

Example 3

1. Recognize emotional pain

Upset and Hurting (While pain event is still fresh)

What happened? Be brief in your statement. (Perception)

Spot, my dog, was put to sleep after breaking his back while we were away on vacation.

What thoughts did you direct towards yourself during the event? (Thoughts)

I was helpless and wanted to do something.

What thoughts did you direct towards the event itself? (Thoughts)

This wouldn't have happened if we had been at home. Why would God allow this to happen?

Death is such a terrible thing!

This was the worst thing that could have happened while on vacation.

What feelings did you experience? (One word descriptions)

Sadness, Hopelessness, Anger

What did you want to do? (Actions)

Cry

What did you do? (Actions)

Talked about it a lot.

Rate this event on a scale from 1 – 10 8

2. Create favorable conditions to process in

Before attempting to process an event, make sure you are rested, fresh and not violating the H.A.L.T formula. Don't allow yourself to get too hungry, angry, lonely, or tired. Be sure you are in a comfortable place where it is quiet and you are not likely to be disturbed

3. Two attitudes: Humility and a Positive point of view

Check the “me” factor by using humility.

How could you have viewed the event in a more positive light? (Looking at the overall picture and things learned)

My family and I received a whole lot of enjoyment out of him while he was with us.
It was a good thing we were on vacation when it happened so we wouldn't have had to see him in such a feeble position.
Now my family and I have more freedom to come and go as we please.

4. Process with three skills: Accurate Thinking, Assertiveness and Listening

Accurate Thinking

How could you have been more accurate in your response? (Identify all negative thoughts, find the thinking errors that were used, and write accurate responses for each)

Negative Thought	Thinking Error	Accurate Thought
<u>A. I was helpless and wanted to do something.</u>	<u>A. Controlling/ Poor Me Thinking</u>	<u>A. There is nothing I could do to prevent this from happening.</u>
<u>B. This wouldn't have happened if we had been home.</u>	<u>B. Overgeneralization/ Jumping to Conclusions</u>	<u>B. Uncle Wayne was there and it still happened. There was no way to stop it.</u>
<u>C. Why would God allow this to happen?</u>	<u>C. Heaven's Reward Fallacy</u>	<u>C. God let's nature take its course. We all have to die at some point.</u>
<u>D. Death is such a terrible thing!</u>	<u>D. Polarized Thinking/ Filtering</u>	<u>D. Death puts animals out of their misery. For Christians it's our access home.</u>
<u>E. This was the worst thing that could have happened while on vacation.</u>	<u>E. Filtering/ Jumping to Conclusions/ Polarized Thinking</u>	<u>E. A lot of bad things, even worse than this, could have happened.</u>

Listening

What could you have done to improve your listening? (Put yourself in the other person's shoes and see it from his or her viewpoint)

Spot had a lot of health problems.
There was absolutely nothing anyone could have done to prevent something like this from happening.
He was probably in a lot of pain with his arthritis.

Assertiveness

How could you have been more assertive? (Find your need. Then write an assertive response to get your need met, remembering the “you” rule)

Identify the need: 1. To understand why Spot was taken.
Form an assertive statement: 1. This question is something that most people ask themselves after a loss. However, the only thing we can know is that God put laws into nature, making it where everything dies at some point. I'm just glad I have a God who is perfect in every way and knows the best system for things to work.

Be aware that the level of pain events processed should be in direct proportion to the level of attitude and skill development.