PSYCHOEDUCATION / CLIENT HANDOUT

Grief, Self-Blame and Identity After Relational Harm

Acknowledging both loss and resilience

People may grieve a relationship that continues, a hoped-for future, trust, family closeness, opportunities, or parts of themselves that were put aside. Grief can coexist with relief, anger, love, and uncertainty.

Self-blame can become habitual after chronic invalidation. Reflecting on context, practical constraints, and another person's responsibility can help create a more accurate and compassionate understanding of what happened.

Reconnection may begin with small experiences of choice: remembering interests, spending time with supportive people, or recognizing strengths that helped you survive difficult circumstances.

QUESTIONS YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER

- [ ] What losses deserve recognition?
- [ ] What strengths have I overlooked?
- [ ] What matters to me now?

NEXT RESOURCE: Use Worksheet 04: Softening Self-Blame, 08: Grief, and 09: Identity.

Suggested reading: Durvasula, R. (2023). Working with the Fallout of Narcissistic Abuse. PESI training materials. | Durvasula, R. (2023). Working with Clients Experiencing NA/ARS: An Antagonism-Informed Treatment Approach. PESI training materials.