

PSYC 3590 Grief and Bereavement Paper: Personal Experience with Loss*



Purpose: Early experiences with death or loss significantly influence the way we react to the losses of others, both consciously and unconsciously. It is important to recognize these and how they might influence us in our daily work.

Instructions:

Take a few moments now to think about the following questions. Write down your responses and reflect on them as you progress through the rest of this text or use them as the beginning of a journal that you continue to keep.

- What was your earliest experience with death or loss? How old were you when it occurred? Where were you when you learned of the loss? Who did it involve? Describe what happened.
- How did the people around you respond to the loss? How did they respond to your reactions?
- How did your cultural and/or spiritual background influence your responses? (For this question refer to Chapter 8)
- What about loss makes you feel vulnerable now?
- Based on what you have learned since, what do you think can help make it easier to cope with death or loss now or in the future?

If there are unresolved feelings about previous experiences with death that you have not worked through, it is important to find a way to address them so they do not negatively influence your work with others. Journaling, loss specific support groups, counseling, even courses on grief can be helpful. There are many forums, chat rooms and support groups available on the Internet that can be accessed through the links provided for this text. Choose the method that works best for you, but take the time you need to deal with your own losses. It will inevitably result in better care for others who are facing loss.

*From: Walsh, K. (2011). *Grief and loss: Theories and skills for the helping professions*. Pearson, p. 20.

Your paper should be minimum of three (3) pages and not more than 5 pages in 12 point font. Submit it by the due date in the Assignment portal on D2L. No late papers will be accepted. All assignment due dates are listed on the Calendar on the D2L course website.

Grading Rubric

Section	Excellent (20 points)	Good (15-18 points)	Poor (0-14 points)	Points
Earliest experience with death or loss (20 points)	Detailed description including age, where you were, who was involved, and what happened.	Experience was described but missing some details.	Experience was not clear and not detailed.	
Reactions of others (20 points)	Specific description of at least 2 different peoples' reactions and how they interacted with you.	Described one person's reactions with minimal discussion of their interactions with you.	Did not describe other people's reactions in detail or in terms of how they interacted with you.	
Cultural and/or spiritual factors. (20 points)	Identified your own cultural and/or spiritual background and described how it influenced your perceptions and coping.	Identified your own cultural and/or spiritual background but did not provide details about how it influenced your reactions to the loss.	Did not adequately identify your own cultural and/or spiritual background and how it influenced your reaction to the loss.	
Vulnerability Now (20 points)	Showed insight into how the loss influenced your current feelings of vulnerability.	Did not clearly describe how the loss influences your feelings of vulnerability OR did not provide an insightful discussion of why it did not make you feel vulnerable.	No real discussion or thought evidenced in your answer.	
What you learned. (20 points)	Identified at least one thing you learned and one thing that would make it easier for you to cope with loss in the future.	Addressed only one thing you learned OR one thing that would make it easier to cope.	Did not adequately address these questions.	
TOTAL				