



## Loss History: Understanding Your Loss History

\*\* adapted from Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy by J.W. Worden 1982

Our cultural, ethnic, religious and philosophical upbringing shapes our attitudes towards death, dying and loss. Our early experiences with loss leave us with messages, feelings and beliefs we will carry throughout life. To prevent our being controlled by our unconscious and conscious reactions to our past, it is important to recognize and acknowledge explicitly how these loss experiences have influenced us. This awareness can also help us identify and reinforce useful coping strategies.

Take a few minutes to complete the following questions. Put down whatever first comes into your mind. Through this exercise, you will investigate how you respond to a variety of losses, including death. You may begin to identify a pattern of response.

1. An early, significant loss not due to death was:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How I felt was:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. I was age:  
What others around me said or did that was helpful *or not* was:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. The first death I can remember was the death of:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. I was age:
6. The feelings I remember I had at the time were:



7. The first funeral (wake or other ritual service) I ever attended was for:
  
8. The thing I remember most about that experience is:
  
9. The most recent loss by death was (person, time, circumstance):
  
10. I coped (am coping) with this loss by:
  
11. The most difficult death for me was/is the death of:
  
12. It was/is difficult because:
  
13. My primary style of coping with loss is:



14. As I reflect back I know my own grief is resolved (integrated as part of my story) when: