

# LOSS INVENTORY

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How to make your most  
significant losses  
& disappointments  
lose their power over you

Doug Schmidt



# A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

***“It’s important to count your losses before you count your blessings.  
If you view a blessing as “making up” for some loss,  
then that loss still holds power over you.”***

The first essential step in the healing process is to clearly identify what you’ve lost.

Not something you’ve lost that you’ll get back again, someday . . .  
or a loss for which you’ll eventually be compensated . . .  
or a loss for which you will receive an apology.

On these pages you’re going to list ***the things you used to have, and will never have again*** because of someone’s indifference, negligence, or malice (or perhaps even your own).

For some people, doing this is no big deal. For others, it may feel like a spiritual root canal.

It’s a hard thing to do . . . that’s why so few people do it. They don’t want to think about their losses because the memories are just too painful.

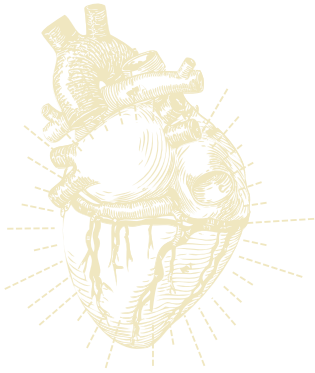
Even if you were compensated for some sort of loss down the line, there was still a period of time when you were without that particular thing . . . it was still a loss. Put it down anyway.

So what may happen after you start listing these things? Different people will react differently. At first, some people may feel angry over the reminder of the injustice that these losses represent. Some people may begin to feel a profound sadness when they begin to grieve what they use to have, but possess no longer. Finally, they may come to a point of acceptance. They will be able to say to themselves, “Yes, I did lose this particular thing, and it was a tough loss, but I’ve accepted it. I’m ready to move on.” Even if the memory resurfaces, they may be able to say to themselves . . . “Oh, that’s right . . . but that feeling is no longer debilitating.”

This is usually the point where feelings of forgiveness start to appear.

For some, the new-found ability to forgive may even seem effortless.

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# HOW TO USE THESE GUIDED TEMPLATES

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Look through the examples; get an idea of what you'll be writing.

Step 2: Go through the Loss Inventory Checklist and pick the categories in which you've experienced significant losses.

Step 3: On the Loss Inventory Blank Page, begin listing your significant losses by name. You may have to make multiple copies of this page; some people have done this part of the exercise by listing 100-150 losses, from big to small.

Step 4: THIS IS IMPORTANT: You must make a copy of the Customizable Worksheet and What Does Healing Look Like for You section.(which is 3 pages long) for EACH of the losses you listed.

Step 5: Fill out each of the question on the three pages for each loss you've listed.

Step 6: Once you've completed the grieving process, keep track of the intensity of the emotion you experienced after the memory of the loss. If it's diminishing in intensity, then you are likely heading down the path to healing.

If the feeling is staying the same, or getting worse, then that's just an affirmation you should get outside help. There may be something going on that you can't see. Don't ever hesitate to seek out qualified professional help at any point in the process.

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# LOSS INVENTORY CHECKLIST

USE THIS CHECKLIST TO HELP YOU REMEMBER THE SPECIFIC  
SIGNIFICANT LOSSES YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED;  
WRITE THEM DOWN ON THE BLANK PAGES THAT FOLLOW.

<input type="checkbox"/> Job	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend	<input type="checkbox"/> Childhood
<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational Identity	<input type="checkbox"/> Deep conversation	<input type="checkbox"/> Love of Mom
<input type="checkbox"/> Savings	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared interests	<input type="checkbox"/> Love of Dad
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared values	<input type="checkbox"/> Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> Salary	<input type="checkbox"/> Vulnerability	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical care
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Debt	<input type="checkbox"/> Confidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Innocence
<input type="checkbox"/> Companionship	<input type="checkbox"/> Sense of Purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> Enough food
<input type="checkbox"/> Connectedness	<input type="checkbox"/> Significance	<input type="checkbox"/> Nurturing teachers
<input type="checkbox"/> Belonging	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-alienation	<input type="checkbox"/> Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Nurture	<input type="checkbox"/> Respect of kids	<input type="checkbox"/> Training
<input type="checkbox"/> Intimacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Time with kids	<input type="checkbox"/> Network
<input type="checkbox"/> Touch	<input type="checkbox"/> Proximity	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/> Representation	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical energy
<input type="checkbox"/> Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Retirement	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental energy
<input type="checkbox"/> Affection	<input type="checkbox"/> Vacation	<input type="checkbox"/> Emotional energy
<input type="checkbox"/> Ability to trust	<input type="checkbox"/> Adventure	<input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual energy
<input type="checkbox"/> Legacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteering	<input type="checkbox"/> Hope

LIST YOUR ACTUAL LOSSES HERE, DUPLICATE THIS PAGE AS MANY TIMES AS NECESSARY SOME PEOPLE HAVE LISTED AS MANY AS 100-150 DIFFERENT LOSSES.

[illegible]



## EXAMPLE 1 / PAGE 1 OF 2

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer each question with as much detail as you can ...

WHAT DID YOU LOSE? BE BRUTALLY HONEST & SPECIFIC

My first child died two minutes after he was born after a perfect pregnancy (from a sub-dermal hemotoma)

WHO CAUSED THAT LOSS?

No one. There was no negligence.

WHAT **VALUE** TO YOU ASSIGN TO THAT LOSS (ON A SCALE OF 1-TO-10)?

10 (the highest value possible)

WHAT IS YOUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE MEMORY OF THE LOSS?

Deep melancholy

WHAT IS THE INTENSITY OF THAT EMOTION (ON A SCALE OF 1-TO-10)?

10 (the highest intensity possible)



## EXAMPLE 1, PAGE 2/2

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer each question with as much detail as you can ...

GRIEVING STEP 1 ~ **DENIAL:** HOW HAVE YOU MINIMIZED THIS LOSS?

He didn't suffer long; he's in a better place.

GRIEVING STEP 2 ~ **ANGER:** WHAT INJUSTICE DOES THIS LOSS REPRESENT?

God could have prevented this, but didn't

GRIEVING STEP 3 ~ **BARGAINING:** WHAT WILL MAKE UP FOR THIS LOSS?

We will have more children.

GRIEVING STEP 4 ~ **DEPRESSION:** WHAT SADDENS YOU ABOUT THIS LOSS?

He had no chance.

GRIEVING STEP 5 ~ **ACCEPTANCE:** WHAT WOULD HEALING LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

The memory of the loss still provokes sadness,  
but the emotion is benign and no longer impairs me.



## Example 2 Page 1 of 2

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer each question with as much detail as you can ...

WHAT DID YOU LOSE? BE BRUTALLY HONEST & SPECIFIC

Due to budget cuts, I lost my job with a company for whom I worked 17 years.

WHO CAUSED THAT LOSS?

The company's board of directors

WHAT **VALUE** TO YOU ASSIGN TO THAT LOSS (ON A SCALE OF 1-TO-10)?

9 (close to the highest value possible)

WHAT IS YOUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE MEMORY OF THE LOSS?

Fear & embarrassment

WHAT IS THE INTENSITY OF THAT EMOTION (ON A SCALE OF 1-TO-10)?

8 (somewhat intense)





## EXAMPLE 2 PAGE 2 OF 2

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer each question with as much detail as you can ...

GRIEVING STEP 1 ~ **DENIAL:** HOW HAVE YOU MINIMIZED THIS LOSS?

I'd been here long enough; time for something new.

GRIEVING STEP 2 ~ **ANGER:** WHAT INJUSTICE DOES THIS LOSS REPRESENT?

Why wasn't "so-and-so" released?  
Why did they pick me instead?

GRIEVING STEP 3 ~ **BARGAINING:** WHAT WILL MAKE UP FOR THIS LOSS?

I'll easily get another job.

GRIEVING STEP 4 ~ **DEPRESSION:** WHAT SADDENS YOU ABOUT THIS LOSS?

My vocational identity was tied up in my work here.

GRIEVING STEP 5 ~ **ACCEPTANCE:** WHAT WOULD HEALING LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

The memory of the loss still provokes embarrassment,  
but the emotion is benign and no longer impairs me.



## Example 3 Page 1 of 2

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer each question with as much detail as you can ...

WHAT DID YOU LOSE? BE BRUTALLY HONEST & SPECIFIC

My van was stolen and used in the commission of a crime

WHO CAUSED THAT LOSS?

The criminals (who were never caught)

WHAT **VALUE** TO YOU ASSIGN TO THAT LOSS (ON A SCALE OF 1-TO-10)?

5 (mid-range)

WHAT IS YOUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE MEMORY OF THE LOSS?

Anger

WHAT IS THE INTENSITY OF THAT EMOTION (ON A SCALE OF 1-TO-10)?

5 (mid-level intensity)



## EXAMPLE 3 PAGE 2 OF 2

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer each question with as much detail as you can ...

GRIEVING STEP 1 ~ **DENIAL:** HOW HAVE YOU MINIMIZED THIS LOSS?

By the time I'd discovered the theft,  
the abandoned van had been found; no big deal

GRIEVING STEP 2 ~ **ANGER:** WHAT INJUSTICE DOES THIS LOSS REPRESENT?

What a profound violation of my personal space!

GRIEVING STEP 3 ~ **BARGAINING:** WHAT WILL MAKE UP FOR THIS LOSS?

Getting the van back.

GRIEVING STEP 4 ~ **DEPRESSION:** WHAT SADDENS YOU ABOUT THIS LOSS?

The van was covered with fingerprint-revealing powder;  
it felt like I had participated in the crime  
(the transportation of stolen bikes)

GRIEVING STEP 5 ~ **ACCEPTANCE:** WHAT WOULD HEALING LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

The memory of the loss still provokes anger,  
but the emotion is benign and no longer impairs me.



# CUSTOMIZABLE WORKSHEET

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Start this process with the smallest loss you identified; the one for which you assigned the lowest value ... and then work your way up to the bigger ones. Answer each question below with as much detail as you can ...

WHAT DID YOU LOSE? BE BRUTALLY HONEST & SPECIFIC

WHO CAUSED THAT LOSS?

WHAT **VALUE** TO YOU ASSIGN TO THAT LOSS (ON A SCALE OF 1-TO-10)?

WHAT IS YOUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE MEMORY OF THE LOSS?

WHAT IS THE INTENSITY OF THAT EMOTION (ON A SCALE OF 1-TO-10)?



# CUSTOMIZABLE WORKSHEET

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Answer each question with as much detail as you can ...

GRIEVING STEP 1 ~ **DENIAL:** HOW HAVE YOU MINIMIZED THIS LOSS?

GRIEVING STEP 2 ~ **ANGER:** WHAT INJUSTICE DOES THIS LOSS REPRESENT?

GRIEVING STEP 3 ~ **BARGAINING:** WHAT WILL MAKE UP FOR THIS LOSS?

GRIEVING STEP 4 ~ **DEPRESSION:** WHAT SADDENS YOU ABOUT THIS LOSS?

GRIEVING STEP 5 ~ **ACCEPTANCE:** WHAT WOULD HEALING LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?



# WHAT DOES HEALING LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Print out a copy of this page for each of the losses you experienced. Visualize "before & after" responses to the healing process, and describe them in the boxes below. Generally speaking, if your emotional response to the memory of the loss is diminishing, you are making progress. Of course, never hesitate to get qualified professional help for any part of this process.

## BEFORE GRIEVING

How is the memory of this loss  
impacting your other relationships  
or ability to function?

How has your emotional response  
to the memory of this loss become  
benign and no longer impacting your  
relationships or functionality?

## AFTER GRIEVING

Instructions: Use this grid in conjunction with the preceding templates

Value of the loss to you ( <i>count the cost</i> ) On a scale of 1 to 10 ↓	Intensity of the emotion to you On a scale of 1 to 10 ↓
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Value of the loss  
to you  
(*count the cost*)  
On a scale of  
1 to 10

Intensity of  
the emotion  
to you  
On a scale of  
1 to 10

[illegible]

[illegible]



[illegible]