

SUPPORTING THE ONES WE LOVE INCLUDING OURSELVES

CREATING A NEW BALANCE WITH HOPE,
STRENGTH AND HEALING

Companions on a Journey
Sheila Munafa-Kanoza
Debbie Heidrich

www.companionsonajourney.org



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Our Stories...

- Life...
- Love...
- Everyday life
- Illness
- Change...

Life changes when someone we love is diagnosed with a illness with no cure.



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

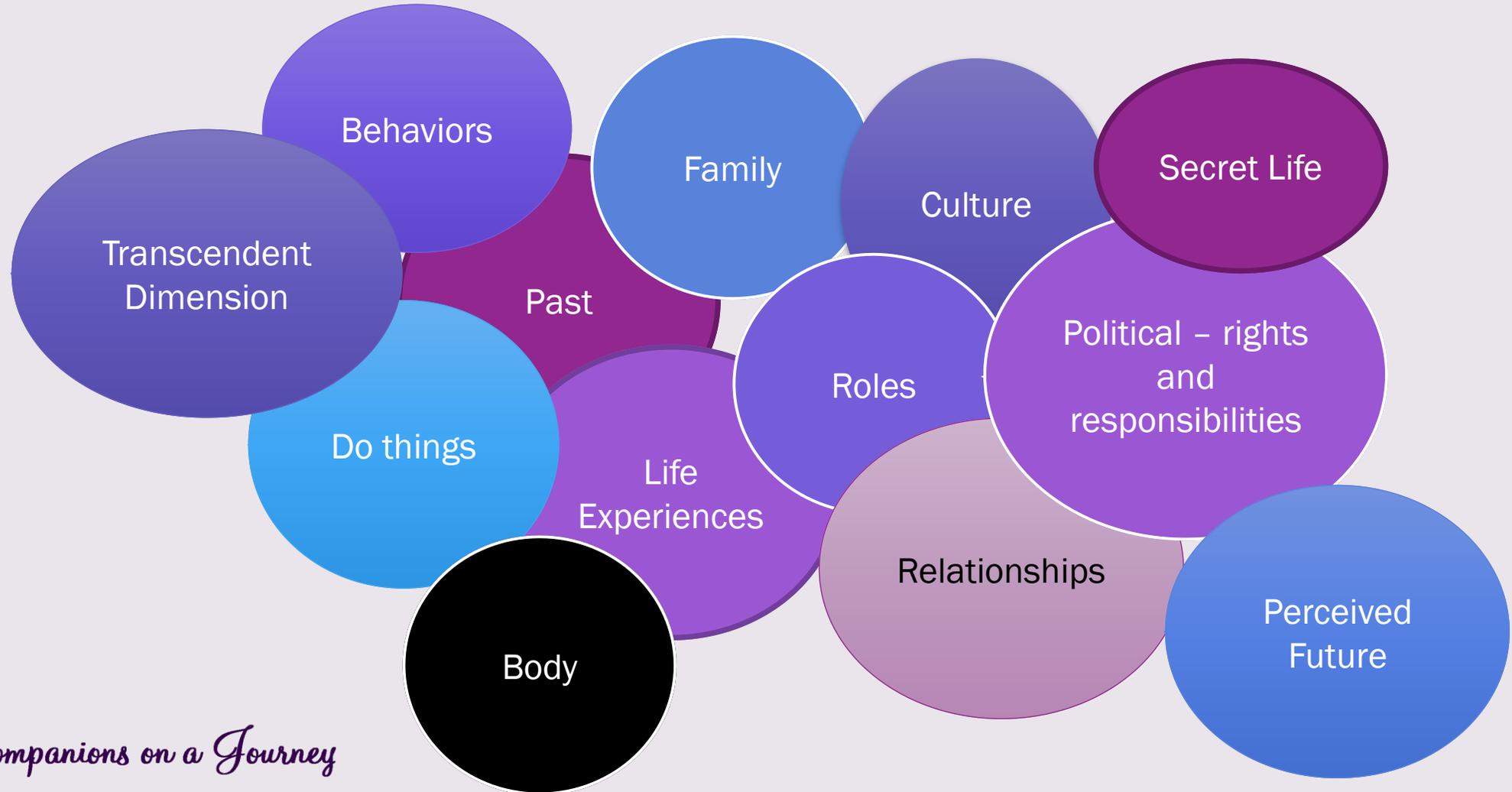
Illness Brings Grief

Anticipatory Grief which is the loss that occurs before an impending loss.

- Sadness
- Isolation
- Anger
- Loss of Hopes and Dreams
- Forgetfulness
- Depression



What Makes Up a Person?



Suffering (Cassell)

- Distress associated with events that threaten the intactness of the person
- Presence and extent of suffering can only be known to the sufferer



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Suffering

- All aspects of personhood are susceptible to damage and loss
- Expressions of injury (sadness, anger, depression, withdrawal, yearning...)
- If the injury is sufficient, the person suffers
- Suffering is both universal and individual



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Recovering from Suffering

- Often involves borrowing the strength of others
 - People can be sustained by the personhood of others
- Finding meaning
- Transcendence



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT



Click to watch video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Eywgu369Jw>

UNDERSTANDING GRIEF

Is an important tool to help us cope

Grief is a Journey

- It takes time
- No two people grieve the same
- Feelings of grief may come and go when least expected
- Feelings are normal with any type of grief



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Grief~ comes with illness, life changes and death

- Process of psychological, social, and physical reactions to the perception of a loss (Rando, 1994)
 - Manifested in all 3 realms (psych, social, physical)
 - Process – a continuing development involving many changes
 - Natural and expected
 - Reaction to many kinds of losses, not just death
 - Based on the unique, individualized perception of loss by the grieving
- Requires physical, emotional, and spiritual energy (i.e. work!)



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Mourning

- The cultural response to grief
 - Social and cultural influence on grief
- Includes:
 - The grieving we allow others to see (usually only what is culturally acceptable)



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Losses That Complicate Grief

- Changes in routines
- Changes in caregivers
- Financial concerns
 - Needing to move
 - Worry about food, power, clothing



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Tasks of Grief Work (Worden)

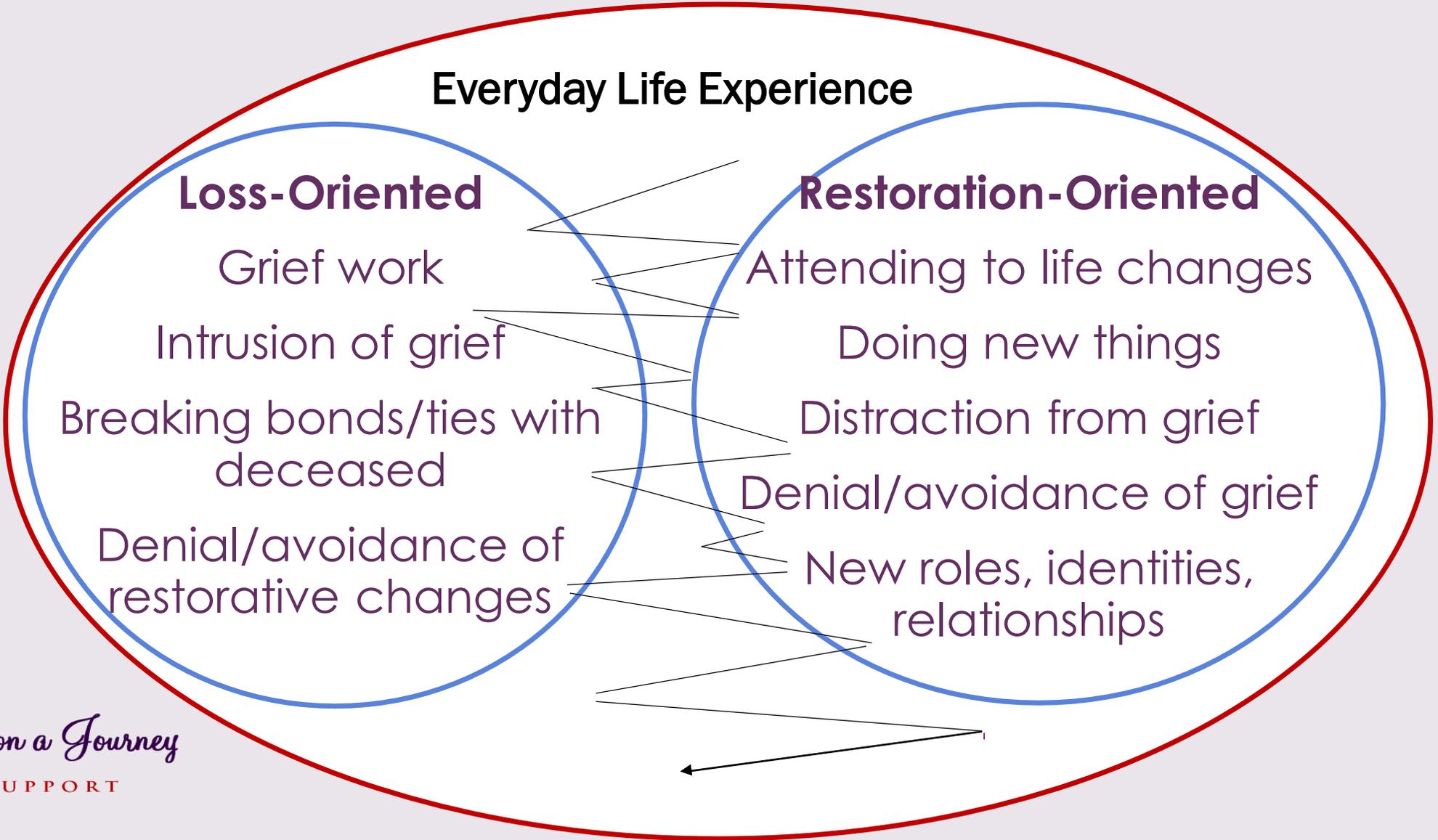
- Accept the reality of the loss that comes
- Experience the pain of the loss
- Adjust to the environment with the missing life the way it use to be.
- Reinvest emotional energy into work, activity, taking time for you.



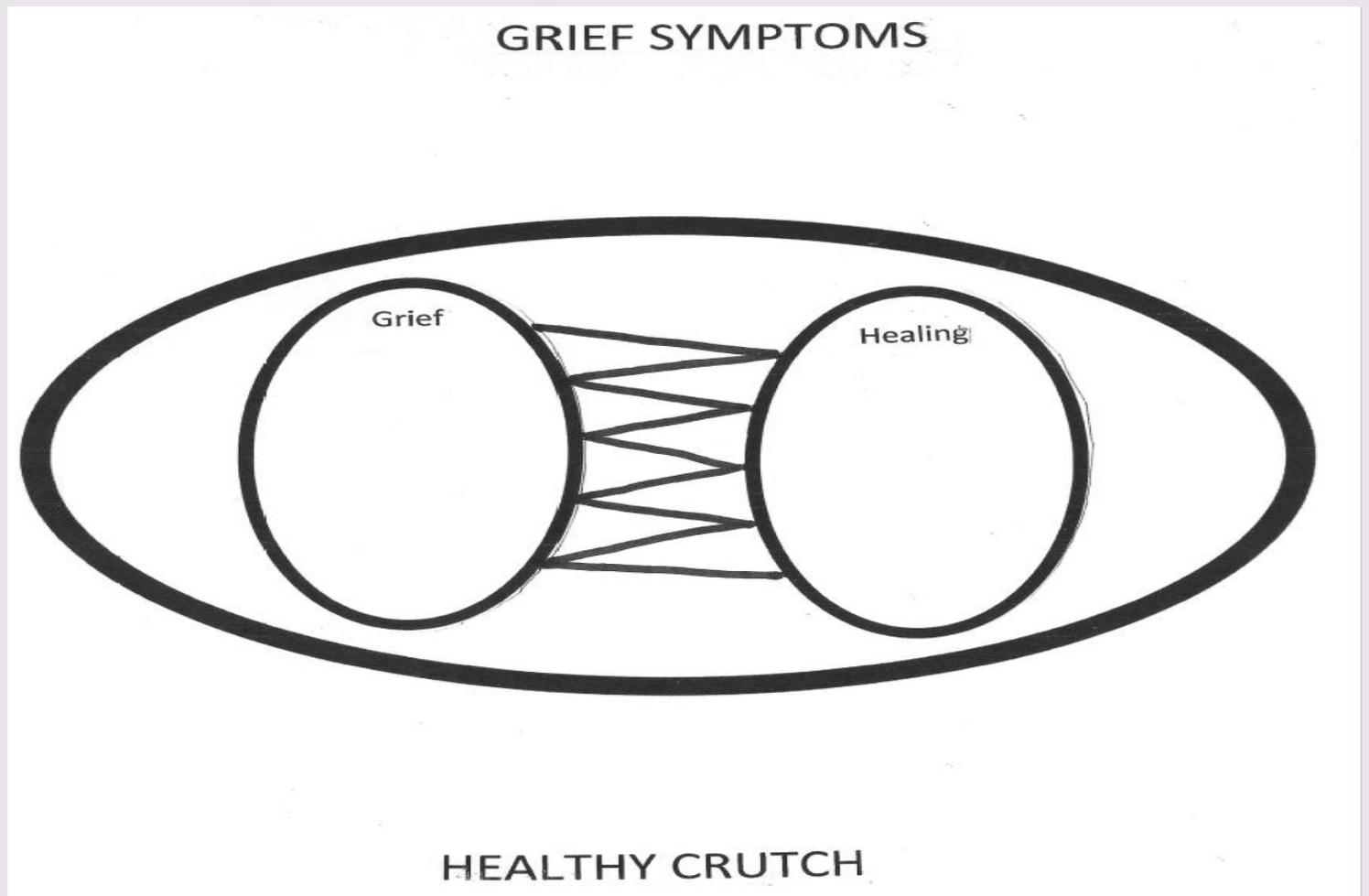
Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Dual Process Model (Stroebe & Schut)



Exercise: the large circle represents everyday life. List your grief, loss and around the oval list your symptoms. Healthy Crutches are used to help bring balance to our lives. List your support system, and other things that bring you balance.



Companions on a Journey
GRIEF SUPPORT

Complicated Anticipatory Grief

- Our minds can be our greatest source of strength... or our greatest obstacle.
- As Care Partners you take on new responsibilities which can lead to stress and exhaustion
- Causing overwhelming anxiety, fear, physical and emotional and spiritual challenge

These symptoms are very much like those of the person with the illness.



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Creating a Balance



Companions on a Journey
GRIEF SUPPORT

HONORING WITH LOVE

Your loved one and yourself
become a team one that cares for each other

The Gift of Presence

- Is a sacred calling, in life.
- Life changes when someone we love is diagnosed with an illness with no cure.
- We cannot take away the pain of their loss but we can share their pain
- Just “be”, not “do.”



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Maintaining Compassion

- Compassion – deep sense of the suffering of another coupled with the wish to relieve it.
- Compassion fatigue – state where the compassionate energy expended has surpassed individual's restorative processes
- Compassion satisfaction – invigorated and inspired by connecting with and sharing in suffering, with focus on relieving suffering through use of self, one's skills, and available resources.



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Compassion Fatigue Self-Assessment

- Watch how you are reacting to your loved one, colleagues, friends and family...and how they are reacting to you.
 - Are you more sensitive than usual?
 - Do you have outbursts of anger or irritability with little provocation?
 - Are other people getting frustrated with you?
 - Do you find even small changes enormously draining?
 - Do other people seem to lack any degree of understanding?
- When you identify any negative behaviors/feelings
 - It is time to ASK for help.
 - It is time to be sure you are taking care of YOU



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Tips for Creating a Balance in Life

Take time throughout the day to prioritize your tasks.

- Even if you don't have more than 15 minutes to eat lunch or sit down after bustling around for hours, make the time that you do have count.
- Write down the most important thing you have to accomplish that day, then include only three or four more tasks you know can finish.
- Keeping a short to-do list helps you stay on track and also allows you to feel satisfied when you cross something off.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	Quadrant I: Urgent & Important	Quadrant II: Not Urgent & Important
NOT IMPORTANT	Quadrant III: Urgent & Not Important	Quadrant IV: Not Urgent & Not Important



Tips for Creating a Balance in Life

Get outside for a few minutes each day to refresh.

- Clear your mind and re-energize just by walking outside or, should you have time, jogging in the morning or evening.
- Exercise gives you an energy boost, but sometimes even sitting outside on a bench if you only have a short break can make a difference, especially if you're feeling overwhelmed.



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Tips for Creating a Balance in Life.

- Breathe
- Listen to Music
- Meditate, Pray
- Take a bath
- Watch a funny movie
- Take time to love



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Practicing Self-Care: Positive Affirmations

A hundred of them

When you feel lonely and sad:

1. I feel the love of those who are not physically around me.
2. I take pleasure in my own solitude.
3. I am too big a gift to this world to feel self-pity.
4. I love and approve of myself.



When you feel terrified (without your safety being in danger):

5. I focus on breathing and grounding myself.
6. Following my intuition and my heart keeps me safe and sound.
7. I make the right choices every time.
8. I draw from my inner strength and light.
9. I trust myself.

When you feel insignificant:

10. I am a unique child of this world.
11. I have as much brightness to offer the world as the next person.
12. I matter and what I have to offer this world also matters.
13. I may be one in 7 billion but I am also one in 7 billion



Practicing Self-Care: Positive Affirmations

A hundred of them

When you are nervous or afraid:

14. I trust my inner wisdom and intuition.
15. I breathe in calmness and breathe out nervousness.
16. This situation works out for my highest good.
17. Wonderful things unfold before me.

When you are angry:

18. I forgive myself for all the mistakes I have made.
19. I let go of my anger so I can see clearly.
20. I accept responsibility if my anger has hurt anyone.
21. I replace my anger with understanding and compassion.
22. I offer an apology to those affected by my anger.

When you feel hopeless and at the end of your rope:

23. I may not understand the good in this situation but it is there.
24. I muster up more hope and courage from deep inside me.
25. I choose to find hopeful and optimistic ways to look at this.
26. I kindly ask for help and guidance if I cannot see a better way.
27. I refuse to give up because I haven't tried all possible ways.



Companions on a Journey
GRIEF SUPPORT

Practicing Self-Care: Positive Affirmations

A hundred of them

When you feel conflicted about a decision:

28. I know my wisdom guides me to the right decision.
29. I trust myself to make the best decision for me.
30. I receive all feedback with kindness but make the final call myself.
31. I listen lovingly to this inner conflict and reflect on it until I get to peace around it.
32. I love my family even if they do not understand me completely.
33. I show my family how much I love them in all the verbal and non-verbal ways I can.
34. There is a good reason I was paired with this perfect family.
35. I choose to see my family as a gift.
36. I am a better person from the hardship that I've gone through with my family.



When you are among friends:

37. I choose friends who approve of me and love me.
38. I surround myself with people who treat me well.
39. I take the time to show my friends that I care about them.
40. My friends do not judge me, nor do they influence what I do with my life.
41. I take great pleasure in my friends, even if we disagree or live different lives.

When you are around strangers:

42. I am beautiful and smart and that's how everyone sees me.
43. I take comfort in the fact that I can always leave this situation.
44. I never know what amazing incredible person I will meet next.
45. The company of strangers teaches me more about my own likes and dislikes.



Practicing Self-Care: Positive Affirmations

A hundred of them



When you are at work:

- 46. I am doing work that I enjoy and find fulfilling.
- 47. I play a big role in my own career success.
- 48. I ask for and do meaningful, wonderful and rewarding work.
- 49. I engage in work that impacts this world positively.
- 50. I believe in my ability to change the world with the work that I do.

When you can't sleep:

- 51. Peaceful sleep awaits me in dreamland.
- 52. I let go of all the false stories I make up in my head.
- 53. I release my mind of thought until the morning.
- 54. I embrace the peace and quiet of the night.
- 55. I sleep soundly and deeply and beautifully into this night.

When you don't want to face the day:

- 56. This day brings me nothing but joy.
- 57. Today will be a gorgeous day to remember.
- 58. My thoughts are my reality so I think up a bright new day.
- 59. I fill my day with hope and face it with joy.
- 60. I choose to fully participate in my day.



Practicing Self-Care: Positive Affirmations

A hundred of them

When you worry about your future:

- 61. I let go of worries that drain my energy.
- 62. I make smart, calculated plans for my future.
- 63. I am a money magnet and attract wealth and abundance.
- 64. I am in complete charge of planning for my future.
- 65. I trust in my own ability to provide well for my family.



When you can't get your loved ones to support your dreams:

- 66. I follow my dreams no matter what.
- 67. I show compassion in helping my loved ones understand my dreams.
- 68. I ask my loved ones to support my dreams.
- 69. I answer questions about my dreams without getting defensive.
- 70. My loved ones love me even without fully grappling with my dreams.
- 71. I accept everyone as they are and continue on with pursuing my dream.

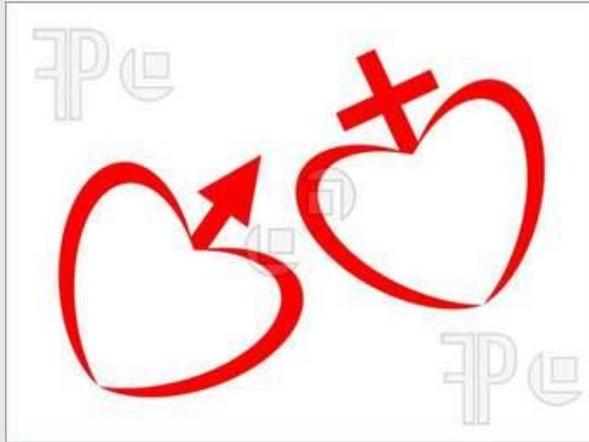
When you come face to face with a problem:

- 72. I am safe and sound. All is well.
- 73. Everything works out for my highest good.
- 74. There is a great reason this is unfolding before me now.
- 75. I have the smarts and the ability to get through this.
- 76. All my problems have a solution



Practicing Self-Care: Positive Affirmations

A hundred of them



When you want to do more with your life but feel stuck:

- 77. I attempt all – not some – possible ways to get unstuck.
- 78. I seek a new way of thinking about this situation.
- 79. The answer is right before me, even if I am not seeing it yet.
- 80. I believe in my ability to unlock the way and set myself free.

When you can't stop comparing yourself to others:

- 81. I have no right to compare myself to anyone for I do not know their whole story.
- 82. I compare myself only to my highest self.
- 83. I choose to see the light that I am to this world.
- 84. I am happy in my own skin and in my own circumstances.
- 85. I see myself as a gift to my people and community and nation.



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

Practicing Self-Care: Positive Affirmations

A hundred of them



When you feel you are not good enough no matter how hard you try:

- 86. I am more than good enough and I get better every day.
- 87. I give up the habit to criticize myself.
- 88. I adopt the mindset to praise myself.
- 89. I see the perfection in all my flaws and all my genius.
- 90. I fully approve of who I am, even as I get better.
- 91. I am a good person at all times of day and night

When you want to give up:

- 92. I cannot give up until I have tried every conceivable way.
- 93. Giving up is easy and always an option so let's delay it for another day.
- 94. I press on because I believe in my path.
- 95. It is always too early to give up on my goals.
- 96. I must know what awaits me at the end of this rope so I do not give up.

When you recognize how powerful, gifted, talented and brilliant you really are:

- 97. The past has no power over me anymore
- 98. I embrace the rhythm and the flowing of my own heart.
- 99. All that I need comes to me at the right time and place in this life.
- 100. I am deeply fulfilled with who I am



Companions on a Journey
GRIEF SUPPORT



Companions on a Journey

GRIEF SUPPORT

