

Reflection Handout for Foster Parents ¹

A guide for grieving, honoring, and self-care

Saying goodbye to a child you've loved and cared for as a foster parent is a profound experience of both love and loss.

This handout offers reflection prompts, rituals, and self-care practices to help you grieve, honor your bond, and nurture your own well-being.

1. Honoring Your Grief

- Name the loss: Allow yourself to say, "This is grief. This hurts."
- Create rituals: Light a candle, write a letter to the child, or create a memory book of your time together.
- Share openly: Find trusted friends, groups, or counselors who will hold space for your story.

2. Journaling Reflections

- What are three memories with this child that I want to hold close to my heart?
- What have I learned about love, patience, and resilience from this experience?
- What do I want to bless or hope for in this child's journey ahead?
- How can I honor my own needs as I move forward?

3. Self-Care Practices

- Rest and nourish yourself: Allow extra sleep, gentle walks, or quiet time.
- Engage in creativity: Journaling, art, or music can express emotions without words.
- Practice self-compassion: Remind yourself you gave love and stability when it was needed.

4. Rituals of Connection

- Light a candle or say a blessing on the child's birthday or special days.
- Keep a small memory box with photos, art, or letters.
- Write a goodbye letter that expresses your gratitude and hopes.

5. Looking Ahead

- Take time before fostering again, if needed.
- Reframe the story: Remember you were part of the child's healing and growth for a season.
- Explore new ways to share love and care, whether in fostering or other areas of life.

Grief and love are intertwined. You do not have to rush through this season.

Give yourself permission to mourn, remember, and rest in the knowledge that your love has made a difference.

© 2025, David Tillman, all rights reserved, www.lifesjourney.us

¹ Created by using ChatGPT by David Tillman, September 28, 2025