



ALYSSA MOORE
COUNSELING

Mindfulness Altar

Sometimes when we have lost someone very special to us our grief can feel overwhelming. Mourning can look like so many different things that make daily life really difficult. Sometimes we push away our grief and refuse to mourn because that feels like the only way to get through. Creating a special place and time for mourning and grief can help you to process the emotions and honor the person while also allowing you to move through the other parts of your life by setting a healthy boundary. This exercise asks you to create a special place and set aside a dedicated time to remember and honor your loved one in a mindful way.

First, find a place to create your altar. It doesn't have to be a large space, just large enough to hold a few special things. Some people have used a shelf on a bookcase, a window sill, or an small area on their kitchen counter.

Next, create the altar by gathering a few things that represent your loved one or your loss. Think about things that you feel a deep connection to like photographs, items of clothing or jewelry, letters to or from your loved one. Whatever makes you feel close to your loved one and their memory is okay. Place these items in the spot you have designated.

Each day or a few times each week make offerings to your altar. That may look like kind words that you speak to the memory of your loved one, or reading a letter that you wrote to them, playing a piece of music that feels special, placing an object that you found that reminds you of the person on the altar. As you are making your offerings make sure that you are really present in the moment. Notice how you feel in your body. Notice what thoughts are coming up for you. Really feel the emotions that you are experiencing.

Finally, close the ritual in a way that feels natural. Some people say good bye or good night, some people blow out candles if they have lit them, some people cover the altar until the next time they come for an offering. This allows you to end the experience and go on to the next thing in your life while still honoring your loved one.

When you feel that you are ready, whether that is a week/month/year, you can disassemble your altar. That doesn't mean that the love or honor is lost or over, it just means that you have processed your own feelings around the loss and can experience that love in the space and in your life without the help of the altar.