LEADER PACKET

Growing your team

Assessing the readiness of potential volunteers

GriefShare®

GRIEFSHARE.ORG/VOLUNTEER

FOR MINISTRY LEADERS

How to Use This Packet

Potential volunteer assessments

Objective

To determine if people are ready to serve on a GriefShare ministry team by assessing their healing progress. And, if they are in a good place to serve, to determine what roles they are best suited for.

Who to give them to

Ministry leaders should give the assessments to people who are interested in serving with GriefShare.

What's included

Assessment 1: "The signs of your healing" 3
Includes experiences that may be later in a person's grief journey.

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Addresses disruptive experiences usually associated with the early part of a person's grief journey.

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Interview-style questions a ministry leader could ask a potential volunteer.

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A form to get feedback from the person's friends and family on strengths, weaknesses, and areas of growth.

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Instructions

1. Give the assessments to potential volunteers. Assessments 1 and 2 are best suited for people who might need more healing progress. Assessments 2 and 3 are helpful for people who seem further along on the healing journey.
2. Schedule a time to walk through their responses with them.
3. Use the evaluation guides in this packet to help you identify areas of progress and areas where more healing is needed. They'll also help you determine the participants' readiness to serve with GriefShare and where they would best fit.

Assessment #1

The signs of your healing

You've found comfort through GriefShare, and maybe you're thinking about sharing that same comfort by volunteering. This is wonderful, and giving back is an important part of your healing process. But before you jump in, it's important to make sure the time is right for you. There's no need to rush if you still have more healing to do first.

The 6 "signs of healing" outlined in this assessment will help you recognize your progress and determine whether you're ready to serve on a GriefShare team.

Directions

Use the number scale to gauge how you've changed since the loss of your loved one. Circle the number that best represents that. If an item does not apply, score it 0. Total your scores. When you are finished, talk through your answers with your leader or pastor.

1. Accepting the reality of my loss

This means acknowledging the loss and the changes it has brought and avoiding various forms of denial or unhealthy attempts to numb the pain.

Compared to when you first lost your loved one, what is true of you now?

Sign of healing	Not true of me					Consistently true of me
A. Smiling and laughing again:	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Remembering pleasant and unpleasant things about my loved one without being overcome by them:	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Being less consumed with my loss each day:	0	1	2	3	4	5
D. Accepting my life without trying to recapture the way it used to be:	0	1	2	3	4	5
E. Avoiding excessive or unhealthy behaviors to numb my pain:	0	1	2	3	4	5

Score: _____

2. Dealing with the emotions

This involves addressing sadness, anxiety, anger, etc., in a helpful, God-honoring manner.

Compared to when you first lost your loved one, what is true of you now?

Sign of healing	Not true of me					Consistently true of me
A. Being more thankful for the blessings in my life:	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Accepting grief ambushes if they come:	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Exercising more control over my emotions:	0	1	2	3	4	5
D. Talking about my loss more easily (without being overwhelmed):	0	1	2	3	4	5
E. Noticing more good days than bad:	0	1	2	3	4	5

Score: _____

3. Adjusting to a world without my loved one

This involves identifying how your lifestyle will need to change. It can mean learning new skills, taking on new roles, and thinking of yourself (and God) in new ways.

Compared to when you first lost your loved one, what is true of you now?

Sign of healing	Not true of me					Consistently true of me
A. Getting a restful night's sleep more often than not:	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Eating balanced meals and engaging in regular physical activity:	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Participating in activities that we both loved without crying:	0	1	2	3	4	5
D. Learning new skills to make my life run more smoothly:	0	1	2	3	4	5
E. Willing to spend time alone without too much distress:	0	1	2	3	4	5
F. Being patient with other people's awkwardness or shortcomings:	0	1	2	3	4	5
G. Maintaining positive relationships with friends and family:	0	1	2	3	4	5

Score: _____

4. Addressing my questions about ultimate concerns

Thinking through questions about God's character or purposes and eternity is a sign of healing.

Compared to when you first lost your loved one, what is true of you now?

Sign of healing	Not true of me					Consistently true of me
A. Attending worship services and Bible studies at church:	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Reading the Bible as God's Word to guide me in my life:	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Being honest with God about my spiritual struggles and questions:	0	1	2	3	4	5
D. Accepting that God's plan is best for me, even if I don't understand all of it:	0	1	2	3	4	5
E. Trusting God's goodness, wisdom, and love as He chooses to reveal them:	0	1	2	3	4	5

Score: _____

5. Continuing life without forgetting

This means taking steps forward in your life in a way that honors your loved one's memory. It involves pursuing God-given opportunities and living out the positive influences and lessons learned from your loved one.

Compared to when you first lost your loved one, what is true of you now?

Sign of healing	Not true of me					Consistently true of me
A. Remembering my loved one less idealistically and more realistically:	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Looking to the day ahead of me with positivity rather than dreading it:	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Establishing ways to honor the contributions of my loved one to my life:	0	1	2	3	4	5
D. Exploring new foods, new places, or new activities:	0	1	2	3	4	5
E. Recognizing the lessons I've learned through this experience of loss:	0	1	2	3	4	5
F. Looking for opportunities for new and healthy relationships:	0	1	2	3	4	5

Score: _____

6. Sharing comfort with others

Serving others in distress becomes an important part of rebuilding your life because it honors God's design for us. Comforting others is essential to healing.

Compared to when you first lost your loved one, what is true of you now?

Sign of healing	Not true of me					Consistently true of me
A. Being more aware of the suffering around me:	0	1	2	3	4	5
B. Sharing the lessons I have learned from my loss with others:	0	1	2	3	4	5
C. Reaching out to family or friends in need when I have the opportunity:	0	1	2	3	4	5

Score: _____

Check your progress

What your scores mean

Reflect on the areas where you scored higher and lower. This will help you see where you've had some growth and healing, and areas you need to spend more time processing. Then add your total scores for all 6 sections, and use the chart to help you gauge your readiness to volunteer with GriefShare.

Total Score: _____

Score	General recommendation
<130	**Take more time to heal before volunteering:** • Repeat another GriefShare cycle • Use the *Reflections* journal
130+	**Talk with your leader or pastor about serving on a GriefShare ministry team**

Next step:

Share with your pastor/leader

Share your results with your GriefShare leader or pastor. They might be able to suggest ways you can pursue areas of growth identified in this assessment. They'll also help you determine your readiness to serve with GriefShare and where you'd best fit.

FOR MINISTRY LEADERS

Evaluation 1:

"The signs of your healing"

Look at the answers in each of the 6 categories where they scored higher and lower. This will help you better see where they've experienced growth and healing, and areas they need to spend more time processing.

Some items in each of the categories are more important than others. For a person to serve as a GriefShare leader or facilitator, the score should be a 4 or 5 in these areas listed under "Important signs of healing" below. For a person to help with meeting prep or connecting, they should score higher for the answers listed below.

Meeting prep

Important signs of healing:
1D,E • 2A,C • 3F • 4C • 6A

Set up/take down the meeting room

Group promotion

Technology assistance (videos, scheduling, registration)

Parking attendant/hanging directional signs

Bake/prepare refreshments

Connecting

Important signs of healing:
1A,C,D,E • 2A,C,E • 3F,G • 4D • 5F • 6A,C

Greet people; welcome table

Oversee refreshments

Check in with group members between meetings (email, notes, cards)

Prayer support

Leading

Important signs of healing:
1A,C,D,E • 2A,C,D,E • 3E,F,G • 4A,B,C,E • 5B,C,E,F • 6A,C

Oversee a prayer team

Lead meetings

Facilitate small-group discussions

Oversee the ministry; make sure it runs smoothly

Start a new group (online or at a different time)



Ready to serve!

Steps to take

1. Invite the person to join your team.
2. Share this link: **griefshare.org/volunteer**
3. Send us the person's name. We'll follow up with support: **griefshare.org/potentialleader**

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Assessment #2

One step at a time

If your grief is fairly recent and you're wondering if you're ready to volunteer, this chart lists disruptive experiences usually associated with the early part of a person's grief journey. As you assess each "grief indicator," you'll have a better idea of how you are progressing through grief.

Directions

For each grief indicator, place a number (1–4) in the column that most closely matches your experience. (If column 1 is your choice, insert a "1"; if column 2, then insert a "2"; etc.) Total your scores, and share this with your leader or pastor for feedback.

Grief indicator	**1:** Almost never (less than 1x a month)	**2:** Rarely (2–6x a month)	**3:** Often (7x or more a month)	**4:** Always (every day)
Example: *E.g.: Since losing _____, I cry easily.*		2		
Example: *I have difficulty sleeping & feel exhausted.*			3	
Since losing _____, I cry easily.				
I have difficulty sleeping & feel exhausted.				
I have difficulty concentrating.				
I'm troubled by intrusive images or thoughts about _____.				
I struggle with irritability since losing _____.				
I struggle with anxiety & worry since losing _____.				
Reminders of _____ cause a painful & disruptive longing to be together.				
Reminders of _____ result in a loss of enjoyment in activities.				
I avoid activities we used to do because of painful memories.				
Total for each column:				

Grief indicator	**1:** Almost never (less than 1x a month)	**2:** Rarely (2–6x a month)	**3:** Often (7x or more a month)	**4:** Always (every day)
I feel lonely without _____.				
I feel distant (detached) from other people since losing _____, because they shy away from me.				
I feel distant (detached) from other people since losing _____, because I tend to isolate myself.				
I feel lost & helpless. Small problems seem overwhelming.				
I avoid reminders that _____ is gone.				
I'm distressed when reminded that _____ is not coming back.				
Life seems meaningless or empty.				
I feel distant from God.				
I find it hard to read the Bible & pray.				
I find it hard to go to church.				
Total for each column:				

Total score: (all column totals combined)	

Evaluation 2:

"One step at a time"

Once the participants have completed the chart, talk with them about their answers so you can best assess their readiness to volunteer. Sometimes after talking things through, they might realize they scored themselves too high or too low in certain areas.

This chart offers a general recommendation, and the possible volunteer roles are areas where the person might fit in your GriefShare ministry. Ultimately, the decision is up to you and your staff overseer or pastor as to which role seems best for both this person and the group (even if the individual may have a different opinion).

Score	General recommendation	Possible volunteer roles
35+	**Take more time to heal before volunteering:** • Repeat another GriefShare cycle • Use the *Reflections* journal	n/a
< 35	**Consider serving on a GriefShare ministry team**	• Set up/take down the meeting room • Group promotion • Technology assistance (videos, scheduling, registration) • Parking attendant/hanging directional signs • Bake/prepare refreshments • Prayer support
< 30	**Consider serving on a GriefShare ministry team**	• Greet people; welcome table • Oversee refreshments • Check in with group members between meetings (email, notes, cards) • Oversee a prayer team
< 22	**Consider serving on a GriefShare ministry team**	• Lead meetings • Facilitate small-group discussions • Oversee the ministry; make sure it runs smoothly • Start a new group (online or at a different time)



Assessment #3

Helping others as I've been helped

Do you feel like you're in a good place to help with GriefShare? These interview-style questions will help you consider your readiness to serve by looking at areas such as your spiritual growth, support network, availability, and how well you work with others.

Directions

(1) Thoughtfully answer the questions. (2) If you are associated with a current GriefShare group, discuss your answers with your leader. If you're thinking of hosting a new GriefShare ministry program at your church, then discuss your answers with your pastor.

1. How much time has elapsed since your loss?

2. Have you completed a full cycle of GriefShare?

3. How has your loss affected the way you live your life now?

4. What support (any type of help from others) did you receive that helped you early in your grief?

5. What support network (people you can count on for help) do you currently have in your life?

6. How are you trying to grow in your relationship with the Lord?

7. What's it like for you to talk about your loss with others?

8. Do you struggle with a high level of anxiety since your loss?

9. What type of involvement on a GriefShare ministry team would be most meaningful to you? What are you most passionate about doing? What would you say you are called by God to do?

10. How much time each week might you have for the ministry team?

11. Would you say you're more task-oriented, relationship-oriented, or are balanced between the two orientations?

***Task-oriented**: Tends to focus more on getting tasks completed*
***Relationship-oriented**: Tends to focus more on developing relationships*



Share your answers with your ministry leader!

To learn more about serving with GriefShare, visit **griefshare.org/volunteer**.

FOR MINISTRY LEADERS

Evaluation 3:

"Helping others as I've been helped"

Plan a time to walk through the person's responses to these questions. See the notes below each question to help you gauge the answers.

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1. How much time has elapsed since your loss?

There is no standard time for how long someone will need before getting involved in serving on a ministry team. However, the full impact of a loss might not be evident for a while after a loss. Within whatever time has elapsed, there should be: (a) an acceptance of the changes in your life, (b) a re-engagement with family and friends, and (c) a new and workable daily routine.

2. Have you completed a full cycle of GriefShare?

It's beneficial to have gone through a full cycle of GriefShare prior to volunteering.

3. How has your loss affected the way you live your life now?

To help the participants gauge how far they've progressed through their grief, see the "Check my Progress" tools at ***griefshare.org/volunteer****.*

4. What support (any type of help from others) did you receive that helped you early in your grief?

5. What support network (people you can count on for help) do you currently have in your life?

Having a support system is very beneficial as a person steps into this ministry.

6. How are you trying to grow in your relationship with the Lord?

Ministry team members are committed followers of Jesus Christ, living life for His glory and based on His Word. It's important that your volunteers feel comfortable with the following and that these practices are a regular part of their life:

- *The Bible (knowing how to read and apply Scripture)*
- *Prayer (communicating to God what is on your heart: confession, adoration, gratitude, lament, etc.)*
- *Corporate worship (joining with other believers to learn about, engage with, and reaffirm a commitment to the Lord)*

7. What's it like for you to talk about your loss with others?

As GriefShare ministry team members, you'll want to be able to tell your grief stories comfortably (without getting overwhelmed), appropriately (when the time is right; when others are interested or might benefit from it), and confidently (knowing what elements are important to include). If talking about the loss is too overwhelming, that doesn't mean you can't be involved on the ministry team, but it may be best for supportive roles where you won't need to share your stories yet.

8. Do you struggle with a high level of anxiety since your loss?

If fear and anxiety still tend to interfere with your volunteers' daily responsibilities, they may be better off taking some time to focus on that issue first.

9. What type of involvement on a GriefShare ministry team would be most meaningful to you? What are you most passionate about doing? What would you say you are called by God to do?

God prepares us for service opportunities. "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Eph. 2:10). Therefore, our "natural passions" (interests we are easily drawn to), gifts, and abilities often are connected, and they can give us some direction for how to serve others.

10. How much time each week might you have for the ministry team?

Volunteering usually requires a weekly commitment during portions of the year.

11. Would you say you're more task-oriented, relationship-oriented, or are balanced between the two orientations?

***Task-oriented**: Tends to focus more on getting tasks completed*
***Relationship-oriented**: Tends to focus more on developing relationships*



Assessment #4

Input from others

You may be at a place on your grief journey where you're thinking about serving and comforting other people through GriefShare. We recommend you ask friends and family for their feedback on how your loss might have affected you and how you might be used by God to serve others.

Directions

Send a copy of this feedback form to two people who know you well. Ask them to fill it out and return it to you. If you'd like to volunteer with a GriefShare team, give the responses to the leader to help him or her determine areas where you could serve.

See next two pages

Serving with GriefShare

Help me assess if I'm ready to volunteer

Volunteer name: _____

Instructions for friends & family

I have been thinking about volunteering with GriefShare to help people who are grieving and need comfort and support. Please share your feedback regarding my areas of growth, strengths, and weaknesses, especially in light of my own grief experience.

Part 1

Using the scale below, indicate how often you see the following traits in me:

Personal traits	Growth needed				Moderately strong				Very strong	
Eager to learn	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Collaborates well with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Works well with a variety of personality types and ethnic backgrounds	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Compassionate (moved by others' suffering to help)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Reliable/trustworthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Authentic (genuine, honest about himself/herself)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Flexible (willing to adjust to circumstances as needed)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Emotionally stable (not prone to extreme emotional expressions)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Part 2

Based on what you know about my activities in the church and other Christian organizations, how do you think the Lord has been using me to bless others?

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Administering programs
- ☐ Helping people feel comfortable
- ☐ Discipling/mentoring individuals to deepen their faith
- ☐ Helping groups understand the meaning and application of Scripture
- ☐ Listening attentively to understand others
- ☐ Connecting well with new acquaintances
- ☐ Being tactful in dealing with people who disagree with or question me
- ☐ Encouraging others to persevere through their challenges in life

Additional comments?

Next step: Send back to me

I will share your feedback with my GriefShare leader or pastor, who will help me decide where I could best serve. Thank you for sharing your perspective on how I've healed and grown since my loss.

Evaluation 4:
"Input from others"

Part 1

The chart below shows what the Bible says about each of the traits or skills found on the feedback form. Look at the areas where the person was scored higher and lower. This will help you determine if a person is ready to serve as a GriefShare leader or in another area.

Trait or skill	Why it's important
Eager to learn **Collaborates well with others**	From a biblical perspective, both of these are outgrowths of humility (a realistic & biblically informed recognition of one's own strengths & weaknesses, responsibilities & privileges). "With humility comes wisdom" (Prov. 11:2). The wise know what they don't know & are willing to learn: "Good and upright is the Lord. … He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way" (Ps. 25:8–9). By contrast, "mockers," hardened by years of self-centered arrogance, aren't open to ideas that don't benefit themselves (Prov. 9:7–8, 13:1). Humility undergirds unity and ministry within the community of faith (Rom. 12:3–16; Eph. 4:2–16; Phil. 2:3–11). Jesus sent out His disciples in teams of two (Mark 6:7; Luke 10:1); Paul embarked on his missionary journeys with teams of helpers (Acts 13:2–5,16:3-6; see also the openings of many of his letters); and the NT churches were established with teams of elders to oversee and direct them (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5).
Works well with a variety of personality types and ethnic backgrounds	From a biblical perspective, God is building His kingdom with people from all walks of life, "from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9). Christians have to learn how to embrace this diversity so that their singular focus is on unity in Christ (Gal. 3:8, 28–29; Rom. 15:7–9; Eph. 2:11–18).
Compassionate	From a biblical perspective, compassion characterized the life of Christ (Matt. 14:13–14, 15:29–32; Luke 7:11–17; etc.). Consequently, compassion must also characterize His disciples: "But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:17–18; see also Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 3:8).
Reliable/trustworthy **Authentic**	From a biblical perspective, reliability (honoring what you say you will do) and authenticity are aspects of Christian integrity (Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:9; Paul modeled integrity & authenticity throughout his ministry—see especially 2 Cor. 1:12–24, 6:3–13, 7:2–13, 11:5–11, 12:14–21; 1 Thess. 2:1–3:10).

Trait or skill	Why it's important
Flexible	From a biblical perspective, flexibility is important because God's plans might not coincide with people's plans. So, part of wise living is accepting that God's will is ultimately determinative—and best (Prov. 16:1, 9; Rom. 1:10–13; Jas. 4:13–15).
Emotionally stable	From a biblical perspective, "emotional stability" is an outgrowth of a committed & growing relationship with the Lord. This relationship fortifies Christians against excessive anger, lingering bitterness, debilitating fear & anxiety, etc. (Matt. 6:25–32; Rom. 8:28–39; Eph. 4:26–32; 1 John 4:18–20).

Part 2

There are some clear parallels between the gifts mentioned in Scripture and the roles fulfilled by a GriefShare ministry team:

Areas from input form	Roles on ministry team	Spiritual gifts*
Administering programs	Program direction	Administration, Leadership, Shepherding, Mercy
Helping people feel comfortable **Connecting well with new acquaintances**	Hospitality	Hospitality, Helps, Serving
Discipling/mentoring individuals to deepen their faith **Helping groups understand the meaning & application of Scripture** **Listening attentively to understand others** **Being tactful in dealing the people who disagree with or question me** **Encouraging others to persevere through their challenges in life**	Small-group facilitation	Discernment, Encouragement, Mercy, Teaching

* "Spiritual gifts," in Scripture, include some special divinely granted *abilities* (e.g., speaking in tongues, prophesying) as well as ministry *opportunities* to use one's skills or resources to serve others (e.g., mercy, helping, hospitality). What links such a diverse range of "gifts" is God's use of these abilities & opportunities to fulfill His kingdom purposes. Therefore, a key question in figuring out how people might serve in a GriefShare ministry is, "How has God used you in the past?" If people are new to the Christian faith, then their skills and life experiences can be indicators of ministries, because these skills & experiences are God's handiwork in their lives, preparing them "to do good works" (Eph. 2:10).



Ready to serve!

Invite the person to join your team.

Share this link → **griefshare.org/volunteer**

Let us know the person's name, and we'll follow up with guidance and support:
griefshare.org/potentialleader

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