

Grief Rumination: The Mediating Link Between Guilt, Pending Issues, and Bereavement Outcomes

Sara Albuquerque¹, Ricardo Pinto¹, Asuman Büyükcan Tetik³, Alexandra Coelho²

¹HEI-Lab: Digital Human-Environment Interaction Labs, Lusófona University, Lisbon, Portugal, Lisboa, Portugal, ²ISPA - University Institute of Psychological, Social and Life Sciences, Lisboa, Portugal,

³Utrecht University, Utrecht, The Netherlands

Background:

Grief and trauma following the loss of a loved one are complex emotional experiences with significant individual differences. Among the various factors influencing the grieving process, guilt and unresolved issues with the deceased have been identified as important variables. Understanding the mechanisms through which these variables impact grief can inform interventions aimed at promoting healthier grieving processes.

Rationale:

This longitudinal study aims to investigate the role of guilt and pending issues in the experience of grief and trauma among individuals who have lost a loved one. Specifically, the study examines the mediating effect of grief rumination.

Design:

The study comprises 141 participants, aged between 18 and 76, who have experienced the loss of a loved one. Data was collected at two assessment points: the first assessment occurred 3 to 6 months post-loss, while the second assessment took place 9 to 12 months post-loss. Utilizing a longitudinal design allows for the examination of changes in grief, trauma, guilt, pending issues, and grief rumination over time.

Results:

Analysis revealed total mediation for all models, indicating that grief rumination fully mediated the relationship between guilt and pending issues, and the experience of grief and trauma.

Conclusion:

The results highlight the importance of addressing guilt and unresolved issues in interventions aimed at promoting healthy grieving processes. Targeting grief rumination may be a particularly effective strategy for mitigating the negative impact of guilt and pending issues on grief and trauma outcomes among bereaved individuals.

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