

“The work of the mature person is to carry grief in one hand and gratitude in the other and to be stretched large by them. How much sorrow can I hold? That’s how much gratitude I can give. If I carry only grief, I’ll bend toward cynicism and despair. If I have only gratitude, I’ll become saccharine and won’t develop much compassion for other people’s suffering. Grief keeps the heart fluid and soft, which helps make compassion possible.”

Francis Weller – Author of *The Wild Edge of Sorrow*

Storytelling in a small group or personal reflection. One by one, each person shares their answer to the first prompt below. Then go to the next question and so forth. A person can pass.

- 1. Share how you carry, or have carried, your grief and losses.** How did your parents and grandparents deal with and show their grief and losses to you?
- 2. How much sorrow are you holding now?** Are you bending towards “cynicism and despair,” or bending towards “saccharine” (exaggeratedly sweet or sentimental)? ² Or finding a balance between grief and gratitude? Say more.
- 3. Share about a time you were grieving in your life.** What did you learn about how you grieve? What actions would you do, and words would you share with a good friend who is grieving a loss?
- 4. How do you process and grieve for all those you have never met who are dealing with war, hunger, abuse, violence, fear, racism, poverty, illness, addictions, death, and so much more?** What have you learned about feeling, receiving, and sharing compassion in life?

Check out and download more like this at <https://lifesjourney.us/storytelling-about-grief-and-loss-menu/>

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¹ [Francis Weller Quotes \(Author of The Wild Edge of Sorrow\)](#) , (accessed September 11, 2025).

² [SACCHARINE Definition & Meaning | Dictionary.com](#) , (accessed September 11, 2025).