

Go loss,

Book of Moments

Your name:



Loss is life's humbling common denominator.

It's time to address the layers of loss and grief. Loss of relationships, work, culture, language, identity, and more.

HOW SOLOSS WORKS



1

At the centre of this prototype is a new informal role called the **Losstender**. Losstenders are regular Edmontonians who listen, acknowledge, and give concrete form to Sharers' experiences of grief and loss -- whether as paintings, objects, songs, dances, meditations or/and stories.



2

Sharers are community members experiencing grief and loss -- whether acute or accumulated. They might be grappling with the loss of friends or family, relationships, jobs, possessions, a place, their identity, language, or culture.



3

Sharers choose who they want their Losstender to be and their preferred form of expression, meeting four to five times to share experiences. Losstenders leave Sharers with **something they can see, touch, or listen to, as a way to honour loss, validate feelings, and foster renewal.**



Our first round of prototyping attracted some frontline workers as Sharers and that led us to ask if Soloss might provide a valuable alternative to the more solution-oriented processes that staff can usually access through Employee Assistance Programs.

Soloss partnered with The Mustard Seed and Bissell Centre to find out.





Some moments

*The more I thought about
the story, the more I
realized that absolutely
everything is a story — I am
a story, you are story, the
universe is a story.*

- Harold R Johnson

INTRODUCTION

You are story. And, you are about to encounter another human's story - in the form of small moments, vignettes.

Each of us is a beautiful kaleidoscope of identities, roles, experiences, beliefs, and perspectives that shape how we see, hear, feel, and interact with others.

As you read some of the following moments, we invite you to reflect:

- What are some of your identities, roles, life experiences, beliefs, and perspectives?
- How might these identities, roles, life experiences, beliefs, and perspectives influence what you listen for, pay attention to, and prioritize?



On the Soloss experience....

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I really appreciated that my Losstender didn't make me talk about traumatic events.

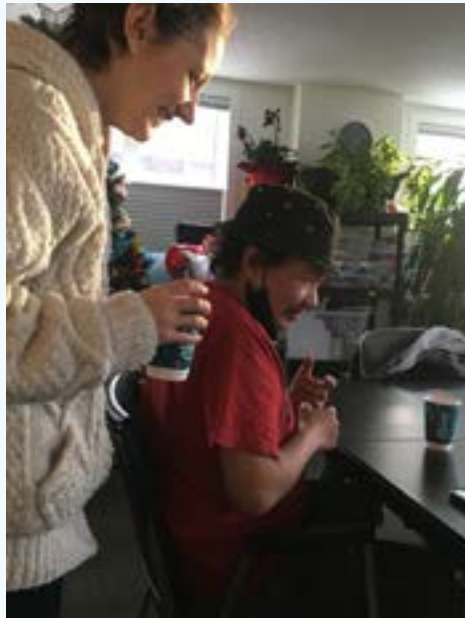
It just felt like I talked more about the people versus like the trauma behind what I had experienced.

- T, A Sharer

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I was able to just be like, like two friends hanging out. Me just being able to speak my mind and really speak my mind because you know, like when you have your close friends like I do have a best friend.

- C, A Sharer



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We did this thing where she had a plan, and she was like you're gonna pick beads and you're gonna make a bracelet. So at first I was like 'I don't think this is gonna work out.' I was like, "Ok whatever you say, I trust the process." And then at the end I ended up with this gorgeous beautiful token, that I still wear, even at the gym. It's a bit of a token. It triggers my memory of what I shared.

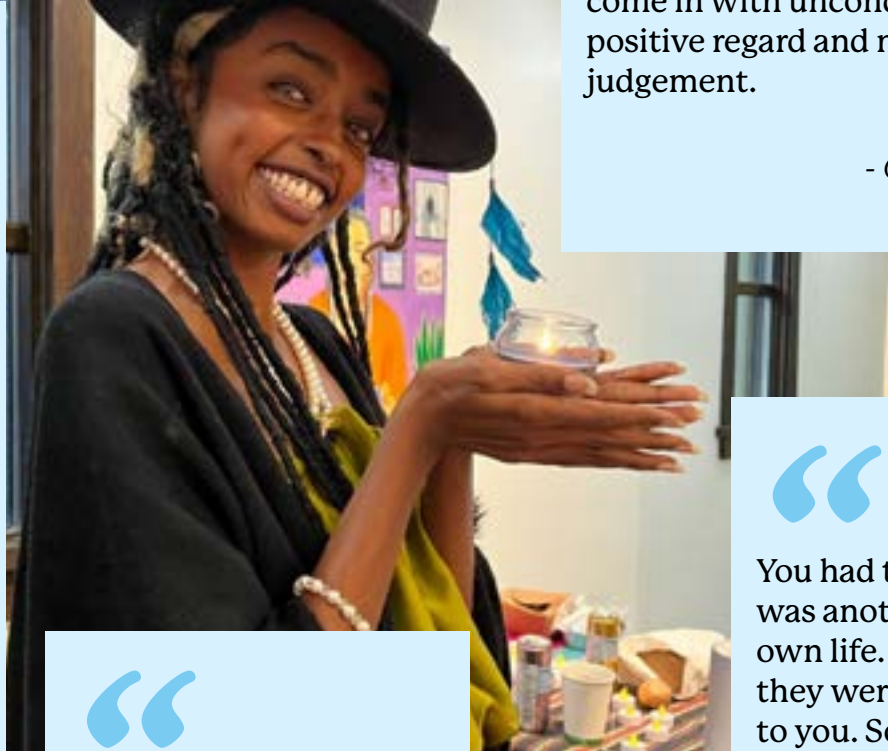
- N, A Sharer

On the value of non-professional care

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It was awesome to be able to meet a normal person who was just trying to help, not somebody who is there that is like their job, it reminds me of how I want to be with community. I grew up around counselors and stuff like that, workers seem like they just are there, there's no intention to get to know you. That's what is missing, the compassion, the relationship, building in with the workforce.

- T, A Sharer



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I don't have to be 'sick enough'. It reminded me how valuable peer to peer care is, and how accessible it is.

- V, A Sharer

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It was definitely more real where I felt like I wasn't going to be judged in any way. And that's the biggest thing for me - to always come in with unconditional positive regard and non-judgement.

- C, A Sharer

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I have enough professional people in my life. It was nice interacting with someone who maybe didn't know the ins and outs of my job.

- C, A Sharer

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You had to take into consideration this was another human being with their own life. And that they were willing - they were willing - to expose themselves to you. So there was mutual respect for that bit of like, providing safety and protection. I would call it a reciprocal relationship. Because when you go to see some therapist, it's not reciprocal. You just dump.

- N, A Sharer

On impact and influence

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I have felt more grounded as I felt that my losstender respected my practices. She's make opportunities for me to be quite and still and cuddle up with my blanket. She gave me permission to be connected to myself.

- T, A Sharer

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Something I wasn't doing was looking after myself.. I started to create time for self care. like moisturizing my body, hair, and body. I take time to do that. I wasn't looking after myself like that..

- J, A Sharer

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Soloss opened doors of communication with coworkers because I wanted to share what I was going through. And my husband respected that. I called my losstender my life coach.

- T, A Sharer

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It allowed me to connect with things larger than myself without shame

- D, A Sharer



The time of the year makes a difference



The timing of Soloss was the hardest because we're ramping into the hardest season, where the most people pass. I would have loved if it was the summer and I felt just more like I could breathe. I think it was between like me engaging with that and not being ok here, and this is my job.

- C, A Sharer



Timing can be improved - either the end of winter or mid summer. I would have liked to complete my time with Soloss.

- C, A Sharer

Space matters



I met my Losstender in a coffee shop, my back was to people, and the way - I'm a bit of traumatized person - so I like to be able to see people, to hear everything around me. Talking about traumatic things in an environment that didn't feel safe for me, that probably didn't help.

- C, A Sharer



I literally spilled my guts. Like, I was like, this is everything about me, but I never told anybody like I told her things that nobody in my life knows. So that was really nice. But it was also really hard to do in a restaurant setting.

- N, A Sharer

Sharers want to see themselves reflected in a Losstender

Sharers selected less on healing modality, and sought to see parallels in life expertise or shared roles



It was hard, I couldn't really relate to any of them, but the reason I chose my Losstender was she shared some similar loss, and and her brother involved in street life. What I wished I seen was a person with a messed up childhood, dysfunctional family, street involved.

- T, A Sharer



I went with my Losstender as I didn't feel like I connected with any of the other Losstenders. The fact that - like I'm in recovery and I'm in charge of the event committee and I love love love party planning - and that's a big thing that she does. I love arts and crafts, and like, she does that for a living pretty much.

- L, A Sharer



I felt older than most of the Losstenders, that was a bit awkward.

- L, A Sharer

ENDING REFLECTIONS

Where and how have these vignettes landed -- in your heart, head, body, spirit?

What do you want to cherish & cultivate from these vignettes?

What curiosities and desires are you left with?



