses?

Consider this statement: *The greater the change or the end in my normal behavior patterns, the greater my grief.*

Is your loss a major loss by these definitions? _____

3. There is no standard way in which one 'must' grieve

- Our relationship with the thing or the person we lost is unique.
- Our 'past' hurts, pain, experiences, etc. with life is unique.
- Our reactions to grief, though there may be many similarities, are individual responses, and are influenced by many factors – all unique to us. How each one responds to the same type loss is and in fact *must be* unique.

What I need to do or not do might not work for you – for my relationship with the one I lost is unique – different from your relationship. And my life experiences are unique also.



4. Comparing our losses with others is rarely helpful and can be harmful to a healthy recovery.

- Others indeed may have losses which I consider worse than mine - in which I would not trade places with them. All loss hurts – comparing my losses to others does not take my hurt away. However,
- “Others have greater loss than me” may cause me to minimize my feelings – and thus I might assume I do not have the right to feel bad. So, I might stuff my feelings.
- “I have the worst loss,” or “my loss is worse than most” may cause me to maximize my feelings of hopelessness and/or helplessness.

EXERCISE TWO:

What might be the outcome of the thinking that my loss is worse than others?

Give yourself permission to ‘embrace grief’ – to understand that grief is connected to love – but also permission to feel bad – no matter what your losses are, and to express those feelings in a healthy way.

Lean into your grief – it is easier to walk into the waves of the ocean if you lean into the waves.

5. Those who experience loss do not need to be fixed, because there is nothing ‘wrong’ with them.

Grievers often believe that something is wrong with them. The heart break affects how we think, causing confusion, which in turn, may lead to confused thinking – but grievors have a broken heart – they often think they have a broken faith or a broken mind.

‘Since grief comes from love’ – though their mind or faith might feel ‘broken’ – it is not wrong to love – so it is not wrong to grieve. Thus ‘embracing grief,’ – giving yourself permission to feel bad, to grieve, is really embracing love.



EXERCISE THREE:

Have you (as a griever) ever felt broken? Have you ever felt there was something wrong with you or have you felt confused? Why?



Vital Points or AHA moments from Video 2: *Permission to Grieve*

List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways from GR Video # 2



Watch Video 3 before moving to the next section.

LESSON THREE:

The #2 Foundational Principle - Ownership

PERMISSION TO
GRIEVE

OWNERSHIP OF MY
RECOVERY

5 Key Concepts

1. What 'recovery' does NOT mean

- Does not mean that you will never cry again
- Does not mean that you will never have bad days or weeks again
- Does not mean that life will be the same again
- Does not mean that my recovery looks like others

2. What 'recovery' DOES mean

- Recovery looks different for each person
- Recovery decisions are made by you – decide to OWN your recovery. Recovery from any loss, including divorce, is a **decision I make** – not necessarily an emotion I feel.

3. Ownership – A Decision – Not an Emotion

- **BIG POINT** – To assume ownership of your recovery does not mean that you necessarily 'feel' like it. Ownership of your recovery is fundamentally a **DECISION** one makes, regardless of my emotions.
- When loss comes, feelings of despair, hopelessness, and deep sadness are part of the grieving process. Few if any feel confident that they 'own' their recovery. In fact, most of us feel powerless.
- **If all my decisions are based on how I feel at the moment, I might make some really bad decisions.**



- **Our suggestion:**

When you are overwhelmed with such negative feelings, give yourself permission to have them, to grieve. Find a safe place or person with whom to express those feelings.

- If you have already made a decision that it is OK for you to recover – permission to live with hope and purpose – then these feelings, tough as they are, will not derail you from a healthy recovery.
- You certainly might feel hopeless and powerless, but again that does not mean that there is no hope.

4. **Assuming ownership of my recovery means:**

- **It means:** You are in charge of your own recovery.
- **It means:** You can listen to others and what they have to say, such as what we have to say in this course, but you decide what to do with the information and suggestions.
- **It means:** What works for others might not work for you. No one has walked in your shoes, not totally.
- **It means:** You are capable to work through your pain, sadness, and loneliness, at your pace.
- **It means:** You can live forward, with purpose and hope.
- **It also means:** You can question long held beliefs about grief and recovery, and grow in knowledge and perspective, and have what we call a ***healthy recovery***.
- **You** can apply the principles and action steps we suggest, to your particular losses, and actually have hope to live forward.

5. **Assuming ownership of your recovery does NOT mean** isolation, or that you always reject help from others, or that you grieve alone – all the time.

Ownership means I have the right to ask for help, and admit I need help – but that ultimately the decisions I make are mine – concerning my recovery. If we let others dictate what I must do, and believe, my recovery might just be characterized by confusion, doubt, and ‘give up.’

You are in charge of your own recovery.



EXERCISE ONE:

What would your life look like if you are in a 'healthy' recovery mode from your loss?

Complete this sentence: **I'll know I am in a healthy recovery when...**

Examples: I'll know I am in a healthy recovery when I begin doing those things I used to love doing – when I do not cry all the time – when I get out of bed before noon – when I start working out, etc.

6. Living Forward after loss is possible when:

- I 'give myself permission' to grieve – to hurt – to feel bad at times – even to feel at times that I can never be happy again - permission to FEEL – and to express those feelings.
- And I 'give myself permission' to recover – no matter how I feel.
- These two thoughts – permission to grieve and permission to recover, are simultaneous. For when I give myself permission to grieve deeply, I am actually doing that which I need to do in order to recover in a healthy way.



Vital Points or AHA moments from Video 3: *Own Your Recovery*

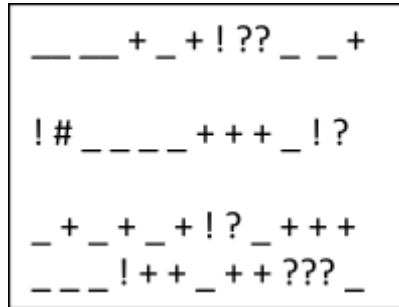
List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways.



Watch video 4 before continuing to the next section.

LESSON FOUR: Changing My Brain Box

Typical Brain Box



Key Concepts from Video 4

1. There is BS (Bull Spit, or something similar) in our BS (Belief System)
2. All our losses are filtered through our Brain Box – where our Belief System resides.
3. To begin grasping ownership of your losses, give yourself permission to challenge the bad stuff in your Brain Box, and to eliminate the negatives, while holding on to the good stuff in your Brain Box.
4. There will always be those questions in our brain box, where some things just do not make sense – sometimes there are just no answers.

EXERCISE ONE:

What are 2-3 negative and false beliefs about yourself that have infiltrated your Brain Box after your loss?

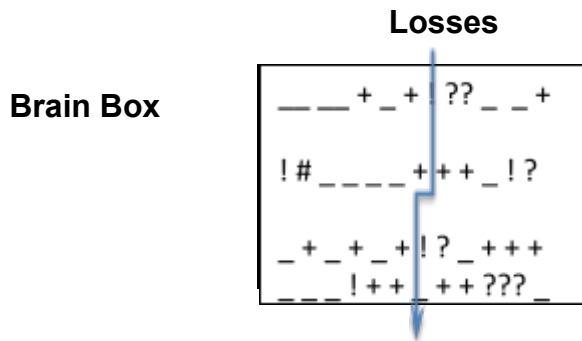
Some examples: *I can never be happy again; I can never forgive myself; I can never forgive others; I am worthless; I am unlovable, etc.*



EXERCISE TWO:

Could these negative beliefs above keep you stuck in the pit of grief so deeply that other important relationships in your life could be hurt? How?

The fact is that ALL my losses are filtered through my Brain Box, which contains both true (positive) and false (negatives) beliefs, and perhaps unanswered questions, etc.



So, we need to challenge our belief system regarding grieving any loss.

Get rid of the FALSE – the negatives – and hold on to the TRUE – the positives. Accept that at times, some things cannot and will not make sense right now.

It is possible to De-Clutter the Junk in My BS – Mental Action

“I assume ownership in my recovery when I take mental action against the BS in my BS.”

First, I need to identify the negatives, the false beliefs, the myths, the ‘myth-information,’ etc. that could be deeply rooted in my Brain Box, and that could be hurting my attempts to Live Forward.

Second, I take mental and verbal action against those false beliefs. It helps to speak this to someone you can trust. If you have no one you can trust, speak those words out loud.

For example: “I reject the false belief that I am unlovable and unforgiveable.”



By the way, some of your bad stuff in your brain box will be different from mine, and different than those close to you as well. Your pain IS your pain – Your recovery from loss is YOUR recovery.

OWN your Recovery

EXERCISE THREE:

From the list below, which of these statements are false, and which are true? We need to take mental action against all the false, eliminating them, and hold on to the good. Put 'T' for all the true statements – 'F' for all the false statements.

- _____ Big boys don't cry
- _____ Grieving any loss is normal and healthy
- _____ Everyone grieves in their own way
- _____ Crying over a loss shows my weakness
- _____ I can never be happy again
- _____ I do not deserve to be happy
- _____ Feeling hopeless does not mean I am hopeless
- _____ It's OK for me to feel sad at times
- _____ I can never be forgiven
- _____ I have to be strong for my kids, so I cannot grieve or show them my sadness
- _____ It is alright for me to be angry with God
- _____ Grief sucks
- _____ I do not have to stay stuck in the pit of grief forever
- _____ There is always hope as long as I breathe
- _____ My past does not have to define me; in fact, my past can propel me to new heights.
- _____ I can change, and learn from my mistakes and other's mistakes



Put 3-4 **false** statements that you have believed, and that has affected you greatly, below, taking mental and perhaps verbal action against them. Begin the process of owning your recovery from loss. Add other false beliefs not on the list below that you have believed.

Example: *I can never be forgiven for certain things I have done – this is false.*

Mental Action: *I think, ‘everyone makes mistakes,’ and I can be forgiven.*

Verbally state: *I CAN be forgiven for what I have done – everyone is screwed up and makes mistakes.*

Put 3-4 **true** statements that you have believed, and that has affected you greatly – below. Add other true statements not on the list. Writing them down can help reinforce the truthfulness and the power of these truths.

In grief, if we hold on to the myths and myth information in our Brain Box, our losses are filtered through these false beliefs, **and can produce negative feelings and hinder a healthy recovery. These myths can also lead us to question powerful truths that, because of the pain of divorce and other losses, we might forget, or doubt**

“What is wrong with me?” can dominate my thinking.



Vital Points or AHA moments from Video 4: *Changing My Brain Box*

List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways.



Watch video 5 before continuing to the next section.

LESSON FIVE: What is really keeping us stuck?

Discovering what is really keeping me stuck

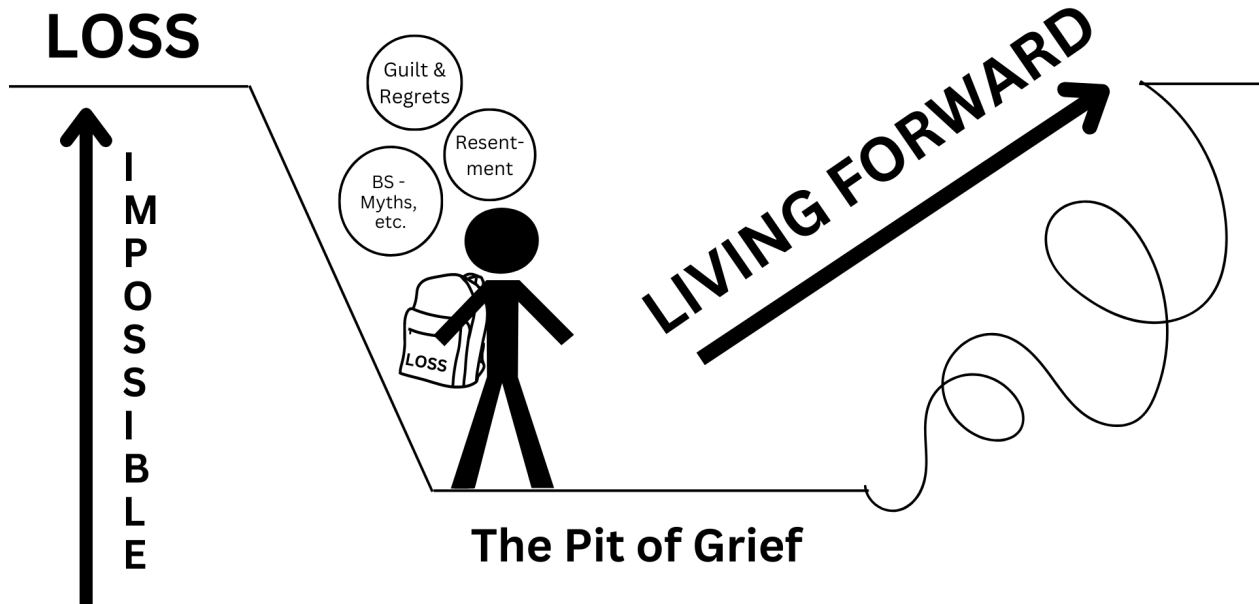
5 Key Concepts from Video #5

1. Going to the pit of grief after loss is natural and normal.
2. Staying stuck in the pit of grief is unhealthy, as it can negatively affect important relationships I desire to keep – such as children, other family members, friends, etc.
3. To get ‘unstuck’ from the pit of grief, and to ‘Live Forward’ with hope, I must identify the real reasons I am stuck, and develop a strategy to rid myself of those barriers that keep me stuck.
4. If my losses are responsible for me staying in the depths of the pit of grief, then I will **never** get out of the pit, and I will ‘exist forward’ and not ‘Live Forward.’ I cannot change the past – I can change my perspective and response to bad and hurtful things of my past.
5. Three things keep us stuck in the pit: those ‘Boulders’ that weigh us down and make progressing out of the pit so difficult and impossible.
 - BS in my BS – (False beliefs - Bull Spit) in my Belief System)
 - Resentments – Toward those who have hurt me, my family, etc.
 - Regrets and/or Guilt – Those things that haunt me about myself

NOTE: The remaining 6 topics of this course detail the powerful, specific strategies to help you eliminate these three huge ‘boulders,’ helping you have hope to ‘Live Forward.’



Setting the Stage for Climbing out of the PIT



The LOSS can never go away – You will have to carry this ‘backpack’ for the rest of your life.

But the loss, though it threw you into the Pit, is not what is keeping you in the pit.

The three huge boulders keep us stuck – I can carry that LOSS backpack – it hurts deeply, and I need to give myself ‘permission’ to grieve that huge loss.

But I cannot carry those huge boulders around for the rest of my life.

Permission to grieve, yes. But also, permission to own my recovery.



How? Start chipping away those three huge boulders:

- #1 – Your false beliefs in your Belief System
- #2 – Your Resentments – toward others in your story.
- #3 – Your regrets and/or guilt

EXERCISE ONE:

The ‘Pit of Grief’ illustration – What do you see?

EXERCISE TWO:

It is possible to be higher on this journey than I was before the loss – refer to the right of the drawing and compare the height then to when the loss occurred.

How can it be possible to be ‘higher’ on this grief journey than I was before my loss?

EXERCISE THREE:

Progressing out of the pit is achieved when I make small steps, one at a time.

In every other area in which recovery is used, the same principle applies – One step at a time: one SMALL step at a time.

“Do the next right thing.”

Illustration from *The One Thing* by Gary Keller

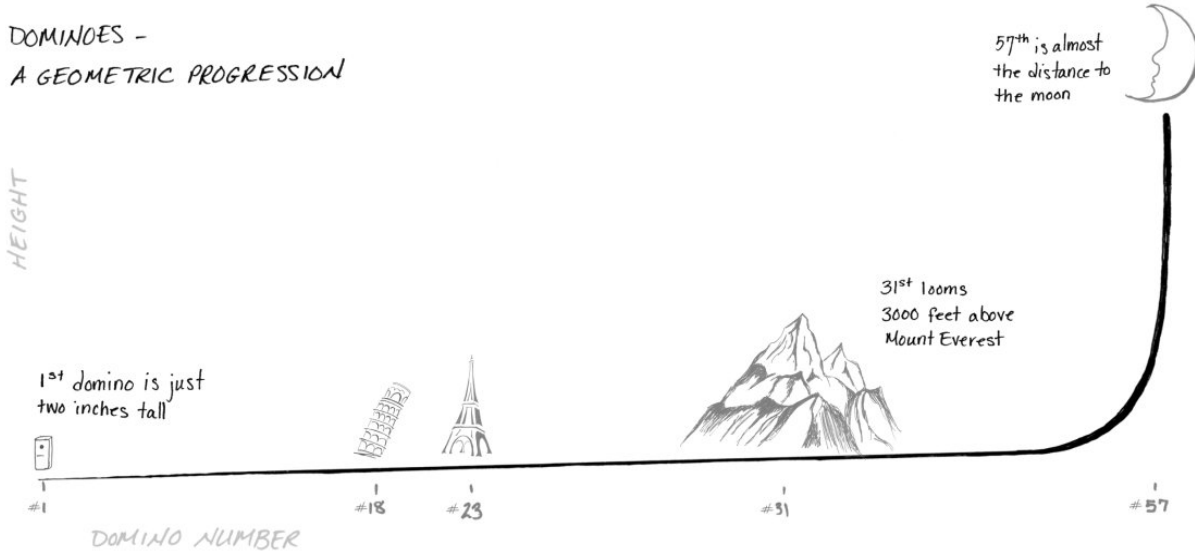
In his book, *The One Thing*, Gary Keller relates the fact that a domino can knock over another domino that is 1 ½ times its size. For example, a 2” domino can knock over a 3” domino, and so on.



Obviously, the first domino needs some energy behind it before it knocks over another domino. Once something or someone pushes over the 2” domino, amazing things can eventually happen.

According to Keller, and according to FACT, if one starts with a 2” domino, and each succeeding domino is 1 ½ times bigger than the previous one, the 18th domino to fall would be as high as the leaning tower of Pisa, the 31st domino’s height would be 3,000 feet above Mount Everest, and the 57th domino as high as from earth to the moon!

DOMINOES -
A GEOMETRIC PROGRESSION



To begin to get ‘to the moon’ in our recovery, ALL we must do is to knock down one small domino at a time – and begin with the 2” domino!

What might happen in your recovery if you try to knock over the 57th domino before knocking over the first domino?

What is the next ONE right thing you need to do to continue a healthy recovery from your loss? Keep it simple and do-able.



Vital Points or AHA moments from GR Video # 5

Get Rid of Those Boulders!

Discovering what is really keeping me stuck

List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways from GR Video # 5



Watch video 6 before continuing to the next section.

LESSON SIX: Who Am I?

Building Block #1: Identity

BUILDING BLOCK #1: IDENTITY

**PERMISSION TO
GRIEVE**

**THE UNDERLYING
PRINCIPLE**

Key Concepts from Video #6

1. In your opinion, has your loss become your identity? Does this loss define who you are as a person? _____
2. When people see you, what do you think is their first thought of you? Do they think, "There goes _____, the one who is _____?"
3. When you think of yourself, do you think something like: "I am the one who lost _____.... And I will forever be known as that?" _____

We did not ask if your loss forever changes you, shapes you, influences you, affects you, etc. We did not ask because your losses **do** forever change you, shape you, influence you, and affect you.

But is your CORE Being defined by your loss(es)?

Circle one:

Yes

No

I don't know

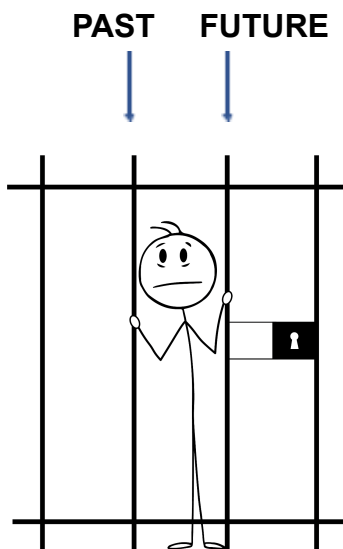


4. Though my loss(es) influences me, changes me, and shapes me, what might be the result if my losses define me, and the losses *become* my identity?

OTHERS might view you as that person who suffered that loss, at least for a while, but the **REAL** question is how do you view yourself?

5. My View? **IF I view my core identity as the one who suffered this loss, then chances are I will not experience a healthy recovery.**
6. If my identity is defined by my past losses, mistakes, or failures of me or others toward me, situations beyond my control, etc. then present relationships could be hindered, and my life could indeed spiral toward hopelessness.
7. Look at the crude drawing below. What do you see?

When my losses, failures, and injustices define me.



My Personal Jail

Why is this person still in jail? _____

Can he/she get out of jail? It appears she could simply walk between the bars and escape.

What does she/he need to do to walk out? He needs to let go of the bars, which will enable him to get out jail.



- ***The bar on the left represents the past.***

When my core identity is formed by what has happened to me in the past, such as losses, failures, mistakes, sins, and injustices, then the PAST controls me. The past can actually become my Identity.

This is a problem, for I cannot change the past.

Everyone has regrets and resentments of things that happen in the past.

Someone has said: “When I am incomplete with the past, I will tend to re-create it in the present and the future.”

This concept will be vital when we discuss Building Blocks # 2 (Forgiveness) and # 3 (Completeness).

- ***The bar on the right represents the future.***

Incompletes in the past lead to incompletes in the future, which can lead to fear of the future.

8. To help identify your Core Identity – answer the following 5 questions first formulated by Landon Saunders. What beliefs and values would you die for?
 - 1) *Are you living for something that time will not destroy?* _____
 - 2) *Are you living for something that death will not destroy?* _____
 - 3) *Are you living for something that enhances all the important relationships of your life?* _____ (Enhances the relationship regardless of the other’s response to you)
 - 4) *Are you living for something that guarantees constant improvement until you die?* _____
 - 5) *Are you living for something that you are willing to die for?* _____

Answer honestly. If you answer ‘NO’ to any one question, consider that you might need to find another purpose in life.

What might that ‘Purpose’ be?



Vital Points or AHA moments from GR Video # 6

Who Am I?

Discovering Exactly Who I Am

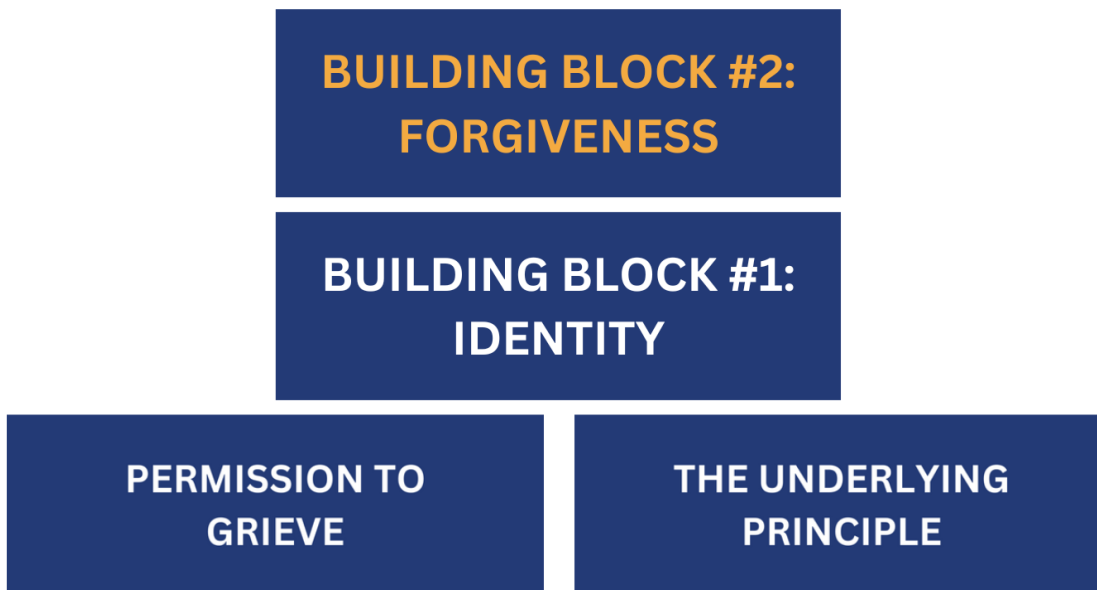
List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways from GR Video # 6



Watch video 7 before continuing to the next section.

LESSON SEVEN: Real Forgiveness of Self and Others

Building Block #2: Forgiveness



Key Concepts from Video 7

1. Without forgiveness, of others and of myself, staying stuck deep in the pit of grief is a probable outcome.
2. To forgive –self and others – I must define forgiveness correctly. We begin with what forgiveness is NOT, and then discuss what forgiveness really is.
3. What forgiveness is **NOT**:
 - Does NOT mean I can **F**orget about the offense
 - Does NOT necessarily mean **R**econciliation – though it could
 - Does NOT mean I have to be **E**xcited About it – I can forgive and not feel like it, or even like it.
 - Does NOT mean that I am **E**xcusing the wrong

NOTE: The 4 letters in **Red** above spell 'FREE' – **Forgiveness sets us F - R - E - E**
Whether we have resentments toward one who has died or is still alive, forgiveness sets us free. It enables us to break those resentment chains that haunt us.



4. What forgiveness IS:

- Forgiveness is a DECISION - not an emotion.
- Forgiveness is a PROCESS - I forgive someone WHEN I DECIDE TO FORGIVE THEM.
- Forgiveness is in the CONTEXT of other relationships - un-forgiveness in the past, of myself and of others, tends to repeat itself in the present and the future
- *All of life is in context. Context with what? One may ask. With everything.*

5. Forgiving others is often hindered by not forgiving myself.

- *Get this: ALL of us struggle with self-forgiveness. Even you.*
- *I can never forgive myself for...*
- In the blanks below, complete this sentence: The thing(s) I struggle with in forgiving myself is...

How do we begin to forgive ourselves? Remember all the above about forgiveness.

Waiting for the person (who I need to forgive) to earn or deserve forgiveness means we might wait a long, long time to give forgiveness – even if I need to forgive myself.

The truth is – no one can earn forgiveness by being good enough, long enough.

Past actions or words can never be undone.

At the heart of forgiveness is a simple concept – **forgiveness is a gift I give – it is the gift I need to receive.**



6. Thus, by necessity, forgiveness is a gift – unearned and undeserved. No one can really earn it.

The final step to forgiving myself is perhaps the most important one –

7. To forgive myself, I must stop trying to forgive myself.

- **Think about this:** Trying to forgive myself is almost a contradiction. I have hurt someone by my sins, mistakes, failures, selfishness, in-considerations, etc.
- Then I try to get them to forgive me, by apologizing, buying them gifts (ask my wife how this works), stopping the behavior, doing good to them, etc.
- If the one I need to forgive me has died, then there is nothing I can do to get them to forgive me.

8. Forgiveness does mean: To let go.

“Letting go” = Letting me climb out of the pit to fresh air and fresh hope and new purpose.

When I ‘let go’ of an offense that someone has done to me, I am lessening the negative effect that offense has had on me.

I am letting it go, in as much stating that I am not going to let that dominate me and/or embitter me any longer. I ‘let it go.’

9. What forgiveness does – When I forgive others, it sets ME free.

When I look at the first letter of the four words above which describe what Forgiveness is NOT – Forget, Reconcile, Excuse, Excite - they spell out ‘Free.’ When I forgive others, it sets me free.

Think of the one person in your life who is or was the most difficult person to forgive. Why is/was forgiving them so difficult?



What sins/decisions/failures in your life are you struggling with in accepting forgiveness?

10. How can I truly forgive someone who has hurt me or my family, especially if there is no admission, or sorrow, or repentance?

- a. Remember that forgiveness means to **let go** – it sets you free
- b. Decide to **assign value** to the person with whom you are struggling to forgive, even if that person is you.
 - Our **VALUE** as a human being, is always with us – we are ‘stuck’ with this value – because it has to do with who we are – (Our true self, our true identity). This is true of every human who has ever lived. We have this value whether we believe it or not. We **CAN** decide to accept this.
 - **ADDED POINT:** This assigning value to others helps us forgive them. Assigning this same value to **ME** helps me accept God’s forgiveness to **ME**.
- c. Third, assume that everyone has a **story** – that everyone acts the way they do for a reason. It is usually related to their ‘story.’
 - This is crucial. Stating that everyone acts the way they do for a reason, is **NOT** giving them a ‘get out of jail free’ card.
 - Even if I do not know the other person’s story, it helps me to know that they have a story. Everything makes sense in context.
- d. **Decide to Forgive, because it is the right thing to do.**

Even if you do not feel like it. Even if they are still hurting you. Remember, forgiveness does not necessarily mean reconciliation, and does not excuse the wrong, and does not mean I will never be angry with them again.

I can also forgive and not tell them I have forgiven them. If the relationship is toxic, telling them might **not** be the wise thing to do. Letting go of the offense helps you.

What Forgiveness Is? It is ‘Letting go.’



NOTE A VITAL POINT: If you are struggling to forgive a 'less than loved one'...

Abuse Situation – Do not apologize for anything – nothing you did or didn't do contributed to someone abusing you.

Betrayal, Denial – You may apologize for what you have done that hurt the relationship – however, never take the blame for someone's free choice decisions.



Vital Points or AHA moments from GR Video # 7

Forgiveness? Really?

Discovering How to Really Forgive Self and Others

List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways from GR Video # 7



Watch video 8 before continuing to the next section.

LESSON EIGHT: Completion

Building Block #3, Part 1

Your Loss Story



Key Concepts from Video 8

1. Unfinished business?

Unfinished business is any **regret** or **resentment** I have that is unresolved with people or things or even God - in my past and present – it is incomplete.

When I have unfinished business after a devastating loss, such as a regret for what I have done that hurt them, or a resentment toward the one I lost (for what they have done that hurt you), I will tend to stay stuck in the pit of grief.



2. Completing the Incompletes?

To begin identifying our incompletes, we need to look at our loss story, or journey. Why? Because all of life is in the context of all our life.

This loss story will help me recognize and take note of any unfinished business with who I lost, but also any other deep resentments or regrets I have with other people.

To complete any resentment or regret, I need to apologize for any thing I did that hurt the relationship and forgive anything the other person did that hurt the relationship – whether they are alive or dead.

This apology and/or forgiveness is for me, not for the other person.

If I have someone in my past that hurt me, betrayed me, or that I hurt them, and I have not done everything I can do to ‘complete’ those resentments and/or regrets, then I will have unfinished business in the past, and I will tend to repeat it in the present and the future.

3. How to do Your Loss Story/Journey

NOTE: You might want to look again at the Video on incompletes, in which we show you an example of a loss story.

Your loss is your loss. Thus, your recovery is YOUR recovery. YOU are in charge of your own recovery—no one else.

When we talk about your loss story, we are really talking about your life story. There are many different, creative ways for you to do your story or journey.

Alcoholics Anonymous calls it a fearless and moral inventory, which is similar to what a Loss Story is.

Examples: Decades or Narrative or Timeline

Note these ‘absolutes’ about your Loss Story

1. Include all your losses of your life that you can remember.
2. Include both death and non-death losses
3. When you identify a specific loss – such as:



1985 – my grandfather died – *write your feelings you felt when that happened*

1985 – granddad died – sadness, confusion, anger

4. Try thinking of your life chronologically – it helps you remember things. Start with your earliest loss.

DECADE Method - Some list their losses in every decade of their life:

0-10 years of age:

Age 5 – dog died – felt sad and confused

Age 7 – Grandmother died – sadness, but mostly numb

Age 9 or 10 – moved to Houston, new town and school – lonely, deeply sad, angry at my parents

11-20 years of age

Parents fought – afraid, confused

Parents divorced – felt guilt, sadness, lonely

21-30 years of age

31-40 years of age

41-50 years of age

NARRATIVE Method: Some write a story of their losses, in narrative form.

Each paragraph could describe your losses and feelings about the loss for each decade of your life, for example. Be sure you wrote down your feelings when the loss occurred.

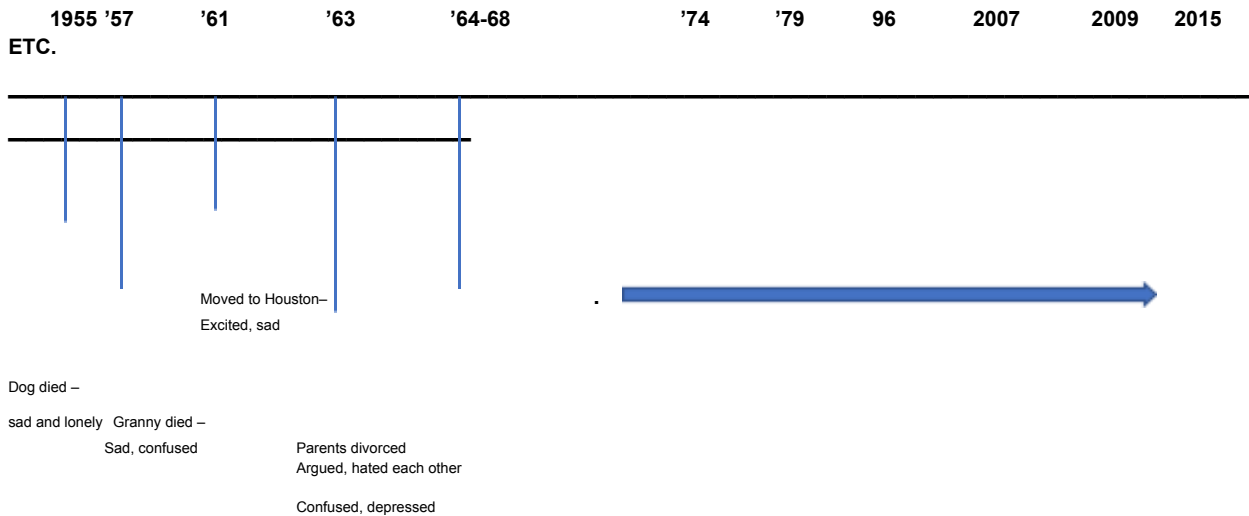
Example: My first loss I remember was in 1955 when my dog died. I felt so alone and sad and empty. Then, when I was 7, my grandmother died suddenly. I was so confused



and a bit angry. I remember our family praying that God would heal her, but she died anyway.

TIMELINE Method

Some do a timeline of their losses – start with your earliest memory, and list each loss under the appropriate year. Again, be sure you put your emotions you felt when that loss occurred.



For more details about how to do your Loss Story, refer back to the GR Video #8

Action Step #1: Complete Your Loss Story Now

- Put both facts and feelings – In the above example, the feelings are in red
- Start with the earliest memory you have – go chronologically, without getting hung up on exact dates, years, etc.
- Put whatever losses that come to mind

Action Step # 2: Read/describe your Loss Story to a trusted person or coach

- Share your Loss Story with one you trust – whose only job is to listen - not advise, condemn, or fix. Be certain that the one who listens to your story understand what their role is and is NOT. Twenty or so minutes should be sufficient time to share your Loss Story.



Vital Points or AHA moments from GR Video # 8

Building Block # 3 - Completion – Part 1

Discovering the Power of Understanding

Your Loss Story



Watch video 9 before continuing to the next section.

LESSON NINE: Completeness

Building Block #3, Part 2

Your Relationship



Key Concepts from Video 9

1. A Reminder: What is unfinished business?

- Unfinished business is any **regret** or **resentment** I have that is unresolved with people or things or even God - in my past and present – it is incomplete.
- When I have unfinished business after a devastating loss, such as a regret for what I have done that hurt them, or a resentment toward my ex-spouse or others (for what they have done that hurt you), I will tend to stay stuck in the pit of grief.



- **The unfinished business could be for others who have hurt me (resentment), or I have hurt them (regret).**

2. Another crucial Reminder: How do I complete the incompletes?

You have already begun to identify your incompletes by completing your Loss Story.

Next step: From your loss story, identify the most incomplete relationship in your life.

Refer to the Grief Recovery Video #9 for details.

Example: Bob came to a Spark of Life Grief Retreat grieving the loss of his marriage to Sue. While doing his Loss Story, he discovered that he had huge resentments toward his alcoholic father who left the family when Bob was 9 years old. His dad died a few years earlier and had never apologized to Bob. Bob was left with a gaping hole in his heart.

He realized that he first had to complete this incomplete with his dad before he could work on completing the incomplete, he had with his ex-wife.

First – identify the relationship you need to complete first.

Select ONE person from your past – not two, not a group. If both parents hurt you, for example, do not do your Relationship Story on both parents at one time – select the most difficult, most incomplete relationship – in this case either your mom or your dad.

Later, you can do other relationship stories that you consider incomplete.

This relationship **may or may not** be concerning the loss you came to this course with. **Why? Because all of life is in the context of all our life.**

This loss story will help me recognize and take note of any unfinished business with not only my major loss, **but also any other deep resentments or regrets I have with other people.**

To complete any resentment or regret, I need to apologize for any thing I did that hurt the relationship and forgive anything the other person did that hurt the relationship – whether they are alive or dead.



This apology and/or forgiveness is for me, not for the other person.

If I have someone in my past that hurt me, betrayed me, or that I hurt them, and I have not done everything I can do to ‘complete’ those resentments and/or regrets, then I will have unfinished business in the past, and I will tend to repeat it in the present and the future.

Your Relationship Story can be in any form you decide – refer to the previous lesson.

Examples: Decades or Narrative or Time-Line

Whatever method you chose for the Loss Story – we suggest you use for the Relationship Story.

3. Note these three ‘R’s that you put in your Relationship Story:

‘R’ # 1 – Your Regrets – what do you regret about what you did that hurt the relationship?

‘R’ # 2 – Your Resentments – what do you resent about what the other person did that hurt the relationship?

‘R’ # 3 – Your Remembrances -what positive memories do you have about that relationship?

NOTE: If you choose to work on a relationship in which someone abused you, such as sexual abuse, we suggest strongly that you never apologize about any regrets that you have about what you think you might have done to bring about the abuse.

The truth is: you did nothing to cause this abuse. If you are confused about this, please seek help from a professional therapist.

Please refer to Video #9 for details about completing your Relationship Story.



Vital Points and AHA moments from GR Video # 9

Building Block # 3 - Completion – Part 2

Your Relationship Story

Discovering the Power of Completing Your Regrets and Resentments

List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways from GR Video # 9

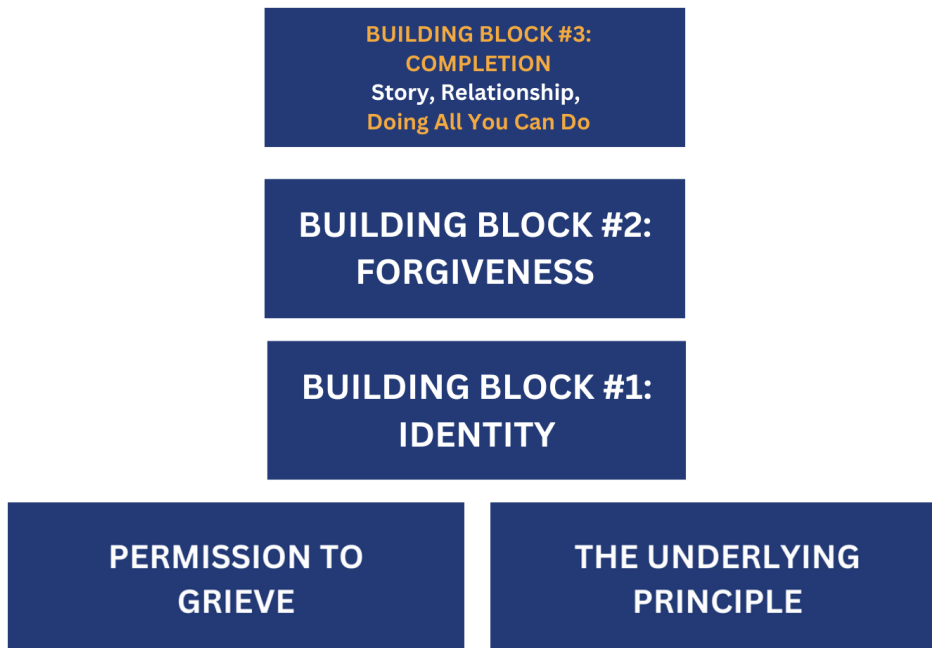


Watch video 10 before continuing to the next section.

LESSON TEN: Completeness

Building Block #3, Part 3

Doing All You Can Do



Key Concepts from Video 10

1. ‘All I can do is all I can do, and all I can do is enough.’ This quote from A.L. Williams in his book by the same title, can change everything.
2. The tangible things that I can do can actually help me do all I can do and can help me feel more complete.
3. When there is nothing else I can do, I feel lighter, and the journey out of the pit of grief progresses to fresher air, and hope for a better tomorrow can emerge.



A Suggestion of a Tangible Thing You Can Do

1. **Your letter** – Do ALL you can do to complete the regrets and the resentments

This letter is for you – not the other person.

This letter is NOT to be given to the other person – it is for you. IF you decide to write a letter to give or send to the other person, that is your decision.

But the letter we are suggesting is for you – not them. Also, the other person might not be alive.

2. **The contents of the letter** - The letter has 3 parts to it – Apology, Forgiveness, and Remembrances.

Apologize whatever you did that hurt the relationship

Forgive whatever they did that hurt the relationship

Remember any positive things about your relationship

3. **MOST IMPORTANT** – Read the letter to someone you trust – whose job is only to listen, not advise, condemn, or fix. Be certain that the one who listens to your letter understand what their role is and is NOT.

When I give voice to my pain, and someone who hears my voice, and simply listens and accepts me, I am affirmed.

When I do ALL I can do, peace can come, and though I might still have pain – I am in a better position to ascend out of the pit of grief, and Live Forward with hope.

What Next?

After completing this first letter, you later proceed to any other relationship you might need help with.



For example: Refer back to the example used in the previous lesson.

Bob came to a Spark of Life Grief Retreat grieving the loss of his marriage to Sue. While doing his Loss Story, he discovered that he had huge resentments toward his alcoholic father who left the family when Bob was 9 years old. His dad died a few years earlier and had never apologized to Bob. Bob was left with a gaping hole in his heart.

He realized that he first had to complete this incomplete with his dad before he could work on completing the incomplete he had with his ex-wife.

Bob came to the retreat because of his pain when his wife divorced him. But he decided to first ‘work’ on the loss of his relationship with his father – because that loss affects how he deals with the loss of his marriage.

After completing his Relationship Story and Letter on his father, he then decided to complete the incompletes with his ex-wife.

That required him completing his Relationship Story on his ex-wife, and then completing the letter concerning her, thus ‘doing all he could do.’

“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.” Viktor Frankl

Again, refer to Grief Recovery Video # 10 for more details.



Vital Points and AHA moments from GR Video # 10

Building Block # 3 - Completion – Part 3

Doing All You Can Do

Discovering the Power of Doing All You Can Do

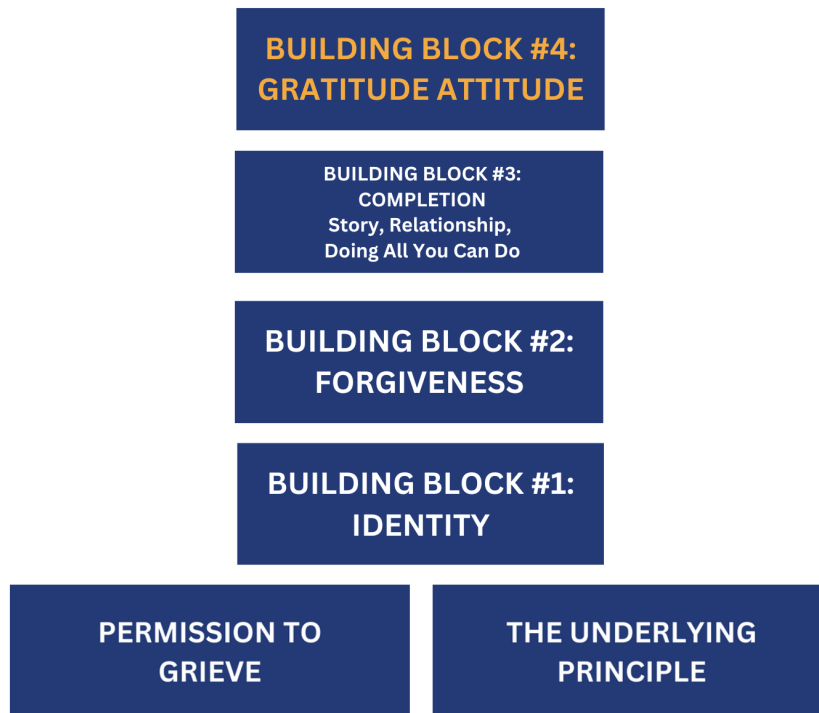
List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways from GR Video # 10



Watch video 11 before continuing to the next section.

LESSON ELEVEN: Building Block #4

The Simple Gratitude Attitude



Key Concepts from Video 11

1. One of the key differences between those who *live forward* after loss, and those who do not, is that one develops a change in attitude – from focus on who/what I have lost – to a gradual transition of focus to what I HAVE - an attitude of gratitude, and the other does not.
2. Anyone can develop more gratitude – it begins with a choice we make, and not necessarily an emotion I feel. If one person can develop a gratitude of attitude – then I can.
You can do it. If one can – you can.
3. Research has shown the power of gratitude – which can change my entire life.



“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to **choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.**” - Viktor Frankl

4. There are simple, tangible things we can do to begin changing our focus from the losses we have experienced, to the possibilities of living forward with hope.

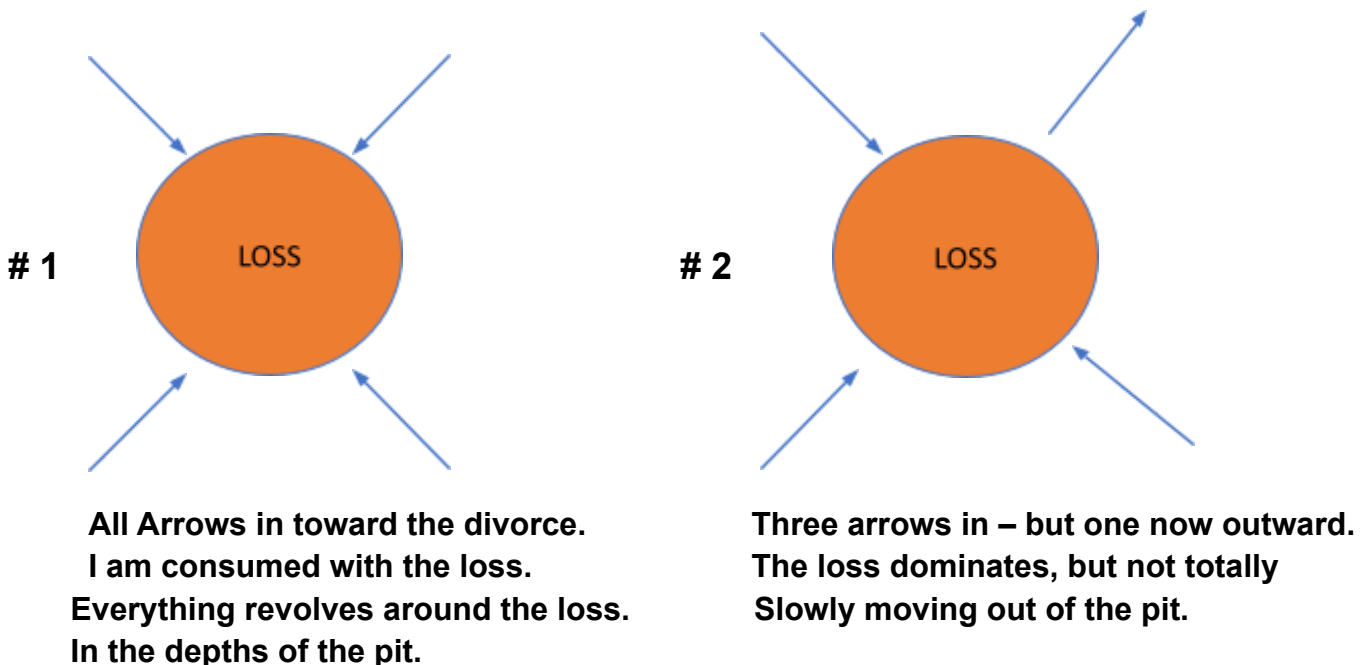
Shawn Achor and others – Gratitude Journal – Positive Experience – Encouraging others

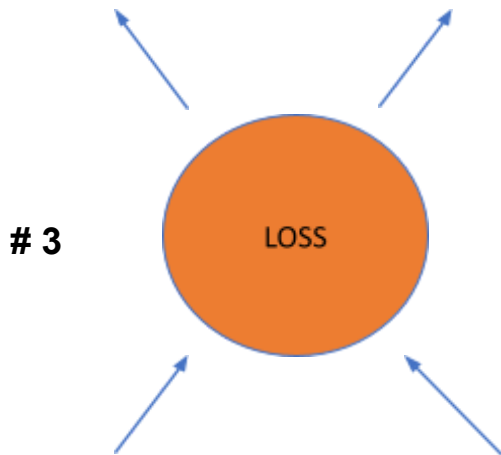
5. Gratitude for the blessings of my life can propel me to find meaning for the rest of my life.

Action Steps that can Change Your Life

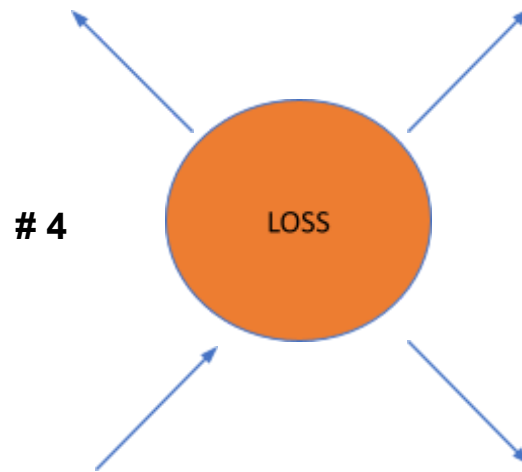
The Power of the 4 Circles

Gratitude for who and what we have helps us not to focus all our energy on who or what we lost. This helps us progress out of the depths of the pit. Look at the 4 circles below from left to right on both rows.





**Two arrows inward – two out.
More focus on what I have.
More progress out of the pit.**



**Three arrows outward – one in.
More gratitude and hope.
Progressing to heights unthinkable.**

Note three key points concerning the 4 circles:

1. When loss occurs (#1) everything revolves around the loss.

- The loss is all I can think about. Everything is viewed in the context of that loss.
- You do not need to be fixed. There is nothing 'wrong' with feeling the way you feel.
- You are deep in grief. You must grieve.

2. There is NO ABSOLUTE TIME FRAME for when you progress to the second circle or the third or the fourth.

- It is **not** a straight-line progress. These are **not** stages.
- You do not check off #1 and say now I go to # 2.
- You naturally and by necessity go back and forth from thinking about nothing else but the loss, to looking outward.
- You might, according to this illustration, go from Circle # 1 to # 4, and then back again.



There are days when you might have 4 arrows all outward, helping others, thinking of other things, and then... have a week or two or whatever with all the arrows seemingly pointed in toward the loss.

This in and out movement can be very frustrating and discouraging. "I thought I was doing better, but now????"

Knowing that this is the way it will probably be can actually help you not give up when you experience this crazy roller coaster of emotions.

3. When the loss is all-consuming, I might focus on who or what I lost, and lose sight of what or who I still have.

It is here that *gratefulness for the blessings I have* can help me navigate through the pain of my loss. Again, for a while, who I lost and the pain from that loss dominates.

In a healthy recovery, gradually we begin to recognize those blessings I have, while giving myself permission to grieve the loss.

I can never replace my loss, but I can grow in gratitude for what I have.

"When we are no longer able to change a situation - we are challenged to change ourselves." Viktor Frankl

Action Step # 1 - As you think through the 4-circles illustration above, write one thing from the 4-circles that can help you navigate through your loss - that can help you *Live Forward*



Action Step # 2 – In the blanks below, write your thoughts concerning Viktor Frankl’s quote below. How could those thoughts help you have a healthy recovery from your loss?

Viktor Frankl wrote: “Everything can be taken from a person but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”

Action Step # 3 – Your Gratitude Journal

In GR Video # 12, David Mathews references Shawn Achor and his (and others) research concerning the power of Gratitude.

Achor suggests doing 5 things daily, the doing of which would greatly change our attitudes, especially in the realm of gratitude.

We suggest you develop a habit in as many of these areas as you decide. More detail can be found in Achor’s book, *The Happiness Advantage*, and in his popular You Tube Videos.

For now, we suggest you begin with three action steps: Write one thing you are thankful for each day; write one positive experience you have had in the last 24 hours; encourage one person in your life with a short email. Each day pick a new person to encourage.

4 Strong Suggestions as You do three action steps each day:

1. Spend no more than a total of 5-10 minutes on answering all of these each day.
2. Keep it simple – the more simple, the more consistent you will be.



3. Commit to 21 days to do this – see how that affects you – then keep doing this once a day – no more than 5-10 minutes total!
4. Oh and keep it short and simple.

For now, write in the blanks below or in your journal on three of Achor’s suggestions.

One thing or person I am thankful for today is:

EXAMPLE: I am thankful for my wife of 48 years, Debbie.

One positive experience I have had from the last 24 hours is:

EXAMPLE: Today, we sat by the Kenai River in Alaska. WOW!

One person I am going to encourage today is..... (We suggest a SHORT email).

EXAMPLE: Lyle, just want you to know how much I treasure our friendship. Thanks for being such a good friend. I love you.



I completed these three suggestions in about 1 minute!

Do I have time to do this every day? I think so. And by the way, I feel more peace and hope as I face this new day.

**DO THIS ONCE EACH DAY
DO THIS IN 5-10 MINUTES OR LESS
KEEP IT SHORT**



Vital Points and AHA moments from GR Video # 11

Building Block # 4

The Simple Gratitude Attitude

Discovering the Power of Simple Gratitude

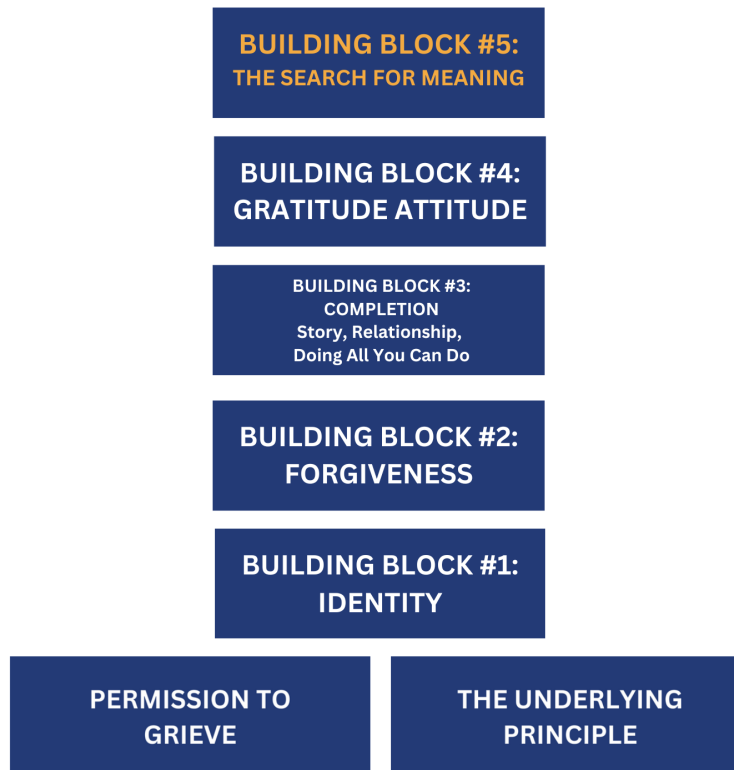
List any AHA! Moments or other vital take-aways from GR Video # 11



Watch video 12 before continuing to the next section.

LESSON TWELVE: Building Block #5

The Search for Meaning



Key Concepts from Video 12

- **The 'Illusion' of Focus Illusion**

Shawn Achor – Happiness precedes success – Success does not breed happiness

- **Viktor Frankl – The Holocaust**

"Challenging the meaning of life is the truest expression of the state of being human."

"Ever more people today have the means to live, but no meaning to live for."

"Those who have a 'why' to live, can bear with almost any 'how'."



"What is to give light must endure the burning."

"Don't aim at success. The more you aim at it and make it a target, the more you are going to miss it.

For success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side effect of one's personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself or as the by-product of one's surrender to a person other than oneself.

— Viktor E. Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning

When Life Sucks and Grief Overwhelms, Do This...

When life sucks and grief hits you, and loss overwhelms you, what in the world do you do? Three points that hopefully helps you:

#1: Look at Others

Number one, I want to encourage you to look at others who have somehow been there and done that and have made it through the suckiness of grief. And they still have their grief, they still have their pain, but they're not letting it debilitate them.

Witold Pilecki was born in May of 1901, and he died in 1948. He was 47 years old, and had a wife and he two children. He was a Polish calvary officer and co-founded the Secret Polish Army resistance movement as Hitler and Nazi Germany made its way into Poland, arresting thousands and thousands of Polish people. The Germans built the concentration camp called Auschwitz in German-occupied Poland.

Pilecki was the only human on record that volunteered to intentionally be arrested and become a prisoner at Auschwitz. He went into the camp in order to give reports to the Allies of what the Germans were doing to the prisoners. What he found was so shocking and horrific that the Allied leaders found hard to believe.

For two years he also tried to organize a resistance within the camp in order to help thousands escape. When that effort failed, and the Allies were slow in accepting his reports, he escaped from Auschwitz and he went back to help this Polish people.

When the war ended, he was arrested by the communistic Polish government and put to



death. He was a hero of all heroes. There's this book by Mark Manson, it's called Everything is _____, quite a bold title. And in that book, he has this quote about being heroic. What does it mean to be heroic?

"Being heroic," Manson writes, "is the ability to conjure up hope where there is no hope."

Look at Others Who Have Conjured Up Hope Where There is No Hope

At Spark of Life, where we have worked with so many 'heroes,' I agree with that definition. The first point to share is to encourage you to look at other people who are hopeless, yet found hope. How did they do it? What did they do that can help me know what to do?

When we look at others, we don't ever want to compare our loss to theirs. I can look at somebody else who's lost 3, 4, 5, 6 children, for example, and think that since my loss is not 'as bad' as their loss - then I should not feel so bad. Thus, I may minimize my feelings, and feel bad about feeling bad.

But I can look at those who haven't quit and had a hopeless situation and they found hope, and ask how did they do it? I mention often that the people who come to our retreats, the people who go to our online resources that we have, **are our heroes because they've conjured up hope where there was no hope.** When they felt hopeless and helpless, they didn't quit. And when I look at others, I'm inspired. So Pilecki can become a hero because he conjured hope where there was no hope. He never gave up.

#2: If one human can have hope where there is no hope - then I can.

In every single retreat, we see hopeless people, but really we see people who FEEL hopeless, but they are not hopeless. The reason they're not hopeless is that they came to a retreat seeking help. When you seek help, when you try to do something about your situation, with your pain, then you are not hopeless or helpless because you haven't even believed you're helpless and hopeless, even though you feel helpless and hopeless.

I say that often because I think it's such a vital point right now. We're saying, if you do anything to find help, you are acting in a way that's not hopeless and helpless, if that makes sense. My emotions do not define me. So if I look at somebody else and I see that they have not given up, it helps me not give up either. If I look at somebody else



who is on the brink of giving up, but didn't give up and they're living productive lives and they're not letting their past define them or debilitate them, then I get hope. **If one other person can do it, then I can do it.** So what do I do with these feelings of hopelessness and helplessness? Well, what I do is I give voice to it.

We have found the power of listening to those who feel hopeless and helpless is life-giving! When people are listened to in their pain, then their pain is validated, and we're saying, in effect, there's nothing wrong with you for feeling the way you feel. You've experienced terrible loss, and you have every right to feel that way, but you don't have to let it define you.

'It's never too late to have a happy childhood' is one of the greatest statements I've ever heard in my life. This quote does not mean you can go back in the past and change things, but I can reframe the past into something that can make me into a better person today, even the painful things of the past.

I want to hold on to the good things, I don't want to forget those. I don't want to heighten the power of all the bad stuff that people have done to me or did to me, or my own mistakes and failures, or even horrific losses. I want to recognize them, give voice to them, but not let them define me. So when I look at others who didn't let all the bad stuff define them and dictate to them how they should live their present and future, I'm inspired by that. I need to look at others and I need to realize if one human being can go through what Pilecki did, in the midst of pain and death, then so can I.

#3: Find Meaning in all the Pain

The third life-changing realization is this: find meaning in all the crap that's happened to you. Find meaning. This does not mean that everything happens for a reason, a specific reason. I do not believe that. God does not delight in my pain, and suffering.

Jesus wept at the tomb of a good friend. God sees our pain and his heart goes out to us. God is not a monster. I don't understand everything about God, but I know this; it is a myth that everything happens for a specific reason. Sometimes evil people do evil things. Sometimes people hurt other people because of free will. Sometimes loved ones die, and there is no explanation.

But that does not mean I can't find meaning in every bad thing that happens.

Viktor Frankl was a prisoner in Auschwitz. He was an Austrian psychologist, a neurologist, a psychiatrist, he was an author, and he was a Holocaust survivor. Frankl



went to the same concentration camp as Pilecki. So this our third point, find meaning in whatever you're going through.

What can you find in the midst of deep loss that can help you live forward as a different, changed person with your pain, but a different person with the same identity, the core identity.

Don't let the past define your core identity.

The Nazis arrested 960,000 Jews who were thrown into Auschwitz. Of the 960,000 Jews that went to this concentration camp, 865,000 died and went to the gas chambers on the day they arrived into Auschwitz. If you do the math, that's 90%. There was a total of 1.3 million humans who went to Auschwitz, and 1.1 million of those died. Viktor Frankl was one of the 'lucky' ones.

After the war ended, and Frankl went back to life, he discovered he had lost ALL his family. He then wrote *Man's Search for Meaning*, one of those life-changing books. It is Frankl's effort to make 'sense out of the nonsense,' to find meaning in the horrific horrors that went on during that period of time in world history.

When I look at other people, and realize if somebody else can find hope in the midst of despair, and when I find meaning of what happened, I can reframe what happened to say,

"Okay, this happened. I'm going to give myself permission to grieve it, to feel terrible, to be honest with my emotions, but I'm going to look at others and see what others have done, and I'm going to have hope. And I'm going to conjure hope in the midst of no hope."

And that's what being heroic is all about.

For Frankl, meaning came from three possible sources: purposeful work, love, and courage in the face of difficulty. That's how you find meaning in life. And listen to some of his quotes.

"Life is made is never made unbearable by circumstances, but only by lack of meaning and purpose."

If you've experienced horrific loss, what will you do with it?



You're going to give yourself permission to grief deeply because that's natural and normal.

You're not going to compare your losses to other people. You're not going to say, "Others have worse losses, therefore, I don't have a right to feel bad. I'm not going to minimize my pain and I don't need to maximize my pain. "

I need to be honest with my pain and my feelings and my emotions, but I also need to be honest that they don't have to define me. And then, what do I do? The people who have survived horrific things find meaning and purpose to get up in the morning again.

So where's that meaning and purpose?

"When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves," wrote Frankl.

I'm unable to change the crap of the past. I wish I could. I wish I had the magic wand. But I can change, I can change my response to the past. I can change what I do with it.

So what do I do with the pain of the past?

I admit it. And then I find meaning and purpose, and this quote, "I can't change the past, but I can change this guy. I can do something about this guy."

We really want you to find hope in the midst of no hope. Remember this. I want to repeat this.

That true heroism, being heroic, is finding hope, conjuring up hope, where there is no hope, of not quitting, of not giving into it.

At Spark of Life, we believe there's always hope. Go to sparkoflife.org for more resources. At Spark of Life, we really do believe this. There is always hope.

Be a hero, conjure up hope where there is no hope.



Anchors to Sails

An anchor is mostly good. It keeps the boat in the dock so that the storms do not destroy the boat. When a storm comes, fear can paralyze us. Some people experience severe storms and fear climbs on board. They never take up the anchor and sail their boat again.

Then they simply exist forward – they are not living forward.

Our encouragement to you is this: dare to sail that boat again! Take up the anchor and set sail in **living life again**.

Begin by doing the NEXT RIGHT THING.

Complete this sentence: The next ONE thing I need to do as a result of this course that will help turn the anchors of my loss to sails is

I will do this by _____ (put a deadline date).

When you have completed your first Anchor to Sails, then do the next right thing to Live Forward.

We would love to hear from you when you complete your first Anchors to Sails.

Contact us at info@sparkoflife.org



APPENDIX:

Difficult / Unpleasant Feelings

Angry

irritated
enraged
hostile
insulting
sore
annoyed
upset
hateful
unpleasant
offensive
bitter
aggressive
resentful
inflamed
provoked
incensed
infuriated
cross
worked up
boiling
indignant
fuming

Depressed

lousy
disappointed
discouraged
ashamed
powerless
diminished
guilty
dissatisfied
miserable
detestable
repugnant
despicable
disgusting
abominable
terrible
in despair
sulky
bad
a sense of loss

Confused

upset
doubtful
uncertain
indecisive
perplexed
embarrassed
hesitant
shy
stupefied
disillusioned
unbelieving
skeptical
distrustful
misgiving
lost
unsure
uneasy
pessimistic
tense



Difficult / Unpleasant Feelings

Indifferent

insensitive
dull
nonchalant
neutral
reserved
weary
bored
preoccupied
cold
disinterested
lifeless

Afraid

fearful
terrified
suspicious
anxious
alarmed
panic
nervous
scared
worried
frightened
timid
shaky
restless
doubtful
threatened
cowardly
quaking
menaced
wary

Hurt

crushed
tormented
deprived
pained
tortured
dejected
rejected
injured
offended
afflicted
aching
victimized
heartbroken
agonized
appalled
humiliated
wronged
alienated



Pleasant Feelings

Love

loving
considerate
affectionate
sensitive
tender
devoted
attracted
passionate
admiration
warm
touched
sympathy
close
loved
comforted
drawn toward

Interested

concerned
affected
fascinated
intrigued
absorbed
inquisitive nosy
snoopy
engrossed
curious

Positive

Eager
keen
earnest
intent
anxious
inspired
determined
excited
enthusiastic
bold
brave
daring
challenged
optimistic
re-enforced
confident
hopeful

Open

understanding
confident
reliable
easy
amazed
free
sympathetic
interested
satisfied
receptive
accepting kind
animated
spirited
thrilled
wonderful

Happy

great
gay
joyous
lucky
fortunate
delighted
overjoyed
gleeful
thankful
important
festive
ecstatic
satisfied
glad
cheerful

Happy

sunny
merry
elated
jubilant

Alive

playful
courageous
energetic
liberated
optimistic
provocative
impulsive
free
frisky