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Healing: Your "Elevator Speech"

Answering "easy" questions related to our loss can be tougher than one might first assume. "Are you married?" "How many children do you have?" "Will you visit your parents?" These are all simple questions, but may be more complicated after loss. Developing a short 'script' about your loved one and your loss will help you feel more in control and prepared for these types of questions. This can be especially helpful when describing losses that may be complicated, traumatic, or involve some type of stigma in society. (Thanks to Ronnie Walker for this idea)

Creating your "Elevator Speech"

- Keep it short. It will be easier to remember. If others would like more details (and you want to share more) then they will ask questions.
- Think about how you want your loved one to be remembered. What would you like others to know about them?
- What do you want to share (and not share) about how your loved one died?
- Practice it a few times until it feels more natural.

A Starter Script

"My husband was a [career or hobby], he was known for [positive personality trait]. He died 3 years ago after valiantly fighting cancer." [For suicide or overdose, you get to frame how suicide or overdose is viewed. I recommend framing it as a personal struggle with a psychological disorder or difficult circumstances, not as a moral failing. A more recent trend is to avoid using "commit" to describe suicide. "Commit" is commonly used to describe perpetrating a crime -- which is very different than "dying by suicide".