

Today the Grief Is Too Much

For the days when grief fills almost every available space.

Some days grief sits quietly in the background. Other days it arrives before you have even got out of bed and seems to occupy your body, thoughts, home, work and relationships all at once. On those days, being told to 'take one day at a time' can still feel too big. This guide is about making the next part smaller.

You do not have to solve grief today. You only need somewhere to put what is happening right now.

What hurts most today?

What has made today particularly difficult?

I NEED TO SCREAM — TODAY THIS IS TOO MUCH

This page does not need to be calm, sensible or hopeful.

Put the overload here. Write I CAN'T DO THIS. Write their name. Write WHY? Write what you are sick of carrying. Scribble over your own words. Use enormous letters. Repeat yourself. Grief does not need good grammar or a positive ending.

WHAT I REALLY WANT TO SCREAM TODAY IS...

Everything Has Piled Up

Grief rarely arrives in an otherwise empty life.

The loss may be sitting alongside work, children, caring, appointments, finances, belongings, anniversaries, family tensions, sleep deprivation, health worries, paperwork or simply the endless practical tasks of being alive.

The grief itself

Everything else I am carrying

The thing that tipped me over today

My Body Has Reached Its Limit

Overwhelming grief can feel intensely physical.

You might notice heaviness, shaking, nausea, chest pressure, throat tightness, headaches, exhaustion, restlessness, tears, numbness, changes in appetite or sleep, sensory overload, feeling unable to speak or wanting to get away from everyone.

What my body is doing right now

What my body has had too much of

What would reduce the pressure by even 5%?

The Next Hour — Not the Whole Future

When grief is huge, shrink the time horizon.

You do not need to work out next month, next year or the rest of your life from inside today's wave. Ask what the next hour requires. Sometimes that is water, something to eat, medication as prescribed, a shower, fresh air, a blanket, silence, a phone call, crying, cancelling something or doing absolutely nothing except getting through the hour.

In the next hour I actually need to...

One thing I can make easier

One decision I do NOT need to make today

What Can Wait?

Reducing demands is not failure; it is responding to capacity.

Grief can temporarily change concentration, memory, motivation, social energy and tolerance for ordinary demands. A difficult day may need a different standard from a normal day.

This genuinely needs doing today

This can wait until another day

This could be delegated, cancelled or simplified

When Other People Want Me to Be Okay

Support can become pressure when people rush the grief.

People may try to cheer you up, change the subject, tell you to be strong, compare losses, offer solutions or say the person would not want you to be sad. Their intention may be kind, but the impact can still be painful.

What people are doing or saying that makes this harder

What I wish they understood about today

What I actually need from them

A Plan for the Next Wave

Not a plan to stop grief — a plan to support you while it moves through.

Signs a big wave is building

People / places / things that help

Things that usually make the wave worse

A sentence I can use: "Today is a very difficult grief day. I do not need you to fix it. I need _____."

When I Have Nothing Left

Rest, numbness and distraction can all have a place.

Sometimes you will not want to process anything. You may need television, sleep, repetitive tasks, a familiar meal, quiet, a walk, company without conversation, or distance from grief-related material. Taking a break from actively feeling grief does not mean you have forgotten who or what you lost.

What feels least demanding right now?

What could comfort me without asking anything from me?

What I give myself permission NOT to do today

Today Can Be Too Much Without Every Day Being Too Much

A difficult grief day is a moment in your story, not a prediction of every day ahead.

A message from Maggie

There may be days when grief feels so large that even ordinary things become difficult. On those days, do not measure yourself against what you managed yesterday, what somebody else expects, or how you think you should be coping by now. Make the day smaller. Make the next hour smaller. Put down anything that can wait. Ask for practical help if it is available. Cry, rest, be angry, be quiet, watch something familiar, say their name or do none of those things. You are not required to turn an overwhelming day into a meaningful lesson. Sometimes getting through it is enough.

What I need to hear today

What I want someone else to understand

One gentle thing I can allow myself

Words I can borrow: "Today is a difficult grief day. I need less pressure and more space."

Further reading: Megan Devine — It's OK That You're Not OK | Julia Samuel — Grief Works | Cruse Bereavement Support