



Grief journaling is not about writing perfectly. Natalie Goldberg offers these tips in *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within*:

1. *Keep your hands moving.* (Don't pause to reread the line you have just written. That is stalling and trying to get control of what you're saying.)
2. *Don't cross out.* (That's editing as you write. Even if you write something you didn't mean to write, leave it.)
3. *Don't worry about spelling, punctuation, grammar.* (Don't even care about staying within the margins and lines on the page.)
4. *Lose control.*
5. *Don't think. Don't get logical.*
6. *Go for the jugular.* (If something comes up in your writing that is scary, dive right into it. It probably has lots of meaning or can get you thinking)

#### Other tips:

##### ✓ **Keep it Simple**

Grief journaling does not have to be hard or complicated. If words seem to fail, jotting a sentence or two may get you started and eventually lead to more. Try to complete these two sentences on a regular basis.

I feel . . .

I desire/need . . .

##### ✓ **Journaling with Quotes on Grief**

Most often we just need a direction in which to start writing. Pick a quote that draws you in, and write how it fits or doesn't fit with your own life experience.

##### ✓ **Visual Grief Journaling**

Another way to deal with the lack of words you may feel in various stages of grief is to work at a visual journal. You can make your own photos, which you can learn more of in the photo reflection section. But an easy way to get started is using a stack of old magazines that you wouldn't mind cutting or tearing up.

##### ✓ **Scrapbook Journaling**

Make memory books using both digital and paper scrapbooking methods.

## **Journal Prompts:**

1. The hardest time of day is...
2. I am really missing...
3. My support system includes....
4. I really need more...
5. I am having a hard time with...
6. I find it helpful when...
7. I find it difficult when...
8. Some of my grief triggers are...
9. I am grateful for...
10. My favorite memory is...

## **Write a love letter to the person who has died...**

- Write a love letter as though the person is still alive. Tell them all the things you love and appreciate about them. Tell them something you never got the chance to say when they were alive.
- Write a love letter recalling a favorite memory that you two shared. For example, describe a day at the beach or the day a child was born, tell them the reasons why you cherish the memory.
- Write a love letter bringing the person up to speed on everything that has happened since their death. Tell them how you have grown, changed, etc. Tell them how you continue to honor their memory.

## **Write a love letter to yourself....**

- Write a letter to yourself and acknowledge all the ways you have grown and changed since your loved one's death.
- Write a letter to yourself at the time of your loved one's death. Give you past-self advice, tell your past-self about the most important lessons you have learned, and provide your past self with words of encouragement.