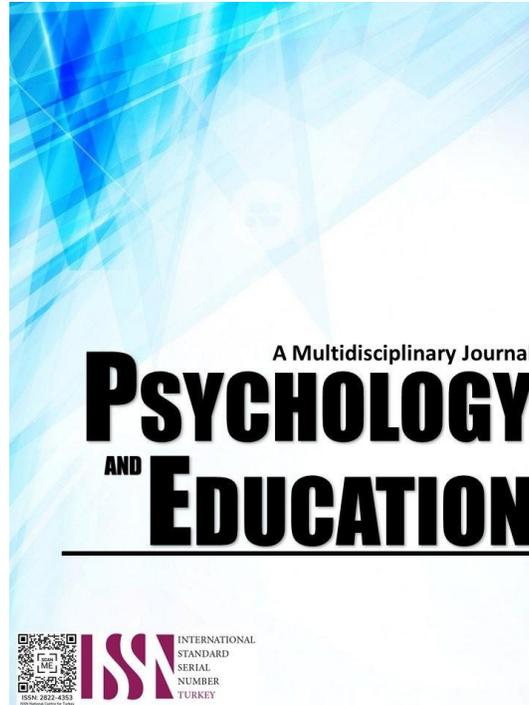


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Unspoken Loss: Mixed Method Examination on Grief and Post-Traumatic Growth in Relationship Loss

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Abstract

This study employs a concurrent mixed methods design to explore the complexities of grief and post-traumatic growth (PTG) following non-death losses, with a particular focus on relationship loss. Two hundred adults were recruited for quantitative data collection, complemented by qualitative insights from 10 participants. Quantitative data, obtained through questionnaires that measured grief severity and growth, were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient. Qualitative data, gathered via semi-structured interviews, underwent thematic analysis. The study utilized concurrent triangulation to compare and integrate findings from both methodologies. Key findings indicate that respondents reported low to moderate levels of grief severity, yet demonstrated a relatively high level of PTG, particularly in appreciation for life and improved relationships. Statistical analysis revealed a weak yet significant relationship between grief severity and some aspects of PTG, suggesting that experiencing grief may contribute to personal growth. Coping mechanisms such as seeking social support were prevalent, highlighting the resilience of individuals navigating non-death losses. The study contributes to the understanding of grief in non-death losses, emphasizing the significance of acknowledging and validating these experiences. Themes of personal growth, self-discovery, and enhanced resilience emerged, aligning with existing literature on PTG. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of tailored interventions and support systems in empowering individuals who navigate such losses. By integrating quantitative and qualitative data, this research provides a comprehensive perspective on the nuanced interplay between grief and growth in the aftermath of non-death losses. The findings hold implications for clinical psychology, workplace policies, educational practices, and future research endeavors, emphasizing the need for holistic approaches to address the multifaceted aspects of grief and loss experiences.

Keywords: *grief, Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG), non-death losses, resilience, support systems*

Introduction

Grief is a complex and deeply personal experience that encompasses a range of emotions and responses to loss. It is important to acknowledge that loss can extend beyond mortality. Note that confronting human mortality and physical fragility is an unavoidable reality. With this said, non-death losses or disenfranchised grief is the process in which the loss is felt as not being “openly acknowledged, socially validated, or publicly mourned (Doka, 1989). In other words, these are the types of losses that go unnoticed. The truth is that non-death losses occur much more frequently in everyday life and represent how our lives often revolve around change, uncertainty, and transition. (Shelvock, 2022)

According to Shelvock (2022), “loss is fundamentally any experience where it is not possible to return to life as it once was; loss occurs when there is a permanent change in our circumstances or perceptions, particularly after seismic life events”. Everyone experiences loss, change, and transition at some point in their lives; there is no one-size-fits-all approach to coping with these experiences. What works for one person may not work for another. It is important to find what works best for you and to be patient with yourself along the way. Loss, change, and transition are universal experiences, but the personal responses and appraisals of these experiences are highly individual and unique (Harris, 2022).

Ambiguous loss can be an exceedingly difficult type of loss to cope with, as it can be hard to know how to grieve and move on when there is no clear ending. Ambiguous loss does not offer any sense of closure (Cleveland Clinic, 2022).

Post-traumatic growth is a process of positive change that can occur after a traumatic event, when the individual reflects on the traumatic experience and finds positive outcomes or makes a new sense of it as a result (Aftyka et al., 2020). While post-traumatic growth is not a guarantee, it is something that can happen to anyone who has experienced a traumatic event, including ambiguous loss. PTG is often defined as a result of intentional rumination processes conducted to integrate past difficulties into a revised view of the world, rather than a direct outcome of the traumatic event itself (Tomaszek & Muchacka-Cymerman, 2022).

The end of a relationship is often not just about the demise of an intimate partnership. However, it may also involve splitting up property and assets, supporting children and young people through this incredibly stressful and confusing time, and changes in friendships (Griefline, 2021). Unfortunately, navigating these complexities can be overwhelming, and according to Gaffaney (2021), many create closure in unhealthy ways that may extend the pain of the loss as well as complicate future relationships. When a relationship ends, it is “natural” and “normal” to experience grief and sadness. However, this is also a pivotal moment to reframe our initial narrative and massage it to be more flexible and accepting of our life goals. According to Miles (2016), feelings will often wildly oscillate between anger, guilt, regret, and sadness, to name a few, leading many to create closure in unhealthy ways that may extend the pain of the loss as well as complicate future relationships.

Despite the prevalence of non-death losses, there is a gap in the research on this topic. This gap is due to several factors, including, firstly, the lack of awareness of non-death losses. While grief research often overlooks the profound impact of breakups and divorces, the emotional reality for those experiencing such losses can be just as intense, or even more painful, than grief after death. The person left behind navigates a similar landscape of loss, marked by intense sorrow, shattered hopes, and a profound void in their life. (Pinho, n.d.). Additionally, Grief and sadness are normal feelings when dealing with loss (Buscho, 2022).

Secondly, the stigma associated with grieving non-death losses; Societal stigma surrounding breakups and divorce can cause individuals to suppress their grief, isolating themselves and hindering healthy processing, despite some findings suggesting that non-specific symptoms, such as depression or anger, account for more variance in relationship impairments (Campbell & Renshaw, 2018).

Finally, research on relationship loss often falls short by overlooking its diversity. While research often focuses on the singular pang of romantic breakups, the reality of loss extends far beyond that singular experience. Losing friends, family, or cherished connections, regardless of the reason—a falling out or the quiet passage of time—can leave a lasting and indelible mark on our emotional landscape. These varied experiences are not intended to suggest that we live in a chronic state of grief throughout life; instead, they aim to recognize how loss and grief have shaped our lives, our choices, and how we now perceive ourselves and the world (Harris, 2019).

By studying non-death losses, a deeper understanding of the human experience of grief and loss can be generated. This knowledge can be used to help people who are grieving non-death losses cope with their grief and heal.

Research Questions

This research aimed to elucidate the nature of grief and post-traumatic growth (PTG) following such losses, with a specific focus on the impact of relationship loss. Specifically, the research addressed the following questions:

1. What is the profile of respondents in terms of their grief symptoms' severity?
2. What are their levels of PTG?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the severity of grief and the level of PTG?

Methodology

Research Design

The study used a concurrent mixed method design, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to measure coping mechanisms while experiencing grief, and post-traumatic growth after their grief in non-death losses. The numerical data was analyzed using statistical methods, and the non-numerical data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

The quantitative part of the study used surveys to gather data on how participants cope with grief and how they eventually grow from the experience. The data were collected using the following questionnaires: the Brief Grief Questionnaire and the Post-traumatic Growth Inventory.

The qualitative phase utilized open-ended interview questions designed to delve into participants' unique experiences of non-death losses. Participants were encouraged to share their emotions, thoughts, and coping mechanisms surrounding the loss, which provided rich, personal narratives that complement the quantitative findings. This deeper understanding of individual experiences offered valuable contextual insights beyond the numerical data, painting a more complete picture of grief and growth after non-death losses.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative data enabled the researchers to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences. The quantitative data provided information about the severity of grief symptoms and post-traumatic growth. The qualitative data provided information about the participants' individual experiences of non-death losses, which supported the quantitative data.

Respondents

The study recruited 200 adults for the quantitative component, aiming to achieve a statistical power of 0.80. An additional maximum of 10 adults were recruited for the qualitative aspect, as data saturation was not reached within the sample size. All participants experienced a significant relationship loss within the past 12 months, encompassing various contexts defined within the study's criteria.

These relationship losses included instances from romantic relationships, such as divorce/annulment, separation, or breakup. For family relationships, the loss often involves estrangement or significant changes in dynamics, such as strained parent-child relationships or sibling conflicts that lead to separation. Additionally, friendships can also be lost due to conflicts, relocations, or natural drifting apart.

The recruitment process utilized online platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, employing Google Forms to target communities and forums focused on relationship issues, grief support, or personal growth. Snowball sampling techniques were also employed, where participants were encouraged to share the study information with their networks, thereby expanding the reach to individuals who may have experienced similar losses.

Overall, the recruitment strategy aimed to capture a diverse range of experiences related to significant relationship losses, aligning with

the DSM-5 TR PGD criteria, and contributing to an expanded understanding of prolonged grief in non-death losses. Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, the study sought to comprehensively explore the nuances of grief and post-traumatic growth in the aftermath of these losses.

Instrument

The researcher used a closed-type questionnaire, which provided respondents with a list of choices to select from using a Likert scale. The researcher also used open-ended questions, which allowed respondents to provide their own answers.

The following are the closed-ended questionnaires:

Post-traumatic Growth Inventory

Tedeschi and Calhoun (1996) developed the Post-traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI), which assessed post-trauma growth and self-improvement a person undergoes. A 21-item scale based on the five-factor model of Tedeschi, this inventory is one of the most valid and reliable resources for evaluating personal growth following a stressful encounter. Each of the 21 items falls under one of the five factors and is scored accordingly. A summation of the scores indicates the level of post-traumatic growth. (Tedeschi et. al., 1996)

The PTGI demonstrates strong reliability and validity in measuring post-traumatic growth. The PTGI demonstrates strong internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.90 to 0.96 across the five subscales (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). The PTGI demonstrates good test-retest reliability, with a coefficient of 0.71 over a two-month period (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). Additionally, the PTGI has shown significant correlations with other measures of post-traumatic growth and resilience, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.50 to 0.70 (e.g., Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale) (Tedeschi et al., 1996). The PTGI does not correlate with measures of depression, anxiety, and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), with correlation coefficients typically below 0.30, confirming its focus on positive post-trauma changes.

The PTGI has five subscales: new possibilities, improved relationships, personal strength, spiritual growth, and appreciation of life. These subscales are distinct and reliable, indicating they measure various aspects of post-traumatic growth. The PTGI has been translated and used in various cultures with some adaptations.

A high total score implies that the person has undergone a positive transformation. However, a closer look at the scores of each section would provide a more in-depth insight into what has changed significantly and which aspects of the self may still require some improvement. (Tedeschi et. al., 1996)

Brief Grief Questionnaire

The Brief Grief Questionnaire (BGQ) is a 3-item self-report questionnaire that assesses the severity of grief symptoms. It was developed by the Center for Prolonged Grief at Columbia University and is designed for various settings, including clinical practice, research, and community-based organizations.

Respondents rated each item on a 3-point Likert scale, where higher scores denote more severe symptoms. Note that these ratings are intended to measure the severity of symptoms rather than directly diagnose the disorder. Total scores on the BGQ can be used to classify individuals as having low, moderate, or high levels of Prolonged Grief Disorder (PGD) symptoms.

The BGQ has been shown to have good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.75 (Wittkowski et al., 2013). This means that the items on the BGQ are all measuring the same concept (complicated grief) and that the scores are reliable. The BGQ has also demonstrated good test-retest reliability (Prigerson et al., 2001).

The BGQ correlates well with other measures of complicated grief, such as the Inventory of Complicated Grief (ICG) and the Prolonged Grief Disorder Scale (PGDS), with correlation coefficients around 0.70 (Prigerson et al., 2001). BGQ does not correlate with measures of depression and anxiety, with correlation coefficients below 0.30, suggesting that it measures a distinct construct from these other mental health conditions (Horowitz et al., 2008).

BGQ is a sensitive measure of complicated grief, correctly identifying a high proportion of individuals who have the condition. It is also a specific measure, with a low likelihood of misidentifying individuals who do not have the condition. Sensitivity and specificity rates are both around 0.80 (Shear, 2014).

Interview Guide

This interview guide explored the experiences of individuals who have experienced relationship loss. Ambiguous loss is a type of loss that is unclear and unresolved, often due to a lack of closure or information about the loss. This interview guide gathered information about the individual's experience with ambiguous relationship loss, their coping mechanisms, and the impact of the loss on their lives.

In the validation process for the interview guide, a comprehensive approach was adopted to ensure the reliability and effectiveness of the data collection instrument. A clinical psychology master's holder first reviewed the interview guide to assess its alignment with established psychological principles and research objectives. Subsequently, it was forwarded to a clinical psychologist for further scrutiny, focusing on the appropriateness of the questions in eliciting relevant and meaningful responses from participants. Finally, a

psychometrician was engaged to evaluate the interview guide's structure, clarity, and coherence, with a specific focus on its reliability and validity as a qualitative research tool. Feedback from each expert was carefully considered and integrated into the refinement of the interview guide, aiming to optimize its utility in capturing rich and insightful data on participants' experiences of non-death loss and grief. This multi-stage validation process ensured that the interview guide was robust and well-suited to guide the qualitative data collection process, thereby enhancing the overall rigor and trustworthiness of the study's findings.

In addition to consulting experts in psychology, the interview guide was also reviewed by individuals outside the field of psychology to ensure its accessibility and clarity for a diverse audience. Opinions were sought from individuals representing diverse backgrounds and demographics, enabling a comprehensive assessment of the guide's comprehensibility and relevance across different populations. Their perspectives provided valuable insights into the interview questions' understandability and appropriateness, facilitating further refinement to enhance their effectiveness in eliciting meaningful responses from participants.

Procedure

The study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, where quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously and analyzed separately. Upon completion of both analyses, the results were compared to draw comprehensive conclusions from both data sets. This approach allows for a thorough understanding of the relationship between grief and post-traumatic growth in non-death loss. A mixed-method questionnaire was utilized, incorporating both closed-ended and open-ended questions to capture diverse data.

Participant recruitment focused on individuals who had experienced a significant relationship loss within the past 12 months, such as divorce, separation, or the end of a romantic or close friendship. Diverse recruitment strategies, including online platforms, community centers, and schools, were employed to ensure a representative sample. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, with a focus on maintaining confidentiality and adhering to the principles of ethical research practices.

Data collection involved two main components. Qualitative data were gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews, where participants shared their experiences of grief and post-traumatic growth following the loss of a significant relationship. These interviews explored topics such as relationships, grieving processes, coping mechanisms, perceived changes in self-concept, and personal growth experiences. Quantitative data were collected using standardized questionnaires to measure the severity of grief and the level of post-traumatic growth. Additionally, demographic and relationship-specific information were gathered to explore potential moderating and mediating variables. This comprehensive data gathering procedure aimed to provide a detailed and nuanced understanding of the interplay between grief and post-traumatic growth in the context of non-death relationship loss.

Data Analysis

In terms of the quantitative aspect of the study, the profile of the respondents in terms of the severity of grief symptoms and the level of post-traumatic growth was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Specifically, the mean and standard deviation were calculated for each variable. This provided a summary of the central tendency and variability of the data, allowing for a basic understanding of the respondents' profiles on these dimensions.

Pearson's r was used to determine if there is a significant relationship between the severity of grief symptoms and the level of post-traumatic growth. A significant positive correlation between the severity of grief and the level of post-traumatic growth would suggest that people who experience grief are also more likely to experience post-traumatic growth. This is consistent with the idea that post-traumatic growth can be a positive outcome of adversity, and that people who can find meaning and purpose in their suffering may be more likely to experience personal growth. On the other hand, a significant negative correlation between the severity of grief and the level of post-traumatic growth would suggest that people who experience grief are less likely to experience post-traumatic growth. This is also consistent with the idea that post-traumatic growth is not a universal outcome of adversity, and that some people may be more vulnerable to the negative effects of trauma.

To go deeper into the intricate experiences of non-death loss, thematic analysis was employed to uncover the overarching themes that emerge from the respondents' narratives. This method was systematically identified, analyzed, and interpreted to reveal patterns within the data, uncovering the common threads that connect the participants' experiences. By examining these shared themes, people can gain a deeper understanding of how non-death loss manifests in the lives of the respondents, how they navigate the challenges of coping with these losses, and the potential for psychological growth that may arise from these experiences.

Concurrent triangulation design was employed to investigate the relationship between the severity of grief and the level of post-traumatic growth in non-death loss. By collecting both qualitative and quantitative data concurrently, the researcher gained a more complete understanding of this complex phenomenon. The qualitative data provided rich insights into the lived experiences of non-death loss. In contrast, the quantitative data provided a broader understanding of the prevalence and predictors of post-traumatic growth in this population. By comparing the findings from both sources of data, the researcher was able to identify patterns and convergences that can inform future research and interventions.

Employing concurrent triangulation in the study facilitated several critical outcomes. Firstly, it enabled the integration of qualitative and quantitative data, offering complementary insights into the lived experiences of grief and growth following non-death losses. Qualitative data provided rich individual narratives, uncovering underlying mechanisms and personal perspectives, while quantitative



data offered a broader picture by quantifying the prevalence and predictors of post-traumatic growth within the population. This dual approach allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the complex phenomena under investigation. Furthermore, concurrent triangulation enhanced the validity of the study. By comparing findings from both data sources, the researcher triangulated the results, validating and reinforcing the study's conclusions. Through this process, discrepancies and consistencies between qualitative and quantitative findings were identified and explored, contributing to a more robust interpretation of the data. This strengthened the overall credibility and trustworthiness of the study's findings.

Moreover, the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative analyses facilitated the identification of patterns and convergences across the data. By triangulating findings, the study could identify common themes and trends that emerged from both qualitative narratives and quantitative measures. These insights not only contributed to a deeper understanding of the relationship between grief and post-traumatic growth but also informed future research directions and the development of targeted interventions for individuals navigating non-death losses. Overall, concurrent triangulation proved to be a valuable methodological approach, enriching the study's findings and advancing knowledge in the field of grief and post-traumatic growth.

Ethical Considerations

The participants were not harmed in any way, and their dignity was respected throughout the study. The data they provided was kept confidential, and their anonymity was ensured. The researcher was honest and transparent about the study's aims and objectives, and did not provide any misleading or exaggerated information. All communication related to the study was done with the utmost honesty and transparency. The information provided by the participants was only used for academic purposes.

Results and Discussion

Quantitative

Severity of Grief Symptoms

Table 1. *Brief Grief Questionnaire Results*

<i>Grief Brief Questionnaire</i>	
N	200
Mean	1.19
Median	1.00
Mode	1.00
Standard deviation	0.688

The data suggest that the severity of grief experienced by the individuals surveyed is relatively low. The mean grief score of 1.19, with a median and mode of 1.00, indicates that most respondents reported low levels of grief. Additionally, the standard deviation of 0.688 suggests that the grief scores are closely clustered around the mean, further indicating low variability in the responses. Overall, the conclusion drawn is that the severity of grief among the surveyed individuals is low.

Level of Post-Traumatic Growth

Table 2.1. *Post-traumatic Growth Inventory Overall Results*

<i>PTG: Overall</i>	
N	200
Mean	3.42
Median	4.00
Mode	4.00
Standard deviation	1.17

The mean score of 4.42, along with a median and mode of 4.00, suggests high overall post-traumatic growth experienced by the individuals surveyed. The low standard deviation of 1.17 indicates consistency among responses, reinforcing the conclusion of high PTG.

Appreciation for Life: With a mean score of 3.65 and a median and mode of 4.00, individuals reported high levels of appreciation for life after experiencing trauma. This suggests alignment with Calhoun and Tedeschi's (2004) concept of post-traumatic growth, wherein they exhibited heightened gratitude, altruism, a clearer sense of priorities, and appreciation for the positive aspects of life.

Table 2.2. *Post-traumatic Growth Inventory Spiritual Growth Results*

<i>PTG: Spiritual Growth</i>	
N	200
Mean	2.79
Median	3.00
Mode	3.00
Standard deviation	1.66



Although the mean score of 2.79 is lower, the median and mode of 3.00 indicate moderate post-traumatic spiritual growth among respondents, in line with Calhoun & Tedeschi's concept. This shows a deeper development of meaningful beliefs and life philosophies, heightened awareness, strengthened faith, and a clearer sense of purpose.

Table 2.3. *Post-traumatic Growth Inventory Personal Strength Results*

	<i>PTG: Personal Strength</i>
N	200
Mean	3.63
Median	4.00
Mode	4.00
Standard deviation	1.19

The mean score of 2.52, with a median and mode of 4.00, suggests high levels of perceived personal strength post-trauma. As outlined in Calhoun & Tedeschi's concept, this suggests an increase in resilience, self-assurance, confidence, humility, a deepening of meaningful narratives, and a greater sense of authenticity.

Table 2.4. *Post-traumatic Growth Inventory New Possibilities Results*

	<i>PTG: New Possibilities</i>
N	200
Mean	3.47
Median	4.00
Mode	4.00
Standard deviation	1.26

The mean score of 3.47, with a median and mode of 4.00, indicates high levels of perceived new possibilities arising from the traumatic experience. As proposed by Calhoun and Tedeschi, this implies cultivating new interests, perspectives, adaptability, and openness to novel ways of living and working.

Table 2.5. *Post-traumatic Growth Inventory Improved Relationship Results*

	<i>PTG: Improved Relationships</i>
N	200
Mean	3.48
Median	4.00
Mode	4.00
Standard deviation	1.26

With a mean score of 3.48 and median and mode of 4.00, individuals demonstrate high post-traumatic growth in their relationships, with a low standard deviation of 1.26. According to Calhoun and Tedeschi's model, this entails an increased sense of belonging, heightened emotional vulnerability, a greater capacity for love, empathy, and support, leading to stronger interpersonal bonds.

Is there a significant relationship between the severity of grief and the level of post-traumatic growth?

Table 3. *Grief and Post-Traumatic Growth Correlation*

	<i>Grief</i>	<i>PTG: Overall</i>	<i>PTG: Appreciation for Life</i>	<i>PTG: Spiritual Growth</i>	<i>PTG: Personal Strength</i>	<i>PTG: New Possibilities</i>	<i>PTG: Improved Relationships</i>
Grief	—						
Pearson's r	—	0.141*	0.178**	0.188**	0.046	0.125*	0.142*
df	—	198	198	198	198	198	198
p-value	—	0.023	0.006	0.004	0.258	0.039	0.023
PTG: Overall		—					
Pearson's r		—	0.815***	0.707***	0.863***	0.905***	0.900***
df		—	198	198	198	198	198
p-value		—	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001
PTG: Appreciation for Life			—				
Pearson's r			—	0.520***	0.735***	0.758***	0.711***
df			—	198	198	198	198
p-value			—	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001
PTG: Spiritual Growth				—			
Pearson's r				—	0.542***	0.593***	0.634***
df				—	198	198	198



p-value	—	< .001	< .001	< .001
PTG: Personal Strength		—		
Pearson's r		—	0.845***	0.792***
df		—	198	198
p-value		—	< .001	< .001
PTG: New Possibilities			—	
Pearson's r			—	0.834***
df			—	198
p-value			—	< .001
PTG: Improved Relationships				—
Pearson's r				—
df				—
p-value				—

The data shows that there is a positive correlation (Pearson's $r = 0.141$) between grief and overall post-traumatic growth, which is statistically significant at $p = 0.047$. This suggests that experiencing grief is associated with some degree of post-traumatic growth.

Improved Relationships reveals a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.142, p = 0.045$) between grief and improved relationships. This indicates that experiencing grief may be associated with improvements in relationships.

New Possibilities reveals a relatively weak positive correlation ($r = 0.125, p = 0.078$) between grief and perceiving new possibilities, which is not statistically significant at the conventional level ($p < 0.05$).

The data for Appreciation for Life indicate a stronger positive correlation ($r = 0.178, p = 0.012$) between grief and appreciation for life, suggesting that experiencing grief may be particularly associated with an increased appreciation for life.

Similar to the appreciation for life, Spiritual Growth shows a relatively strong positive correlation ($r = 0.188, p = 0.008$) with grief, implying that experiencing grief may also be connected to spiritual growth.

There is a weak positive correlation ($r = 0.046, p = 0.516$) between grief and personal strength, but this correlation is not statistically significant. This suggests that experiencing grief may not strongly correlate with increased personal strength.

These findings suggest that while grief is positively correlated with certain aspects of post-traumatic growth (such as appreciation for life, spiritual growth, and improved relationships), the relationship varies across different dimensions and not all correlations are statistically significant.

Qualitative:

Qualitative data from 10 participants revealed diverse experiences of loss, encompassing themes such as (1) Relationship Dissolution and Loss, (2) Navigating Transition and Personal Growth, (3) Self-Improvement Through Distraction and Connection, Emotional Impact of Loss, (4) Triggers and Emotional Resonance, (5) Reflection and Adaptive Responses, and (6) Resolution and Healing.

Table 4.1. *How is non-death loss experienced by the respondents?*

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes	Illustrative Quotes
Relationship Dissolution and Loss	Emotional Devastation Identity Transformation Loss of Connection	"I feel devastated, I left the person who truly understand me." "I loss my girlfriend and the reasons is all my problems can't fix and I didn't tell her. It consumed me" "We were living together for almost 3 years. I've seen a side of him that I couldn't live with. He has vices. Most nights, he's out with friends drinking. He did help with chores but it was me who did most and it's really unfair in my end. I felt unimportant." "I got fed up with everything. I left. We didn't talk for weeks and when we finally spoke to each other, he had this ridiculous question, "Paano kung di talaga tayo para sa isa't isa?" It was the last straw. I decided that we couldn't continue anymore." "Yes. I get to know myself better and I am living my life towards the values close to me" "During those times I feel so connected with myself. Always sure of what to do, being kind and optimistic about things. Seeing mostly the good in everything that happens." "Before I was so passionate and full of hope about my dreams, goals, and future. Now, it's just like 'bahala na', come what may" "When my 6 years of friendship dissolve due to backstabbing, trust is shattered and wounds run deep. Though painful, it's often a necessary step towards prioritizing one's well-being and surrounding oneself with genuine connections built on honesty and



		<p>loyalty."</p> <p>"I became more independent, resilient (I believe so), and understanding"</p> <p>"It was hard at first because i was not used to not having my husband. He was my best friend since i was in high school. Along with losing him i think i lost a part of myself also but evolved into something better"</p> <p>"I Had a best friend that I lost due to the an argument we couldn't resolve, the first 6 months of coping was tough but eventually we both part ways and is doing good in life now as we speak."</p> <p>"It was hard at first because I was not used to not having my husband. He was my best friend since I was in high school. Along with losing him I think I lost a part of myself."</p> <p>"Along with losing him I think I lost a part of myself also but evolved into something better."</p> <p>"In all those losses, I also lost a part of myself. I'm not a daughter anymore, I'm not a girlfriend anymore, I'm just who my job description says I am."</p> <p>"My dad came home from the states, and I expected something more when he came back but instead i just saw that his focus is in his new family as same as my mom"</p> <p>"Family: Seeing my dad set aside me and my brother and hide us despite us being the legal children is painful but what hurts the most is that I can't do anything about it. With my mom, she focused on her partner which she found 4 years about my parents separated.</p> <p>Romantic: Me and my partner ended our 5 year relationship because we're not on the same page anymore. Despite us loving each other deeply, we are ant 2 different things already. I wanted to settle down and he wanted to focus on his career.</p> <p>Self: In all those losses, I also lost a part of myself. I'm not a daughter anymore, I'm not a girlfriend anymore, I'm just who my job description says I am. There were days that I just do my job go home and wake up the next day to do the same thing. I don't go out much often, I don't talk to people as much, I don't make an effort to make good relationships with others and I have that mentality of whoever wants to stay can stay and whoever wants to leave can leave."</p> <p>"Losing my alive parents, separating myself from them and other family/relatives that I have to also be lowkey from so I cannot have any contact with them. "</p> <p>"As to my "friend", it is mutual and awkward but it all good, I just miss her sometimes."</p> <p>"I was angry."</p> <p>"Bf: kami pa pero malabo na kami ikasal (I'm at this point na ang labo na ng buhay ko things are unstable but im working on it one day at time)"</p> <p>"Whenever there are contents that are similar to the situation or relationship we had."</p> <p>"I feel empty-It's like part of me is missing."</p> <p>"Sometimes, when I pass by the places we went before."</p> <p>"Seeing someone alike my past self"</p> <p>"Feelings of loneliness and sadness. Seeing someone alike my past self."</p> <p>"He was my best friend from high school then he became my boyfriend then husband then the father of my kids. Now i still see him every now and then when he visits our kids but sometimes there are times that i am reminded of how i lost relationship (him cheating on him) especially now that they have a kid together."</p> <p>"Family: Whenever I see my dad with his family and my mom with his partner."</p> <p>"It triggers me when people say "pamilya mo pa rin sila/magulang mo pa rin sila"</p>
Triggers and Emotional Resonance	Emotional Response to Familiar Settings Sensitivity to Comments and Expectations Realization of Isolation and Unfulfilled Expectations	

Relationship dissolution and loss can be a profoundly distressing experience, triggering a range of emotional responses and challenging one's sense of identity and connection to others. This theme encompasses the emotional devastation individuals may feel following the end of significant relationships, as well as the subsequent transformation in their self-identity and the loss of connection they experience.

The first sub-theme, Emotional Devastation, reflects the intense emotional pain and anguish that often accompany the dissolution of relationships. This is evident in responses such as “I feel devastated, I left the person who truly understands me” (R2.1.1) and “I was angry.” (R10.1.1) These quotes underscore the deep emotional turmoil that accompanies the loss of a meaningful relationship, ranging from sadness to anger.

Identity Transformation represents the internal shifts that occur as individuals navigate the aftermath of relationship loss. The quote “In all those losses, I also lost a part of myself. I'm not a daughter anymore, I'm not a girlfriend anymore, I'm just who my job description says I am” (R8.1.2) illustrates how relationship loss can lead to a fundamental shift in how individuals perceive themselves. On the other hand, responses like “I get to know myself better and I am living my life towards the values close to me” (R3.1.2) and “I became



more independent, resilient (I believe so), and understanding” suggest a process of self-discovery and growth, where individuals redefine themselves in the aftermath of the relationship loss.

Loss of Connection captures the sense of disconnection and emptiness that individuals may experience following relationship dissolution. One respondent reflects on how they have lost their previous passion and hope for the future, The quoted response, “Before I was so passionate and full of hope about my dreams, goals, and future. Now, it's just like 'bahala na', come what may.” (R4.1.3) reflects a sense of emptiness and uncertainty that can arise when the connections that once anchored individuals to their dreams and sense of purpose are severed. This sub-theme highlights the existential questioning and loss of direction that can arise as individuals confront the aftermath of relationship loss.

Triggers and Emotional Resonance reveals how individuals respond emotionally to various stimuli and circumstances, often rooted in past relationships and experiences.

Emotional Response to Familiar Settings highlights the profound impact of encountering places or situations associated with past relationships, evoking a range of emotions, including loneliness and sadness. The quotes, “Sometimes, when I pass by the places we went before,” (R3.5.1) And “Feelings of loneliness and sadness. Seeing someone alike my past self,” (R4.5.1) underscore how familiar settings serve as potent reminders of lost connections, prompting individuals to grapple with nostalgic memories and unresolved emotions.

Sensitivity to Comments and Expectations examines the emotional distress triggered by remarks or societal expectations regarding family relationships, which can fuel feelings of inadequacy and frustration. Individuals often grapple with the weight of societal norms and expectations, particularly concerning familial bonds, which can lead to heightened sensitivity and emotional disturbances. One said, “It triggers me when people say 'pamilya mo pa rin sila/magulang mo pa rin sila,’” (R9.5.2), which epitomizes the emotional vulnerability given by societal expectations, underscoring the internal conflict between personal experiences and external perceptions.

Realization of Isolation and Unfulfilled Expectations captures the poignant moments of realization regarding the loss of social connections and unmet expectations, resulting in profound feelings of sadness and resignation. Answers such as: “Whenever I realized na hindi na talaga ako nagkakaran ng friends or di na maa-repair family or di na ko ikakasal, I feel sad,” (R10.5.3) and “I feel empty. It's like part of me is missing,” (R2.5.3) poignantly illustrate the emotional toll of unfulfilled expectations and severed connections, highlighting the profound sense of loss and longing for meaningful relationships.

Table 4.2. How do participants cope with non-death losses?

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes	Illustrative Quotes
Navigating Transition and Personal Growth	Self-Discovery Adaptive Coping Transformational Change	"I felt relieved because I no longer have to feel guilty for setting aside the relationship so I can focus on myself."
		"I distracted myself by going out with my friends, discovering music, reading books, and watching movies and tv shows."
		"Focus on yourself first then focus your "our goals".
		"I confined with my friends and family. They showed me my worth and how I want to be treated. They're my source of support and understanding."
		"I confined with my friends and family. They showed me my worth and how I want to be treated. They're my source of support and understanding."
		"I discovered that balance is a very important aspect of life. Accepting that good and bad are coexisting. The absence of the other would lead to a dystopic or utopic type of thinking."
		"Doing the things that I like, watching movies, and series, playing games, occasionally connecting with friends and family, having a pet.
		"I realized the importance of trust and honesty in any relationships."
		"I realized that I was strong since before I didn't knew that I would be ok even without a husband."
		"If you're not compatible with your partner and see red flags at the start, think about letting go of the relationship."
		"That I could be strong, be better, be someone anyone can look and rely on, be someone who values the smallest things while keeping and controlling his own ego."
		"I guess I never realized how strong I can be. Before all of these losses occurred, I never saw myself living my life without those people and now slowly I am able to do so."
		"I worked so hard for the things that I want that would make me better, I started using social media less and started reading more books, and I started playing video games."
		"I guess I never realized how strong I can be. Before all of these losses occurred, I never saw myself living my life without those people and now slowly I am able to do so."
"Moving forward without the people we lose doesn't necessarily mean that we forget		



<p>Self-Improvement Through Distraction and Connection</p>	<p>Active Engagement in Distracting Activities Self-Directed Focus on Personal Development</p>	<p>about them." "Talking to my sister, because she and I have the same experience with our parents." "I discovered how stupid and weak I was before." "In times of distress doon ako natututo na people may be mean to me but it will be fall into my attitude" "I distracted myself by going out with my friends, discovering music, reading books, and watching movies and tv shows." "Focus on myself. Read books on how to improve myself." "I confined with my friends and family. They showed me my worth and how I want to be treated. They're my source of support and understanding." "Doing the things that I like, watching movies, and series, playing games, occasionally connecting with friends and family, having a pet." "I just continue on with my life and I was hoping that I can forgive her one of these days. " "Went to Australia with my kids and parents, fixed myself up, went out with friends, in a few years starts talking to new people that's when I met my partner now. In a way it distracted me from everything that occurred since it's not just the loss of my husband but there is a sense of embarrassment since our family is like a public figure type" "Read Self Help books especially the ones who tackle psychology of a human being." "I worked so hard for the things that I want that would make me better." "Talking to my sister, because she and I have the same experience with our parents. Also, I think the reels that I watch from IG that has same situation with mine that I am not the only one with this kind of experience with parents." "Really busy (working on my book last march) and reading self-help books" "Our relationship used to be something that I looked forward to every day. Now, I have to get used to the comfort of my own company." "Whenever there are contents that are similar to the situation or relationship we had." "Before, I struggled with expressing myself and responding appropriately with my emotions. When I was dealing with grief, I learned to accept that my progress is not linear." "When she talked about others that she may have crushed on." "Sometimes, when I pass by the places we went before." "It does get better." "It means a lot. I miss my old self." "Feelings of loneliness and sadness. Seeing someone alike my past self." "Trust and honesty are the bedrock of any meaningful relationship. Without them, the foundation crumbles, leaving behind a fragile bond vulnerable to erosion." "In a way i was okay since we were fighting most of the day before but now, I don't get that anymore." "Relationship: When I see things that reminds me of him and us (which is almost everything)" "For my loss in my relationship with my family, significant other, and myself: all of these losses mean so much to me, but they just differ from the degree of importance." "That sometimes I remember so much with the bad things they did for us (me and my siblings) that I didn't think of as a bad thing back then but remembering it now is so cringe and just a bad vibes and giving me headache sometimes. And I want to vomit feeling. I discovered how stupid and weak I was before. " "Think of their own welfare not in a selfish way but do what's best"</p>
<p>Emotional Impact of Loss</p>	<p>Nostalgia for Past Happiness Acceptance of Loss and Self-Evaluation</p>	

Navigating Transition and Personal Growth is a theme that explores the transformative journey individuals undertake in response to relationship changes, leading to personal development and self-discovery.

Self-discovery is a crucial aspect of this theme, highlighting the process of self-exploration and introspection triggered by changes in relationships. One respondent stated, "I guess I never realized how strong I can be. Before all of these losses occurred" (R8.2.1), encapsulating the profound personal insights and growth that can emerge from navigating challenging transitions. This journey of self-discovery often involves confronting difficult emotions and confronting one's vulnerabilities, ultimately leading to greater self-awareness and resilience.

Adaptive Coping refers to the practical strategies individuals employ to navigate relationship challenges and facilitate personal growth. One response, "I confined with my friends and family. They showed me my worth and how I want to be treated. They're my source of support and understanding" (R3.2.3) exemplifies the proactive approach individuals take to address issues. By employing coping mechanisms such as taking breaks or seeking therapy, individuals demonstrate a commitment to personal growth and emotional well-being.



Transformational Change encompasses the profound internal shifts and growth that individuals experience as they process and cope with loss. One respondent answered: “I guess I never realized how strong I can be. Before all these losses occurred, I never saw myself living my life without those people, and now slowly I can do so” (R8.2.3), which reflects the transformative nature of loss and adversity. Through resilience and perseverance, individuals not only adapt to change but also undergo profound internal changes, emerging stronger, more resilient, and with a deeper understanding of themselves.

Self-Improvement Through Distraction and Connection examines how individuals cope with distress and strive for personal growth through both active engagement in distracting activities and self-directed focus on personal development.

Active Engagement in Distracting Activities involves seeking relief from distress by immersing oneself in activities such as reading books, watching shows, or working more, which divert attention away from negative emotions. One participant responded, “I distracted myself by going out with my friends, discovering music, reading books, and watching movies and TV shows” (R1.3.1), illustrating the range of distractions that one person can employ. By engaging in social activities, exploring new interests, and consuming entertainment media, individuals create a buffer against distress and cultivate a sense of enjoyment and fulfillment in their lives.

Self-Directed Focus on Personal Development, on the other hand, entails directing attention towards activities aimed at self-improvement and introspection. This sub-theme emphasizes the proactive pursuit of personal growth and self-awareness through intentional actions. “Focus on myself. Read books on how to improve myself,” (R2.3.2) and “I worked so hard for the things that I want that would make me better,” (R8.3.2) highlight the deliberate efforts individuals make to enhance their well-being and develop personally and professionally. Whether through reading self-help books, limiting social media use, or pursuing hobbies and interests, individuals demonstrate a commitment to self-improvement and self-care as a means of coping with distress and fostering personal growth.

The Emotional Impact of Loss investigated the complex array of emotions individuals experience following the dissolution of relationships, highlighting themes of nostalgia for past happiness and acceptance of loss through self-evaluation.

Nostalgia for Past Happiness encapsulates the longing for the happiness and fulfillment experienced within the relationship, contrasting it with the present state of solitude or disconnection. A respondent shared, “Our relationship used to be something that I looked forward to every day. Now, I have to get used to the comfort of my own company” (R1.4.1), which illustrates the bittersweet nostalgia individuals feel as they reminisce about the joy and companionship they once shared. This longing for past happiness serves as a poignant reminder of the profound changes and losses experienced in the aftermath of relationship dissolution.

Acceptance of Loss and Self-Evaluation involves acknowledging the pain of loss while engaging in introspection and self-assessment. Individuals confront the reality of their losses and the impact on various aspects of their lives, prompting deep reflection on their actions and relationships. Responses like “For my loss in my relationship with my family, significant other, and myself: all of these losses mean so much to me, but they just differ from the degree of importance,” (R8.4.2) and “Before, I struggled with expressing myself and responding appropriately with my emotions,” (R1.4.2) highlight the introspective journey individuals undertake as they come to terms with their losses. Through self-evaluation and acceptance, individuals navigate the complexities of grief and strive to find meaning and understanding amidst the pain of loss.

Table 4.3. *How has non-death losses affected the psychological growth of the respondents?*

<i>Superordinate Themes</i>	<i>Subordinate Themes</i>	<i>Illustrative Quotes</i>
Reflection and Adaptive Responses	Navigating Life's Challenges Patience in Healing Incorporating Loss into Identity	"Acknowledge your loss, and do not make your grief smaller than it actually is. Grieving is always different for every person, and it's neither linear nor something to tick on a checkbox of stages of grief."
		"I've known him since I was in High School. We did a lot of things together. He was not just a lover but a best friend, too. It was hard at first because I was used to his presence, but it does get better."
		"That things get better and better. But this doesn't mean I am not happy right now. I can say I'm finally over with what happened, and the world got wider. I am happier than ever."
		"Just keep swimming. Good and bad sh*t happens. That's life"
		"Healing would be painful and it's a process, so don't be in a hurry."
		"It's not always the end of the world. Always remember to "Don't fool yourself and you're the easiest one to fool" It's okay to grieve but you have to understand why and until when you should do it."
		"These losses were life changing. I didn't know how to get through them there were days where I just find myself crying and there were days that I was just so angry at everyone even myself. "
		"Moving forward without the people we lose doesn't necessarily mean that we forget about them. We keep the good parts of those losses and make them a part of who we are along with the love that goes with it. We have to accept that the pain from all the losses that we encountered and will encounter is a part of who we are and what we'll we become."
		"That life is short. Too short. It is cliché but it is true. Life's too short to worry that



		<p>you are not enough or like to prove something to people that should be the ones uplifting you and not oppressing or pressuring you into things. "</p> <p>"Just be grateful with whatever happens"</p> <p>"I hope to deal with the things I don't speak about with other people in a better way."</p>
		<p>"Getting back to her. Start everything fresh."</p> <p>"That things get better and better."</p> <p>"Hoping to have a normal and comfortable life."</p> <p>"By navigating through the pain and challenges of loss, individuals emerge stronger, more resilient, and better equipped to forge deeper connections in the future."</p>
Resolution and Healing	Seeking Resolution and Improvement Longing for Positive Change	<p>"To work until the next generation of my kids will have enough money to live by."</p> <p>"Discipline"</p> <p>"I hope one day I could look back at all these losses and be grateful that I experienced them. Hopefully by that time I am in a place where I can also help people who are experiencing the same thing."</p> <p>"Learning how to accept the things I can no longer change and living life without having to worry about the opinions of other people."</p> <p>"I hope one day I could look back at all these losses and be grateful that I experienced them. Hopefully by that time I am in a place where I can also help people who are experiencing the same thing. "</p> <p>"I hope for them to learned from their children as well. To know their fault and admit their faults."</p> <p>"I hope to just be grateful with whatever happens"</p>

Reflection and Adaptive Responses encapsulate the process of introspection and the adaptive strategies employed in response to life's challenges, highlighting themes of resilience, patience in healing, and integration of loss into one's identity.

Navigating Life's Challenges underscores the acknowledgment of life's unpredictability and the acceptance of both positive and negative experiences as integral facets of the journey. Individuals embrace the flow of life, recognizing that adversity is an inherent part of growth and development. Answers such as, "Just keep swimming. Good and bad sh*t happens. That's life," (R4.6.1) and "These losses were life-changing..." (R8.6.1) reflect the resilience and adaptability exhibited in the face of adversity, emphasizing the importance of perseverance and acceptance amidst life's trials.

Patience in Healing emphasizes the understanding that the healing process is gradual and not linear, often accompanied by pain, highlighting the importance of patience and self-compassion in navigating emotional challenges. Individuals recognize the need for time and gentleness in healing emotional wounds, refraining from rushing the process and allowing themselves to experience the full spectrum of emotions. A respondent said, "Healing would be painful and it's a process, so don't be in a hurry," (R5.6.2), which underscores the importance of patience and resilience in the journey towards healing, acknowledging the complexities of emotional recovery.

Incorporating Loss into Identity reflects the process of integrating experiences of loss into one's identity, acknowledging their profound impact while holding onto the love and lessons gleaned from them. Individuals honor the memories of lost loved ones by incorporating their legacies into their own sense of self, recognizing that these experiences shape who they are and contribute to their personal growth. The quoted example, "Moving forward without the people we lose doesn't necessarily mean that we forget about them. We keep the good parts of those losses and make them a part of who we are along with the love that goes with it," (R8.6.3) underscores the enduring significance of lost relationships and the transformative power of incorporating their influence into one's identity.

Resolution and Healing encompass the aspirations for personal growth, resolution of internal struggles, and the longing for positive change, highlighting themes of self-improvement, resilience, and envisioning a brighter future.

Seeking Resolution and Improvement reflects the desire to address personal challenges and constructively confront unresolved issues, with the aim of fostering growth and healing. Individuals express a commitment to addressing the aspects of their lives that they may have previously avoided or neglected, signaling a readiness to embark on a journey of self-discovery and transformation. Responses like "I hope to deal with the things I don't speak about with other people in a better way," (R1.7.1) and "I hope one day I could look back at all these losses and be grateful that I experienced them," (R8.7.1) shows a willingness to confront and address difficult emotions, aiming for greater self-awareness and emotional resilience.

Longing for Positive Change encompasses individuals' hopes for positive outcomes and envisioning a future marked by improvement, comfort, and fulfillment. It signifies a sense of optimism and forward-looking perspective, with individuals expressing aspirations for a better future characterized by stability and contentment. Answers such as, "Hoping to have a normal and comfortable life," (R4.7.2) and "To work until the next generation of my kids will have enough money to live by," (R6.7.2) reflect individuals' desires for positive change and a sense of responsibility towards future generations, these statements convey a sense of optimism and determination to create a better future, underscoring the resilience and hope inherent in the process of healing and growth.

In the expert validation process for the qualitative data, two esteemed professionals —a psychometrician and a clinical psychologist—were engaged to scrutinize the initial themes derived from the qualitative data analysis. The aim was to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings by assessing the clarity, relevance, and specificity of the identified themes. After distributing the initial themes to the experts, they were asked to provide critical feedback on the appropriateness of each theme and suggest any necessary revisions to enhance clarity and specificity, while maintaining relevance to the research objectives. Subsequently, based on the experts' feedback, revisions were made to refine the language and descriptions of the themes, addressing any ambiguities or lack of clarity. The refined themes were then reviewed by the experts for final validation, with any remaining discrepancies or concerns resolved through further discussion and consensus-building.

Conclusions

This study explored the complex phenomenon of grief in response to non-death losses, which are often overlooked or minimized. While the severity of grief reported by participants fell within a low to moderate range, a surprising aspect emerged: a relatively high level of post-traumatic growth (PTG) was also reported, particularly in areas like appreciation for life and improved relationships. Although the correlation was weak, the statistical link between grief and some aspects of PTG suggests that experiencing the emotional turmoil of loss may act as a catalyst for personal growth.

The study highlighted the significance of non-death losses, particularly in relationships, as a strong source of grief. It underscored the emotional toll these losses can take, with participants describing feelings of pain, anger, and the ever-present presence of triggers. However, the research also revealed the resilience of the human spirit. Many participants reported utilizing coping mechanisms, such as social support and a focus on moving forward. This highlights the importance of acknowledging and validating all forms of loss, not just those associated with death, and providing adequate support systems for individuals navigating such experiences.

While non-death losses present challenges, the study also identified pathways to positive outcomes. Participants described personal growth through self-discovery, a newfound appreciation for their own resilience, and even feeling free to start anew, associated with new beginnings. Themes such as self-expression, enhanced self-esteem, and embarking on new chapters suggest that loss, while undeniably painful, can also catalyze personal transformation and a renewed sense of purpose.

This study contributes to psychology by expanding the understanding of the complex interplay between grief, loss, and post-traumatic growth. It sheds light on the multifaceted nature of grief associated with non-death losses and highlights the potential for positive psychological change that can arise from such experiences. By acknowledging the validity of non-death loss and its impact, we can develop more comprehensive support systems and therapeutic interventions to empower individuals navigating these challenges and foster their growth potential.

For clinical psychologists, it is recommended to focus on understanding the nuanced ways diverse types of losses, such as romantic and familial, impact aspects of Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG). Tailored interventions can be designed to address specific needs, such as fostering new relationships for those who lose a spouse or helping individuals develop a new sense of identity and independence after the loss of a parent. Additionally, psychologists should extend their focus to non-death losses, like job loss or relocation, recognizing the unique grief processes and PTG opportunities these situations present. For example, interventions for job loss may focus on skill development and career counseling to help rebuild a professional identity. Training programs for psychologists should include workshops on grief recognition and PTG facilitation techniques, ensuring they are equipped to recognize subtle signs of grief and employ resilience-building exercises and strength-based approaches effectively.

For educators, it is recommended that they receive training to recognize and support grief experiences among children and adolescents. Age-appropriate interventions, such as expressive therapies like art or play therapy for children, and peer support groups and open communication activities for adolescents, can significantly aid in their coping processes. Workshops on grief recognition can help educators identify and address grief in students early, preventing long-term emotional distress. Understanding and integrating these practices into educational settings can create a supportive environment conducive to both emotional and academic growth.

For the workplace, it is recommended to recognize the impact of non-death losses, such as job loss or significant relocations. Employers should provide access to career counseling and skill development programs to help employees rebuild their professional identity and sense of purpose. Training programs for managers and HR professionals on identifying and addressing grief-related issues can foster a supportive work environment. These programs should include resilience-building exercises and methods to facilitate PTG, helping employees navigate their grief and grow from their experiences.

For clinical research, it is recommended to conduct longitudinal studies to track changes in PTG over time and identify factors that influence growth trajectories. These studies can inform the timing of interventions to maximize PTG and develop strategies for maintaining long-term growth post-intervention. Expanding qualitative research with larger, more diverse participant interviews can provide a deeper understanding of grief experiences and PTG processes, employing triangulation of findings to validate results and draw comprehensive conclusions. This approach will ensure that interventions are based on a robust understanding of grief and PTG dynamics across different populations.

For academic research, it is recommended to incorporate cultural considerations into studies, recognizing how cultural influences shape

grief and PTG. Exploring cultural variations in the perception and coping mechanisms for loss will help in developing culturally responsive interventions. These interventions should respect and integrate cultural practices and beliefs, thereby enhancing their effectiveness. Furthermore, expanding qualitative research to include diverse backgrounds can capture a wide range of grief experiences, ensuring that findings are inclusive and representative of various cultural contexts. This comprehensive approach will contribute to more effective and culturally sensitive support strategies for those experiencing grief.

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