

A JOURNAL FOR THE GRIEVING

When Someone You Love Is Gone

A mourning and sorrow journal — for the days when grief is the loudest thing in the room, and for the quieter ones after.

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

There is no right way to grieve

This journal is not therapy, and it is not a schedule. Grief doesn't keep appointments. Use one page a month or three pages in one night — both are correct.

Some days the missing is physical. Some days you laugh at something and then feel guilty for laughing. Some days you are angry at them for leaving, and that is allowed on these pages too. Nothing you write here has to be fair, tidy, or finished.

One thing this ministry believes and practices: you don't have to carry it alone. When the writing surfaces more than it settles, bring a person into it — a friend, a pastor, a counselor, the Prayer Room at only1deelopez.org.

If grief ever turns toward thoughts of harming yourself, please put this journal down and call or text **988** (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, U.S.) — free, day and night. Asking for that kind of help is not a failure of faith. It is part of being carried.

The first days

What do you need to say about how it happened, and how you found out? Write it as plainly as you can — the facts are allowed to be here, next to the feelings.

What happened.

What I keep replaying.

What I wish I'd known.

Remembering them whole

Not a saint, not a summary — a person. The laugh, the habits, the sayings, the flaws that were somehow part of the love.

How they sounded. Their voice, their phrases, the things they always said.

An ordinary day with them. Describe a normal day — the kind you didn't know you'd miss.

What they taught me without trying.

What I didn't get to say

Every grief carries a few unsent sentences. This is the page for them. Nothing here has to be sent, solved, or forgiven today.

I'm sorry for.

I forgive you for. Only if it's true today. 'Not yet' is an honest answer.

Thank you for.

I wish you knew.

The hard days

Anniversaries, songs, empty chairs, the grocery-store aisle that ambushes you. Name the hard days here so they stop arriving as surprises.

The dates that will be hard.

The places and songs.

My plan for those days. Who will you call? Where will you go? Decide now, gently, while it's quiet.

Small mercies

Grief is not the only true thing. On the days you can, record the small mercies — not to rush past the sorrow, but because they are real too.

Something kind that happened.

A moment I almost smiled.

Someone who showed up.

A letter to them

Write the letter. All of it. The love, the anger, the questions, the ordinary news they'd want to hear. Take the whole page, and the next if you need it.

Carrying them forward

Love doesn't end; it changes address. What part of them lives on in you — and what will you do with it on purpose?

What I carry from them.

One thing I'll do in their honor.

Who I can carry, the way they carried me.

A PRAYER TO CLOSE

For the one who is gone

God, I don't have polished words tonight. I just miss them.

You know what this love was, and You know what this loss is. I'm not asking You to explain it. I'm asking You to sit with me in it — the empty chair, the quiet house, the moment I reach for the phone before I remember.

Hold what I can't hold. Carry what keeps dropping out of my hands. When the grief comes in waves, don't let me drown in it; when it goes quiet, don't let me mistake the quiet for forgetting.

Thank You for the time that was real. Thank You that love doesn't become nothing just because someone is gone from my sight.

Stay close, Lord. That's the whole prayer. Stay close. Amen.

This prayer also lives on the Immediate Prayer page at only1deelopez.org, alongside prayers for fear, anger, heartbreak, and sleepless nights.