

Walking Through Breastfeeding Grief

A guided journal to support healing

Kaia Lacy, CLC

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FIRST EDITION

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INTRO

A lot of times we feel as if we don't have permission to grieve breastfeeding, like there's some unspoken rule that if things "don't work out" it was because the we had weak will-power or failure to adequately value breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding grief isn't the result of someone throwing in the towel because they just didn't care or try hard enough. Most of the people who experience it are the ones who try hardest, and have held a deep appreciation for breastfeeding. We daydreamed of what life would be with our new child, and how we'd use our bodies to nourish them.

For a lot of us, so much of our identity as new mothers and parents is deeply intertwined with feeding. When we bring children into this world we're born into an unfamiliar identity; we step into a foreign role in being a provider to the new life we now hold in our arms.

The first responsibilities we have as parents are to provide safety, comfort, and nourishment. When we anticipate what we'll provide and that doesn't happen, we grieve the loss of that experience. We feel betrayed in that it was promised to us: that experience we were told our bodies were "made for".

Breastfeeding grief is the sensation of that loss; of expectations and autonomy. We grieve the loss of feeling self-sufficient and of feeling in control. We grieve in feeling unseen and unheard. Breastfeeding grief is different for a lot of us, but at the heart of it are wounds we don't deserve.

Healing from that grief is a process of unraveling and re-threading the parts of us that have come undone. Some of us have tears deeper than others, but none of us are beyond healing. We're not broken or useless, we just need to find our way back to wholeness again.

This workbook has been created with the intention to guide you through specific journaling prompts to explore and grow through breastfeeding grief. As you set intentional time aside for healing, please be mindful of what needs arise. Those who experience breastfeeding grief are at an increased-risk of postpartum depression and other postpartum mood disorders. If you're struggling and need support, please visit the website for Postpartum Support International, an organization with resources to connect you with the help you need.

www.postpartumsupport.net

