



Identifying and Skill Building with Losses

High performing individuals are often trained to ignore or minimize their significant life losses. While we are all responsible at some point to get up, dust ourselves off, and move on after a loss, the process of metabolizing the losses is critical to the leader's energy level, ability to focus, innovate and connect well with others. In this exercise, write down the 10 most significant losses in your life in the table below. Beside each, write the life consequences of that loss. This can include the following:

- Losses of significant relationships (death, alienation, a move to another location, etc.)
- Financial losses
- Loss of a part of yourself (ability to trust others, confront, accept yourself)
- Your own failures
- Health losses
- Stability in your original home environment
- Career losses

Name of Loss	Consequences

Identifying and Skill Building with Losses *(continued)*

How You Were Trained to Deal with Loss

Write down how you have learned to handle loss that may not have been the best for you.

Here are a few examples:

- Put it behind me and don't dwell on it
- Be strong and don't get down or sad
- Think more about others because sadness is selfish
- Think happy thoughts when sadness comes up
- Solve the problem and get involved in the future

Identifying and Skill Building with Losses (*continued*)

Your own past “Training Experiences”

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

The Skills

“Moving on” is not enough. Leaders need to pay attention to their losses, in order to recover and learn from them. Here are the essential skills that must occur before moving on:

1. **Connect in a vulnerable way:** As much as possible, bring your losses to relationship. The more you relegate grief to your alone time, the longer you it will take. The more “people time” you allow, the less time it will take.
2. **Value what is no more:** don’t dismiss or devalue what you lost (“that person was toxic, good riddance”). You will never fully work through it then. Instead, value the good parts as well (“that person was toxic, but the good times were fun, and I liked his sense of humor and strength).
3. **Be sad and say goodbye:** Allow yourself to feel the sadness of losing someone or something. Say goodbye and mean it.
4. **Forgive:** cancel the debts. The more unforgivable the event, the more you need to forgive.
5. **Replace:** Don’t make an idol of the lost person or thing. Find those who will help you replace whatever contribution it brought you.
6. **Learn:** Losses teach us something about the future. Write down what you have learned that will help your life moving forward. Use your memory banks.

Adapt: Loss is a reality. Don’t argue with reality, adapt to it and learn to live well.