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Healing After Job Loss Clinical Practice Workbook

A clinically branded, function-preserving edition retaining the original exercises, psychoeducation, checklists, logs, planning tools, and response space.

DSM-5-TR · ICD-11 CLINICAL ALIGNMENT

1 · Processing Shock and Denial

2 · Understand the Full Impact

3 · Coping with Anger and Frustration

4 · Dealing with Sadness and Depression

5 · Managing Anxiety About the Future

6 · Recognizing and Addressing Self-Doubt

7 · Reflect On Why This Job Loss Happened

8 · Exploring Your Skills and Talents

9 · Setting Realistic Goals for the Future

10 · Dealing with Rejection in the Job Search

11 · Managing Loneliness Post-Job Loss

12 · Practicing Forgiveness: Letting Go of Job-Related Grievances

13 · Be Gentle with Yourself

How to use this workbook

- Use this workbook selectively and collaboratively; it is educational and does not replace individualized assessment, diagnosis, treatment, medical care, or crisis services.
- Skip, pause, or modify any activity that increases distress, danger, shame, or loss of functioning. Adapt language for culture, disability, neurodivergence, health, resources, and lived context.
- Ratings in this workbook are reflection tools unless a named, validated measure and interpretation are explicitly provided.

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Processing Shock and Denial

1. How did you first react to the news of your job loss?(e.g., disbelief, numbness, panic, confusion)

2. In what ways did the job loss impact your sense of identity and stability?(e.g., feeling lost, questioning your purpose, worrying about financial stability)

3. Have you found yourself denying or minimizing the reality of the job loss?(e.g., telling yourself it's temporary, focusing on distractions, avoiding the subject)

4. How have you been coping with the immediate shock of the loss?(e.g., seeking comfort in routines, talking to loved ones, retreating into yourself)

5. What role did your job play in your life?(e.g., source of pride, financial security, social connections, personal growth)

6. How has the loss of this job affected your daily routine and lifestyle?(e.g., changes in schedule, loss of structure, increased free time, financial adjustments)

7. What aspects of your job do you miss the most?(e.g., daily interactions with colleagues, sense of accomplishment, financial benefits)

8. What parts of the job loss feel hardest to accept?(e.g., the suddenness of the loss, feelings of unfairness, impact on future plans)

9. Have you noticed any patterns of denial in your thoughts or behaviors?(e.g., avoiding conversations about the loss, pretending nothing has changed, delaying job search efforts)

10. What might be contributing to your sense of denial?(e.g., fear of the unknown, clinging to the past, difficulty accepting change)

11. How can you gently confront the reality of your situation? (e.g., acknowledging your feelings, talking to someone you trust, setting small, manageable goals)

12. What rituals or actions can help you acknowledge and let go of this loss? (e.g., writing a letter to yourself, creating a memory box, sharing your story with others)

13. What lessons or growth can you take from this experience? (e.g., learning about your resilience, discovering new strengths, understanding your values)

Understand the Full Impact

1. What were the immediate changes you noticed after losing your job?
(e.g., changes in daily routine, loss of income, alterations in social interactions)

2. How has your daily schedule or routine been affected by the job loss?
(e.g., more free time, lack of structure, difficulty maintaining productivity)

3. What financial adjustments have you had to make since the job loss?
(e.g., cutting back on expenses, using savings, delaying major purchases)

4. How has the job loss affected your interactions with others? (e.g., changes in relationships, avoiding social situations, feeling isolated)

5. Have you noticed any changes in your self-esteem or confidence? (e.g., feeling inadequate, doubting your abilities, struggling with self-worth)

6. How have others in your life responded to your job loss? (e.g., offering support, providing advice, showing concern)

7. How has the loss of your job affected your long-term career goals? (e.g., needing to reevaluate, shifting focus, considering new opportunities)

8. What fears or concerns do you have about your professional future? (e.g., uncertainty about finding new employment, doubts about career direction, worries about financial stability)

Coping with Anger and Frustration

1. What specific events or circumstances related to your job loss have triggered feelings of anger or frustration? (e.g., the way you were informed, perceived unfairness, lack of support from management)

2. How did you react when you first felt angry or frustrated about your job loss? (e.g., yelling, withdrawing, crying, seeking comfort)

3. What ongoing thoughts contribute to your feelings of anger or frustration? (e.g., thoughts of being treated unfairly, feeling betrayed, concerns about the future)

4. What do you feel is at the core of your anger? (e.g., feeling powerless, experiencing injustice, fear of the unknown)

5. What are some constructive ways you can express your anger related to job loss? (e.g., journaling, engaging in physical exercise, discussing your feelings with a trusted person)

6. What strategies have helped you manage anger in the past? (e.g., breaking tasks into smaller steps, practicing deep breathing, seeking advice)

7. How can you channel your anger and frustration into positive action? (e.g., using energy to pursue new opportunities, advocating for yourself, developing new skills)

8. What activities help you release built-up anger or frustration in a healthy way? (e.g., physical exercise, creative projects)

Dealing with Sadness and Depression

1. How intense are your feelings of sadness and depression on a daily basis? (e.g., mild, moderate, overwhelming, fluctuating throughout the day)

2. What specific aspects of losing your job contribute most to your sadness or depression? (e.g., loss of routine, financial stress, loss of identity, fear of the future)

3. What changes have you noticed in your energy levels since losing your job? (e.g., feeling fatigued, lack of motivation, struggling to complete tasks)

4. What fears or worries have surfaced since losing your job? (e.g., fear of never finding another job, worries about financial stability, concern about others' perceptions)

5. How has the job loss affected your sense of purpose or direction in life? (e.g., feeling lost, questioning your goals, struggling to find meaning)

6. What strategies have you used in the past to cope with sadness or depression? (e.g., talking to a friend, engaging in physical activity, writing in a journal)

7. What new strategies could you explore to help manage your feelings of sadness or depression? (e.g., practicing mindfulness, seeking therapy, setting small daily goals)

8. How can you reach out for support from others when you're feeling low? (e.g., calling a friend, joining a support group, talking to a therapist)

9. What negative thoughts have you been experiencing related to your job loss? (e.g., "I'm a failure," "I'll never find another job," "No one understands what I'm going through")

10. How can you challenge or reframe these negative thoughts? (e.g., recognizing your past successes, reminding yourself that this situation is temporary, focusing on what you can control)

11. What positive affirmations or self-talk could help counteract these negative thoughts? (e.g., “I am capable,” “This is a setback, not the end,” “I have value beyond my job”)

12. What small steps can you take to start feeling more in control of your situation? (e.g., creating a daily routine, setting achievable goals, reaching out to a mentor)

13. How can you incorporate activities into your day that uplift your mood? (e.g., spending time in nature, listening to music, practicing a hobby)

Managing Anxiety About the Future

1. What specific aspects of the future are causing you the most anxiety since your job loss? (e.g., financial stability, finding new employment, adjusting to a new routine)

2. How often do you find yourself worrying about the future? (e.g., constantly, several times a day, occasionally, rarely)

3. What triggers these feelings of anxiety about the future? (e.g., checking your bank account, job search struggles, conversations about career plans)

4. What thoughts typically run through your mind when you're feeling anxious about the future? (e.g., "What if I never find another job?" "What will happen if I can't pay my bills?" "I'm not good enough to succeed")

5. How realistic are these thoughts? (e.g., completely unrealistic, somewhat exaggerated, realistic but not helpful)

6. What underlying beliefs might be contributing to your anxiety about the future? (e.g., belief that failure is not an option, fear of the unknown, belief that you must have everything figured out)

7. How can you challenge or reframe these anxious thoughts? (e.g., identifying evidence against the thought, considering more balanced perspectives, focusing on what you can control)

8. What strategies have you used in the past to manage anxiety, and how effective have they been? (e.g., deep breathing, physical exercise, talking to a friend)

9. How can you incorporate relaxation techniques into your daily routine to manage anxiety? (e.g., taking regular breaks, using relaxation apps)

Recognizing and Addressing Self-Doubt

1. What specific events or circumstances related to your job loss have triggered feelings of self-doubt? (e.g., being laid off, receiving critical feedback, difficulty finding new job opportunities)

2. How has self-doubt affected your ability to pursue new job opportunities? (e.g., hesitating to apply, feeling unqualified, avoiding interviews)

3. How has self-doubt impacted your self-esteem and overall sense of self-worth? (e.g., feeling inadequate, questioning your abilities, struggling with confidence)

4. What evidence do you have that contradicts the negative beliefs contributing to your self-doubt? (e.g., past achievements, positive feedback from others, successful experiences in previous roles)

5. How can you reframe your thoughts to be more supportive and realistic? (e.g., “I have valuable skills that are in demand,” “This is an opportunity to grow,” “I can learn from this experience”)

6. What small steps can you take to build confidence in your abilities? (e.g., setting and achieving small goals, practicing new skills, seeking feedback)

7. How can you approach job applications or interviews with more confidence? (e.g., preparing thoroughly, focusing on your strengths, visualizing success)

Reflect On Why This Job Loss Happened

1. What were the immediate reasons given for your job loss? (e.g., company restructuring, budget cuts, performance issues, economic downturn)

2. What factors beyond your control might have contributed to your job loss? (e.g., company financial struggles, changes in leadership, shifts in industry demand)

3. Were there any warning signs or indicators that your job might be at risk before it happened? (e.g., reduced workload, changes in management, company-wide layoffs)

4. How do you perceive your own performance in your previous role?(e.g., consistently strong, occasionally challenged, struggled in certain areas)

5. What areas of your job did you find most challenging? (e.g., meeting deadlines, managing relationships, adapting to changes)

6. In what ways could you have improved your performance or approach to the job? (e.g., seeking additional training, improving communication, managing time more effectively)

7. What personal circumstances, if any, may have contributed to your job loss? (e.g., health issues, work-life balance challenges, personal conflicts)

8. What lessons have you learned from this experience that could benefit you in the future? (e.g., the importance of adaptability, the need for continuous learning, the value of resilience)

9. How might others (e.g., colleagues, supervisors, mentors) perceive the reasons for your job loss? (e.g., understanding of the company's decision, critical of your performance, supportive of your next steps)

10. What feedback did you receive from your employer or colleagues after your job loss? (e.g., constructive criticism, words of encouragement, offers of help)

11. What steps can you take to find closure regarding the reasons for your job loss? (e.g., reflecting on the experience, seeking further feedback, discussing it with a mentor)

12. How can you prevent similar situations from occurring in the future? (e.g., staying informed about industry trends, continuously improving your skills, building a strong professional network)

Exploring Your Skills and Talents

1. What are the top three skills you used most frequently in your previous job? (e.g., project management, customer service, technical troubleshooting)

2. Which skills did you receive the most recognition or praise for? (e.g., leadership, creativity, attention to detail)

3. What tasks or responsibilities did you excel at in your previous role? (e.g., managing a team, meeting tight deadlines, problem-solving)

4. What skills do you have that can be applied to different industries or roles? (e.g., communication, negotiation, analytical thinking)

5. How can you highlight these transferable skills in your job search? (e.g., updating your resume, showcasing them in cover letters, discussing them in interviews)

6. What talents or abilities do you have that you didn't fully utilize in your previous job? (e.g., public speaking, writing, artistic skills)

7. What hobbies or interests do you have that could translate into marketable skills? (e.g., photography, coding, event planning)

8. What skills do you feel you need to develop to advance your career? (e.g., leadership, digital marketing, financial management)

9. How can you go about acquiring these new skills? (e.g., taking online courses, attending workshops, seeking mentorship)

10. What resources are available to help you develop your skills? (e.g., online learning platforms, professional associations, local community colleges)

11. What types of roles or industries could benefit from your unique skills and talents? (e.g., roles in tech for coding skills, industries like hospitality for customer service talents)

12. What steps can you take to market yourself effectively with your skills and talents? (e.g., crafting a compelling LinkedIn profile, creating a portfolio, tailoring your resume)

Setting Realistic Goals for the Future

1. What challenges are you currently facing as a result of your job loss? (e.g., financial instability, loss of routine, uncertainty about career direction)

2. What are your most important personal and professional priorities right now? (e.g., financial stability, personal growth, career advancement)

3. Which goals align most closely with your core values and long-term vision? (e.g., pursuing a career that aligns with your passions, building a strong support system, achieving financial independence)

4. What specific actions can you take today to start working toward your goals? (e.g., researching job openings, reaching out to your network, setting up a daily routine)

Dealing with Rejection in the Job Search

1. How do you typically react to rejection during your job search? (e.g., feeling disappointed, questioning your abilities, losing motivation)

2. What negative thoughts arise after being rejected from a job opportunity? (e.g., “I’ll never find a job,” “I’m not good enough,” “I should just give up”)

3. What feedback, if any, have you received from employers about why you were not selected? (e.g., lack of experience, cultural fit, skills mismatch)

4. How can you objectively evaluate whether the rejection was due to factors within or outside your control? (e.g., considering if the role was a good match, understanding market competition, assessing if you met all qualifications)

5. How can you learn from each rejection to improve your job search approach? (e.g., refining your resume, enhancing your interview skills, gaining new qualifications)

6. What strategies can you use to manage the emotional impact of rejection? (e.g., practicing mindfulness, talking to a friend, taking a break from the job search)

7. How can you practice self-compassion after experiencing rejection? (e.g., reminding yourself that rejection is part of the process, treating yourself kindly, avoiding harsh self-criticism)

8. What motivates you to keep searching for a job despite facing rejection? (e.g., achieving your career goals, supporting your family, personal growth)

Managing Loneliness Post-Job Loss

1. What aspects of your job provided social interaction that you now miss? (e.g., daily interactions with colleagues, team meetings, casual conversations, networking events)

2. How has your social circle changed since losing your job? (e.g., reduced contact with former coworkers, less frequent social outings, feeling disconnected from professional networks)

3. In what ways does job loss contribute to feelings of isolation? (e.g., losing a sense of purpose, spending more time alone, feeling disconnected from your usual routine)

4. Who are the people in your life you feel most connected to right now? (e.g., family members, close friends, a mentor, online communities)

5. What barriers, if any, exist in reaching out to your current social connections? (e.g., feeling ashamed of job loss, fear of being a burden, physical distance)

6. How can you strengthen these existing relationships to combat loneliness? (e.g., scheduling regular check-ins, being open about your feelings, engaging in shared activities)

7. What activities or groups could you join to meet new people and expand your social network? (e.g., joining a club or hobby group, attending community events, volunteering)

8. How can you leverage online platforms to connect with others who share your interests or experiences? (e.g., joining online forums, participating in virtual meetups, engaging in social media groups)

9. What new hobbies or interests could you explore to meet like-minded individuals? (e.g., taking a cooking class, joining a book club, participating in fitness classes)

10. What personal interests or passions have you neglected due to your job search or job loss? (e.g., creative hobbies, outdoor activities, learning new skills)

11. What steps can you take to reintegrate these interests into your daily routine? (e.g., setting aside time each week, finding online communities related to your interests, seeking out local groups)

Practicing Forgiveness: Letting Go of Job-Related Grievances

1. What specific job-related grievances are you holding onto? (e.g., unfair treatment by a manager, lack of recognition, being passed over for a promotion, job termination)

2. How do these grievances impact your emotions and mental well-being? (e.g., feeling angry, bitter, resentful, or hurt)

3. How do these unresolved feelings affect your current job search or career plans? (e.g., reluctance to apply for certain positions, fear of similar situations occurring again, lack of motivation)

4. What were the root causes of the grievances you experienced in your previous job? (e.g., company culture, management style, lack of communication, high-stress environment)

5. How did these situations unfold, and what role did you or others play in them? (e.g., misunderstandings, unmet expectations, conflicts with colleagues)

6. What does forgiveness mean to you in the context of job-related grievances? (e.g., letting go of anger, finding peace, accepting what happened without condoning it)

7. What obstacles might prevent you from forgiving, and how can you overcome them? (e.g., fear of being hurt again, feeling that forgiveness equals condoning behavior, difficulty letting go)

8. What steps can you take to let go of the grievances you've been holding onto? (e.g., writing a letter to express your feelings (without sending it), practicing mindfulness, seeking closure in your own way)

9. How can you create a ritual or practice to symbolize letting go of these grievances? (e.g., burning the letter you wrote, meditating on release, creating a physical representation of letting go)

10. How will you know when you've truly let go of a grievance? (e.g., feeling less emotional charge when thinking about it, not dwelling on the past, being more focused on the future)

Be Gentle with Yourself

1. What self-critical thoughts have you noticed arising since your job loss? (e.g., “I’m a failure,” “I should have done more,” “I’m not good enough”)

2. How can you reframe these self-critical thoughts with self-compassionate statements? (e.g., “I did my best in a difficult situation,” “It’s okay to feel upset,” “This does not define my worth”)

3. What does being gentle with yourself mean to you? (e.g., allowing yourself to rest, speaking kindly to yourself, accepting your emotions without judgment)

4. How can you show yourself kindness during this challenging time? (e.g., taking breaks when needed, engaging in activities that bring you joy, practicing positive affirmations)

5. What expectations have you set for yourself during your job search or recovery period? (e.g., finding a new job quickly, maintaining a positive outlook, not showing vulnerability)

6. How can you adjust your expectations to be more gentle with yourself? (e.g., allowing yourself more time to process emotions, setting smaller, more achievable goals, accepting that it's okay to have setbacks)

7. What self-care activities have you found helpful in the past? (e.g., taking walks in nature, reading, spending time with loved ones, practicing yoga)

8. What new self-care practices can you explore to support your well-being? (e.g., trying meditation, starting a new hobby, engaging in creative outlets like painting or writing)

2026 Clinical Alignment

DSM-5-TR (including Sept. 2025 update) · ICD-11 CDDR / 2026 MMS

Classification status

- DSM-5-TR: No diagnosis under this title · No diagnosis is established by the title.
- ICD-11 CDDR: · No diagnosis is established by the title.
- This workbook is non-diagnostic. A title, checklist, or completed activity never establishes a diagnosis.

Pages requiring the updated interpretation

- The audit identified source pages 1, 2, 6, 10, 12, 15, 19, 22, 23, 26, 30, 31, 34. The statements below supersede incompatible diagnostic, scoring, safety, or resource wording on those pages.

Diagnostic and differential limits

- Assess duration, distress/functional impairment, cultural and medical context, substance/medication effects, and relevant differential diagnoses before assigning any diagnosis.

Document-specific corrections

- Pages [2, 30] · Frame ·Healing After Job Loss· using the DSM/ICD status below; add duration, impairment, exclusions, and differentials without reproducing criteria. The title alone must never be treated as a diagnosis.
- Pages [1, 2] · Treat the Healing After Job Loss ratings/checklists as author-created reflection tools only. Remove unsupported severity bands, cutoffs, totals, or language suggesting diagnostic validity; label response anchors and recall period explicitly.
- Pages [2, 6, 10, 12, 15, 19, 22, 23, 26, 30, 31] · Avoid pathologizing expected grief or imposing forgiveness, closure, exposure, or relationship contact. Escalate for suicide risk, severe functional decline, trauma symptoms, coercion, or persistent disabling grief requiring diagnostic assessment. Apply this specifically to the workbook's Processing Shock and Denial, Understand the Full Impact, Coping with Anger and Frustration, Dealing with Sadness and Depression sections.
- Pages [1, 10, 15, 34] · Review all medical assertions in Healing After Job Loss with a qualified medical professional; distinguish psychoeducation from individualized advice and add referral thresholds, contraindications, and medication/procedure cautions appropriate to this population.

Measures, scoring, and permissions

- Treat the Healing After Job Loss ratings/checklists as author-created reflection tools only. Remove unsupported severity bands, cutoffs, totals, or language suggesting diagnostic validity; label response anchors and recall period explicitly. custom/unvalidated unless evidence is supplied confirm no third-party item wording was adapted

Intervention scope and contraindications

- Avoid pathologizing expected grief or imposing forgiveness, closure, exposure, or relationship contact. Escalate for suicide risk, severe functional decline, trauma symptoms, coercion, or persistent disabling grief requiring diagnostic assessment.

Crisis and current resources

- For immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. In the U.S., call or text 988 or use 988lifeline.org. Outside the U.S., use verified local emergency and crisis services. A workbook is not a crisis service or safety plan.

Authoritative references

- <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm/updates-to-dsm/updates-to-dsm-5-tr-criteria-text>
- <https://icd.who.int/browse/2026-01/mms/en>
- <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240077263>
- <https://988lifeline.org/>