

Dr.ir. Marieke Sonneveld
Vince Vijsma

MSc Graduation project
Design for Interaction
Delft University of Technology

16 September 2026

Appendices:

Reclaiming
a public space
for grief, mourning
and the dead

Tom den Hartog



Appendices

Appendix - Design Brief	124
Appendix A - Field trips	129
A.1 Stedelijk Museum Schiedam	129
Appendix B - Expert interviews	131
B.1 Christina	131
B.2 Carmen	131
B.3 Hans	131
B.4 Liza	132
B.5 Sofie	132
B.6 Nathalie	132
Appendix C - Experience experts	134
C.1 Belle	134
C.2 Billie	134
C.3 Lotte	135
C.4 Jeroen	135
C.5 Tygo	136
C.6 Josephine	136
C.7 Alexander	137
C.8 Hidde	138
C.9 Rosanne	138
Appendix D - Participant talks	139
Appendix E - Clusters	141
Figure E.1. A space to allow	141
Figure E.2. Avoiding the discomfort	141
Figure E.3. Art of presence	141
Figure E.4. Making meaning yourself	142
Figure E.5. An intertwined presence	142
Figure E.6. Expression as experience	142
Figure E.7. Transforming a loss	143
Figure E.8. Connected in uniqueness	143
Figure E.9. Loss beyond the person	144
Figure E.10. How space shapes	144
Figure E.11. Being unintentionally reduced	145
Appendix F - Tensions and inspiring qualities	146
F.1 Tensions	146
F.2 Inspiring qualities	147
Appendix G - Pre-holiday brainstorm	149
G.1 Personal brainstorm	149
G.2 Joint session: setup, ideas and discussion	149
Appendix H - Booklet	151
H.1 Questions and answers per participant	151
H.2 Trip notes and gathered materials	152
Appendix I - Co-design session	153
I.1 The session and the participants	153
I.2 The story	153
I.3 The clusters, grounding and stickers	154
I.4 How each participant chose	158

Appendix J - First concept cards	159
Appendix K - Ideas that were not built	160
K.1 An object with labels	160
K.2 Compost	160
K.3 De verhalen in gen z taal	161
K.4 Eating a memory	161
Appendix L - Marjolein's practice and the three textures, unpacked	162
L.1 Marjolein's practice	162
L.2 Awkwardness	163
L.3 Uncertainty	163
L.4 Complexity	163
Appendix M - Iteration tests	164
M.1 Test 1: the caged mould and two cards	164
M.2 Test 2: the labelled rouwdier and the bond, set apart	165
Appendix N - The exposition	168
N.1 Procedure and conditions	168
N.2 Full texts: label and spoken text	168
N.3 Rouwdieren per participant	169
N.4 Design feedback	170
N.5 The habitat station	170
Appendix O - Testing the AI-returned form	172
O.1 Purpose, materials and participants	172
O.2 Procedure and message	172
O.3 Responses per participant	173
O.4 Limitations	174
Appendix P - Placements	175
Appendix Q — The website	176
Q.1 What it is, and how it was made	176
Q.2 The route	176
Q.3 The landscape and the management side	181
Q.4 What happens to what is given	183
Q.5 How it looks, and what was left behind	183
Q.6 What this version does not do	183
Appendix R. Testing the making space website	184
R.1 Testing during development	184
R.2 Walkthrough with a web developer	184
Appendix S. The twelve rouwdieren	186
S.1 Tygo — Onze momentjes / Flessenpost	186
S.2 Belle — De dennenappel	186
S.3 Remy — The Rose	186
S.5 Fabian — Mijn oude vader	187
S.6 Lotte — White butterfly	188
S.7 Tobi — Forest creature	188
S.9 Stijn — My own rouwdier	188
S.10 Kasper — Everywhere I am	189
S.11 Roos — Twee zussen	189

Appendix - Design Brief

Project Proposal IDE Master Graduation

Name student _Tom den Hartog

Student number 5095042

Reclaiming a public space for grief, mourning and the dead

Please state the title of your graduation project (above). Keep the title compact and simple. Do not use abbreviations. The remainder of this document allows you to define and clarify your graduation project. ■

Other (in case of a double degree outside IDE):

Introduction

Describe the context of your project in the box below; What is the domain in which your project takes place? Who are the main stakeholders and what interests are at stake? Describe the opportunities (and limitations) in this domain to better serve the stakeholder interests. (max 250 words)

The end of life is inevitable for everyone, yet it has largely disappeared from everyday life and the public sphere. In the past, people used to live together with death and dying, as when death came, it got intertwined with everyday life at home and within their community. People cared for their dying, had equally valuable ways of preparing their deceased, and created shared meaning around this whole process. There was a space to collectively say goodbye and mourn together.

Nowadays, however, death and dying have been pushed out of communal life and the public sphere. People have been estranged from caring for the dying as healthcare has taken over, and professionals now take care of the deceased's body, also transforming our way of being and living with the absence of a loved one.

There is a complex web of interconnected stakeholders, from bereaved individuals, families, and their communities to healthcare professionals, the funeral industry, and policymakers. Together, they influence each other, shape the care for the dying and the dead, and the rituals and practices through which mourning and grief take place. The current professional world has a strong focus on practicality and offers standardized options. This creates an opportunity to design a more personal experience that attunes to the actual needs of the bereaved.

Furthermore, this subject comes with a broad and complex set of limitations, as it is heavily loaded with emotion and cultural meaning, which also brings ethical constraints. As the subject has much depth and breadth, it will be a challenge to remain realistic within the given timeframe.

Introduction (continued): space for images

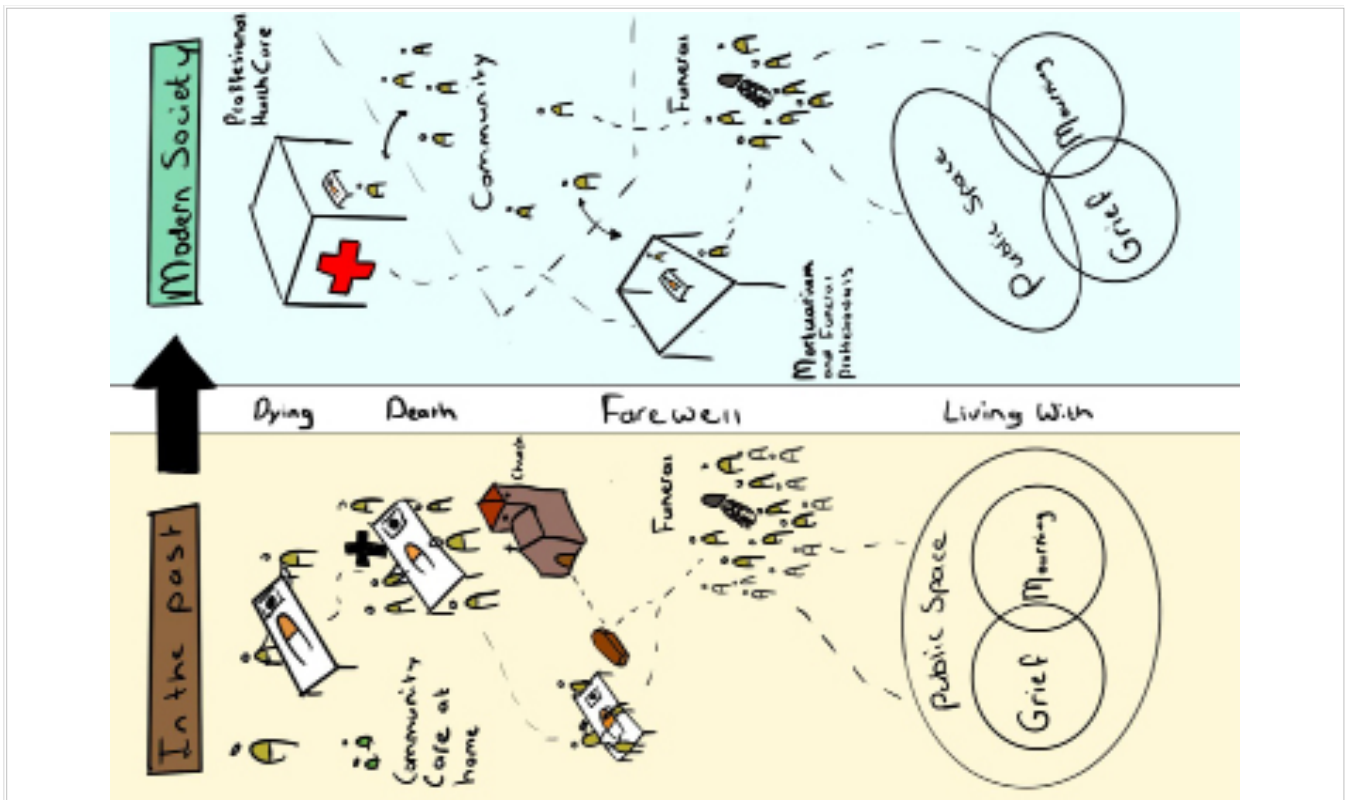


Figure 1: How death, dying and mourning moved from community to private

Figure 2:

Problem Definition

Over the past decades, the end of life has gradually disappeared from public and communal life, and current practices have distanced from meaningful ways of dealing with death and dying. This has estranged us from both individual and collective meaning making in grief and mourning, which results in experiences of suffering and emptiness.

Contemporary practices around bereavement tend to assume a linear process and often fail to respect collective mourning, diverse ways of grieving, and personal boundaries. By leaving space for different modes of experiencing, such as emotional, embodied, and relational, and by allowing forms of expression beyond language as the dominant mode of communication, alternative forms of collective mourning and grieving may be discovered.

To support such development as a designer, one should not steer the process, but rather facilitate cooperation that allows participants to move beyond current frameworks. This creates an opportunity to collectively reimagine new forms of meaning-making rooted in diversity, instead of trying to fit meaning into predefined forms of expression. The result may be the co-design of an open-ended experience, such as a shared practice, or toolkit, that supports both individual and collective forms of expression in the public space.

Assignment

(Investigate/Design/Validate/Create) a (what will be the deliverable □prototype/roadmap/process/ intervention /approach/guideline/strategy/...) to (what should it do □create/understand/evaluate/validate/ improve/execute/ analyse/...) (the objective □experience/value/process/product/...) for (whom □target group/client/...) in (what context).

Create a design to enable individual and collective forms of meaningful expression of grief and mourning for bereaved individuals and their communities in public space.

Explain your project approach to carrying out your graduation project and what research and design methods you plan to use to generate your design solution (max 150 words).

This project aims to investigate the meanings surrounding death and mourning within the interconnected web of human and more-than-human actors, drawing inspiration from Bruno Latour's Actor – Network Theory (ANT). I aim to challenge the medicalized view of death as a problem to be managed by exploring how the dead act as active forces in our lived reality, inspired by the philosopher Vinciane Despret.

Through interviews and observations, I will investigate how non-dualistic ways of being with our dead remain alive in everyday life. These insights will be translated into something more tangible, such as speculative fabulation, an embodied experience, or provotypes. By facilitating co-design processes, my role is to create an open-ended space for collective meaning-making. Ultimately, this project seeks to recontextualize suppressed relations for the public sphere, allowing multiple ways of being to co-exist and co-create shared meaning.

Project planning

GANT chart for project planning:

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVG8NXufc=?share_link_id=474860778365

Motivation and personal ambitions

Explain why you wish to start this project, what competencies you want to prove or develop (e.g. competencies acquired in your MSc programme, electives, extracurricular activities or other).

Optionally, describe whether you have some (max 5) personal learning ambitions which you explicitly want to address in this project, on top of the learning objectives of the Graduation Project itself. You might think of e.g. acquiring in depth knowledge on a specific subject, broadening your competencies or experimenting with a specific tool or methodology (200 words max).

I want to begin this project because I believe it addresses an important societal subject that is heavily underexplored within design. From personal experience, I have noticed that many contemporary approaches place expectations on people while leaving too little space for mourning and grief to be experienced in a way that feels meaningful on a personal level.

Throughout different courses, we are taught to approach matters relationally. Within this project, I hope to apply this perspective and further develop my ability to build complex networks that value difference and recognise relationality. This extends not only to relations between humans, but to all involved actors, through developing skills in observing alongside engaging. I am particularly interested in understanding how being is interconnected with all entities we relate to, within a dynamic and ongoing process.

Furthermore, I aim to strengthen my skills in engaging with highly sensitive and emotionally loaded contexts, and in translating situated knowledge that extends beyond linguistic boundaries into applicable design insights and tools. In addition to this, I want to develop my skills in facilitating participatory design, building on foundations I gained in Creative Facilitation. I believe that relational knowledge cannot be fully grasped by a single individual, and that facilitating meaningful collaboration can allow this complexity to emerge more deeply.

Appendix A - Field trips

A.1 Stedelijk Museum Schiedam

Oscar Abraham Pabón

This simple table is covered with unique plant species including the *Nepenthes*, whose name comes from the Greek for 'dispelling grief'. Since 2012, Oscar Abraham Pabón has been reading aloud to these plants, beginning with philosophical texts he hoped would contribute to the well-being of the plants and to himself. The vibrations of his voice and the exhalation of CO2 mean the plants should grow faster, while reading aloud at a leisurely pace brought about a better understanding of the subject matter.

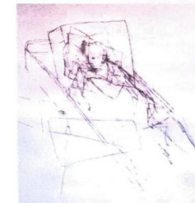
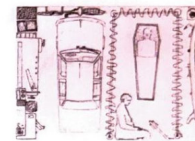
Pabón now also talks to his plants about the troubling political situation in his native Venezuela, recalling memories while feeling the therapeutic effects of an open conversation. The translucent, coloured tubes in this work remind the artist of this homeland and allow the plants to absorb speech more directly. They sit on the table alongside a Dutch translation of Polish writer Wisława Szymborska's collected poems. You are invited to read a poem to the plants out of gratitude for nature, or just for your own enjoyment.



Arnoud Holleman

Arnoud Holleman's drawing of his father in an open casket is rather absurd, yet it captures the reality of death in a surprisingly direct way. In the screened-off area, a stern, naked angel-like woman is keeping watch: the artist's mother. Holleman's father was a quiet man who always just acted as if everything was fine, present in his home only like a ghost. After he died, the artist's perspective changed: 'In processing the loss, I gained a father I never really had. I began to look at our family differently – with a greater sense of reality. I would never have missed his dying, especially because it gave me so much insight.'

This death changed the dynamics of the house: the family restructured and Holleman's relationship with his mother grew more intimate. The drawing of her on her own sickbed is pure tenderness – it is a heart spilling over with love.



Hanne Hagenaaars / Paul Kooiker

Hanne Hagenaaars: 'I wanted to create a ritual for my mother. These clothes became that ritual and, in hindsight, I realised it brought me closer to her. I wanted to use these clothes to show that anyone can make something for someone else – to invest time in that person. It doesn't have to be beautiful, you don't need to take a course, and I'm not an artist. But the time you spend making something is essentially time spent with the person you're making it for.' The photographs by Paul Kooiker add something abstract and timeless.



From: Hoe kunnen we liefde voelen – en verbeelden?, by Lucette ter Borg, NRC, 16 August 2023

Figure A.1. The wall texts accompanying the three works this field visit draws on, Stedelijk Museum Schiedam.

Insights that entered the clustering from stedelijk museum schiedam

1. Experiencing other's grief seems easier than voicing our own
2. Grief and loss should not be washed away
3. Simply investing time brings you closer
4. Relations can change and grow after death

Insights that entered the clustering from Symposium on art, dying and grief

1. Wisdom in end-of-life can help in creating meaning
2. Art can connect people and make them feel connected
3. People often need a little push for creative expression
4. Presence is an active art (art of being)
5. You want to carry grief with you but also private if desired
6. Abstract in art can allow connectedness in shared but differing experiences
7. Society can make you feel like you're failing at grief
8. Loss exposes how connected we are and the value of that

Cemetery visits

Three cemeteries were visited as inspiration rather than as sites of structured observation. No systematic notes were taken; what follows is the set of impressions that carried through into the clustering.

1. Objects on a cemetery are very personal (from beer to toys)
2. Grief shifted from public with rules and customs to private and loose
3. In NL there also were joyful and celebrations around death
4. People desire tangible memories (physical objects with meaning)
5. Death is like sex a taboo, if present it's the only thing people will see
6. Mourning is something heavily influenced by culture

Appendix B - Expert interviews

Here the insights from the Expert Interviews are summarised. These were all used later for clustering.

B.1 Christina

Cultural anthropologist specialising in East Asian studies, who has taught a university course on the anthropology of death. Lived and worked in Korea for around eight years. Ten statements from this conversation entered the clustering.

1. Joyful approach challenges the heaviness around death
2. In the east things are also shifting
3. Spaces around death are lively and joyful
4. Cemeteries, cremation sites etc. are social spaces
5. Professional and commercial systems limit meaningful expression
6. Being in touch with death frequently normalises it
7. Annual ceremonies and days create a space for death
8. Maintaining a bond is something positive
9. Culture deeply shapes how death and dying is perceived
10. In eastern cultures continuing bonds is common rather than moving on

B.2 Carmen

Worked in end-of-life care and was involved in establishing hospice facilities in the Netherlands. Sixteen statements from this conversation entered the clustering.

1. In dying, reflect on and process your life
2. People often pick a peaceful moment to die
3. Hospice as a homely space
4. In dying you lose many parts of yourself, leaving you pure
5. Hospice as a loving and warmer place to die
6. Care can step away from professional appearance
7. Goal of final care is to create space to die in your own way and process
8. Every process of dying is unique
9. Listening is more important than talking
10. Emotional work brings much joy
11. Someone dying often internalises the fear for others
12. Peace during the final stage can still help restore relations in life
13. Open conversations are key to forming a bond
14. Observing is also important besides talking and listening
15. Hospice is also there for the people around it (the dying person)
16. When guiding people in death and dying you should not be afraid of death

B.3 Hans

Psychologist and transcultural medical anthropologist; regional consultant for a foundation supporting self-determination at the end of life. Twelve statements from this conversation entered the clustering.

1. Mutual respect is what matters in treatments
2. Some things (euthanasia) can't always be understood, but support means everything
3. Decisions about life and death shouldn't be reduced to (product) actions

4. Everything that means something should be treated with respect
5. We do not need to know if certain things exist or not
6. Often we ask the wrong questions about life and death
7. Building compassion rather than empathy
8. Grief and trauma shouldn't be forgotten
9. Talking about (someone's) death is very intimate and builds connection
10. Autonomy in decisions about one's life are relational
11. Narrative (and people) are often reduced to a treatment
12. People feel exactly your attitude towards them

B.4 Liza

Pastor conducting municipal funerals for people who died with little or no personal network, and collecting their life stories. Theology background, doing this work since around 2008. Eleven statements from this conversation entered the clustering.

1. People feel it if you judge them or are not open
2. After death, relations can still change
3. Participation increases the value of rituals
4. Small things can create just as much meaning
5. After death a new (richer) story can evolve
6. Uitvaart is also a moral act
7. In telling their story, (to some extent) injustices can still be set right
8. Being a collective before and during uitvaart gives meaning
9. A collective can give meaning to an uitvaart without knowing each other
10. Everything related to a deceased can give meaning
11. Listening (openly) can build compassion

B.5 Sofie

Independent funeral director, running her own practice for around nine years, focused on alternative, personal and ecologically-minded funerals. Interviewed in the discovery phase; twelve statements from this conversation entered the clustering.

1. In chaos, creativity and personal meaning can evolve
2. Lack of creativity beyond standard formats
3. Our society has become ritually poor
4. People are not aware of what is allowed with uitvaart
5. Setting and space strongly shape uitvaart
6. Co-creating the uitvaart is often experienced as most valuable
7. Small gestures connected to the deceased can give most meaning
8. In a meaningful uitvaart, people actually feel the deceased
9. People can create a (new) shared story of a loved one
10. Overwhelming grief and emotions can make people passive
11. If done by a professional, a ritual becomes a medical action
12. Creating intimacy helps people in meaningful expressions

B.6 Nathalie

Grief facilitator; runs loss-focused workshops and a multi-session group programme for bereaved people. Twenty-three statements from this conversation entered the clustering.

1. Expressing (making) can help you embody the unknown
2. Forgetting the pain is in a way also forgetting the love
3. Being with people in similar states relieves fear of burdening others
4. Grief can be very intimate and doesn't always have to be shown
5. People with experience don't need explanations
6. Group therapy was something part of life and community

7. Grief is not something that should be fixed
8. Grief is natural, but pace in society isn't
9. Loss can block your ability to express
10. Language often misses nuances
11. Creating something induces an altered state (e.g. breath, grounding)
12. Others' input can help with insight on own things
13. Unique expressions can embody similar experiences
14. Recognition builds connection
15. Collective reflection can build personal meaning
16. You can attribute value to any object (you find) yourself
17. Loss is far broader than death
18. Returning to place of death is confronting but healing
19. A low threshold is needed for creativity so people don't feel pressured
20. People need a simple/concrete task when making something
21. A safe and inspiring space is needed for (creative) expression
22. Use accessible materials like magazines, wool, simple objects for expression
23. People need the possibility to keep (some) intimate expressions private

Appendix C - Experience experts

Here some background of what is referred to in the body is included as well as the full list of insights that entered the clustering.

C.1 Belle

A woman in mid-life; lost her mother to a terminal illness. Interviewed with a recorded transcript.

Background to what is referred to in the body

During a family lunch after the cremation, a notebook belonging to Belle's mother surfaced. It contained entries about Belle herself, who had struggled heavily with her health. Her mother had never spoken about these worries, not to her husband and not to Belle — most likely she found them too difficult to put into words. Throughout her life Belle had felt her struggles went unacknowledged, as if they had not registered with her mother. The notebook showed that they very much had, and that her mother had been preoccupied with them all along. Belle also continues to wear her mother's clothes and perfume, which makes it feel as though she is still doing things alongside her.

Statements that entered the clustering

1. Funeral is a moment you never forget, making it super meaningful
2. All things collectively done for a funeral create meaning
3. During a funeral, new connections form with e.g. music, flowers
4. Doing what resonates with the deceased feels naturally right
5. Listening to music of the cremation for the period after gave solace
6. More time for a final goodbye (staggering) gives space to grief and progress
7. Scattering ashes is a chance for a second goodbye
8. Emotions need to be expressed physically as well
9. It seemed like she waited for a moment of peace to die
10. Things that pop up after death can tell new things about someone
11. Acupuncture (passive) and qigong (active) as ways of expressing bodily emotions
12. Simple gestures mean much in not feeling alone
13. Actively cherishing memories can help transform emotions

C.2 Billie

A young working adult; lost a grandparent who had been a daily, caretaking presence in his childhood. Interviewed with a recorded transcript.

Background

The death was anticipated, which allowed for a conscious goodbye while the grandparent was still lucid. The grandparent died at home, which felt warmer and more personal than a hospital would have. The ashes were scattered in a quiet natural setting with close family present, which suited the grandparent's love of nature. Billie lights a candle in churches while travelling abroad, a private moment of remembrance carried wherever he goes.

Statements that entered the clustering

1. Dying at home was very peaceful and familiar for everyone
2. Knowledge of death coming can give a (final) chance for meaningful interaction
3. Even a simple text message makes you feel supported

4. Not per se a need to talk; being together gives meaning
5. Doing something practically in silence can help reflect a moment on your loss(es)
6. You can slowly rediscover the happiness in your memories of someone again

C.3 Lotte

A student; supporting a new partner through the sudden loss of a close friend, while looking back on her own delayed grief from a period when several family losses arrived close together while she was living abroad. Interviewed with a recorded transcript.

Background

On the pain and the love: "The intensity of the pain we're feeling now reflects just how much love we experienced at the time."

Supporting someone in shock works better with concrete options than open questions, since people in that state rarely know what they want, and by quietly taking over practical things. The reality of a sudden death often needs a tangible milestone before it lands — the return of the body, a funeral invitation arriving.

Her own delayed grief surfaced weeks and months later in unexpected quiet moments, after a period she describes as a blur. Confronting it eventually required isolating herself and allowing a full day to cry.

Institutions have no protocols for grief outside the immediate family, which made it hard to justify time off to support a partner. When death does come up socially, people react with shock and silence; crying makes listeners uncomfortable enough to change the subject.

Statements that entered the clustering

1. Memories remain emotional but become more joyful
2. The bond (emotionally) transforms with the deceased, not disappears
3. People actually value talking about death
4. People avoid talking about death to avoid awkwardness
5. Emotional expression is socially suppressed
6. Shared mourning can create (or deepen) connections
7. The intensity of grief reflects the depth of love there was
8. Helping others in grief helps you with your own
9. You can only experience loss, not describe it
10. Grief is very emotional but can transform into something beautiful
11. Grief takes a lot of mindspace

C.4 Jeroen

A young adult; spoke about an estranged grandfather and about the sudden suicide of a friend's roommate. Interviewed with a recorded transcript.

Background

Grieving an estranged relative left a muted response tangled with unanswered questions and severed history. Attending that funeral felt more like an obligation to support one specific family member than a personal expression of grief.

With the roommate's suicide, Jeroen was in a "second layer" — close to those directly affected, not to the deceased. That role meant taking over practical tasks so the inner circle could process the shock, which gave him a sense of purpose in a chaotic time.

Photo slideshows were the most intense part of the funeral: seeing the deceased laughing and living normally made the loss raw. The unexpectedly large turnout gave the parents visible proof of how loved their child was.

Music played at a funeral becomes permanently attached to it. "Piano Man" heard later on New Year's Eve now carries the funeral with it.

Statements that entered the clustering

1. Telling a story means most for yourself
2. Things death touch often change in their meaning
3. Calls for help become very obvious after suicide
4. Huge differences in culture can be shocking around death
5. A funeral could also emphasise difficulties in and between families
6. Contrast between happy memories, stories and sad reality is most emotional
7. Seeing someone was loved can give much consolation

C.5 Tygo

A self-reliant young adult; was eight when his mother died. No verbatim transcript was recorded — this was an informal, in-person conversation, and what follows is based on notes taken during and after it.

Background

Tygo keeps an ongoing inner conversation with his mother, sharing good news as much as hard news, deliberately so that she does not become somewhere he only offloads misfortune. He describes it less as memory than as something they do together: there are no verbal answers, but a sense of mutual presence rather than a one-way address. His actual memories of her are few, and he recognises the connection is largely constructed. He knows it can sound strange or overly spiritual from the outside, yet it has become a natural part of his life.

Grief and illness are not discussed in his family — not with his sibling, not with his surviving parent, who is currently terminally ill. Growing up in that silence has made him progressively less inclined to speak about his own feelings. The same distance means a great deal of personal space, which he values and which made him independent, but it also leaves him lonely.

Statements that entered the clustering

1. Talking to a deceased loved one feels good
2. Not having actual memories of a loved one is painful
3. People around me cannot or won't talk about the loss
4. Relation is intimate and no one asks, so no one knows
5. With time the relationship becomes a natural part
6. Relation is something you need to maintain
7. Maintaining a relation can feel as something odd
8. Relationship with deceased is not one-directional
9. Relation with dead loved one needs balance (so not just tell negative things)
10. Not talking can make you more closed too

C.6 Josephine

A young professional moving between Lebanese and Dutch ways of life; lost her sister suddenly. No transcript was recorded — this was initially planned but did not work out, as the conversation took place in a loud café.

Background

She contrasts the two contexts she moves between. In Lebanon people are more used to misery and more readily halt their lives to support the bereaved. In the Netherlands people care and reach out, but a fear of saying the wrong thing raises the barrier to speaking openly.

Her relationship with her sister continues and evolves rather than ending. She protects her sister's belongings — glasses, rings — and gathers with family around her favourite snacks and wine. She feels her presence in the background and has adopted some of her traits. She is aware that others may find this woolly, and prefaces it when she shares it.

The loss reached past her sister: she also lost the previous version of her parents, who broke under the trauma. Healing has been delayed by external factors, including the circumstances of the accident and an ongoing legal case.

Organising the funeral together felt intimate and purposeful. The day itself was mostly a social event to be endured, since the family had already been submerged in it for weeks.

Statements that entered the clustering

1. Grief is alternated with joy, as otherwise too exhausting
2. Grief models (5 stages) can feel alienating
3. Intentions matter more than right words
4. Fear of saying the wrong thing creates unnecessary barriers
5. Maintaining a relationship with the deceased is something active
6. Maintaining a relationship can be seen as woolly
7. Your life and relations need reconstruction after a loss
8. Everyday rituals keep memories tangible
9. Loss is relational and causes other indirect losses
10. Organising the funeral together is perhaps more meaningful than the day itself
11. People more used to it can maybe talk more openly about death
12. Relation with deceased continues to evolve
13. Taking over practical things helps very much after a loss
14. Grief moves in waves but gets softer and less often over time

C.7 Alexander

A working adult; lost a grandfather who had been a large presence in his childhood.
Interviewed with a recorded transcript.

Background

The loss became real when his grandfather was carried back into his own house under a white cloth. Having him lie in state at home felt familiar and safe, and allowed Alexander quiet time alone with him, talking to him.

The family washed and dressed the body together, which he experienced as a final act of care. At the closing of the casket a ribbon was placed in his grandfather's hands and cut, so each family member could keep a piece.

Writing a speech felt impossible until he sat beside his grandfather and spoke to him directly; then the words came. Delivering it was highly emotional but left him at peace.

The funeral was organised collectively, with room for everyone to contribute something personal and no pressure to do so. In quiet moments now, he feels his grandfather enjoying things alongside him rather than watching over him.

Statements that entered the clustering

1. Collectively talking about beautiful memories gives comfort
2. Talking to loved one's body felt good
3. A speech is very emotional to give but also releases these emotions
4. In taking over care of a deceased you embody their relations too
5. A home wake creates a safe and trusted space
6. Shared small rituals can carry large meaning
7. I still enjoy nice things for him as he loved so much in life
8. Seeing death as an end to suffering gave solace
9. Seeing a dead body makes death real
10. Washing and dressing felt like a loving act of care
11. Freedom from pressure made contributing to a funeral easier
12. Contributing something personal gave much value to the funeral

C.8 Hidde

A young adult whose faith frames death as a transition rather than an end; lost his grandmother after a period that swung between hope and setback. Interviewed with a recorded transcript.

Background

Having his grandmother laid out in the living room was initially uncomfortable, but the space slowly became peaceful and drew family and friends together. A spatial division emerged in the house: the living room for mourning and goodbye, the adjacent dining area for organising the funeral and writing cards.

He experienced a stark contrast between his grandmother's essence and the physical reality of her body. Final care softened that — paleness in particular — and restored a recognisable image of her. The casket was closed for practical reasons rather than emotional closure.

His family's shared faith held them: the belief that she had passed to a better place turned the loss into a peaceful progression. The service felt fitting because the pastor had known her personally, and acting as pallbearer gave him a sense of completion.

He observes the contrast with his grandfather, who lost a partner of fifty years and carries a persistent loneliness.

Statements that entered the clustering

1. The dead body is initially confronting but slowly also gives peace
2. Knowing there is a better place gives consolation
3. After death the body loses connection with the person
4. Having someone that remains calm and at peace also resonates that to you
5. Being or even living together some time quickly creates a supportive bond
6. Someone with knowledge and experience but also connection to [the deceased] is very [valuable]
7. Someone connected to a deceased with also experience and knowledge can offer much

C.9 Rosanne

A young adult; spoke from a reflective distance rather than a recent close loss. Interviewed with a recorded transcript.

Background

Walking through a cemetery gives her a sense of peace, though she goes rarely and also feels its heaviness. Until a few years ago her extended family travelled abroad to visit her grandparents' graves, held a memorial together and shared a meal afterwards. Because the grandparents died long ago and she did not know them intimately, these gatherings were not sad but functioned as a dedicated moment of active remembrance. She values the togetherness most, and observes that shared remembrance can close distances between relatives who do not otherwise get along. For a close loss of her own she would prefer a personal spot in nature — a tree with a small plaque — over a traditional cemetery, which she finds impersonal.

No statements from this conversation entered the clustering.

Appendix D - Participant talks

These were more informal conversations. Explicit permission was asked to use what was said, but no consent form was signed. These people are therefore not directly quoted, and their contributions are used only as paraphrase or data. They are summarised below without naming them.

Their statements entered the clustering unsigned, marked with a symbol per individual. The key is given with each summary below.

Individual 1 — The fast pace of grief and secular rituals (♡)

Lost their grandparents during a very busy period in their own life. The pace made them feel guilty for not having given enough time and attention before they died. Their grandfather was a devout Catholic, which gave him peace; the speaker is not religious and does not share the belief in an afterlife, but values the beauty and comfort of the rituals, and expressed a strong wish for meaningful non-religious rituals for secular people. The grandfather's stories and small wisdoms — pausing to notice the sun — still interrupt their stressful days.

19. Everyday moments can become something meaningful like a gift
20. With moments like a sunset I experience them with him
21. Wisdom passed onto me stays very dear and will be passed on again
22. Many rituals such as Christian ones don't mean anything to me
23. If everything goes fast you also experience all the beauty sooner again
24. Saying goodbye very fast (too fast) to someone so valuable
25. Going on quickly can feel guilt

Individual 2 — Relief after suffering (☒)

Witnessing their loved one suffer before death was more painful than the aftermath of the death itself. Because the illness had already fundamentally changed the relationship, the passing felt like relief. This early-life experience still connects them strongly to others who are grieving.

16. Support in grief is there but hidden
17. You will always carry the experience of a death with you
18. Suffering before (painful) death more painful than itself

Individual 3 — Acknowledgment over solutions (—)

Well-meaning people often try to solve or fix grief, which backfires. Right after a funeral the griever feels empty and lacks the mental space to discuss their feelings deeply; simple acknowledgment of the pain works better than being drawn into conversation. Grief is unpredictable — numb and unable to cry at the funeral, then breaking down later during a casual conversation.

1. Emotions only come up in a safe environment
2. It is nice if people know about your situation but it does not have to mean anything
3. Helping or trying to comfort can have opposite effects

Individual 4 — Cultural traditions vs. personal beliefs (□)

Described Newari Hindu mourning rituals in Nepal: rapid open-air cremations at sacred sites, no meat for twelve days, shaving heads, wearing white or pastels for a year, and a joyful celebration to end the mourning period. Holds a more Western, pragmatic view themselves — you should do things for people while they are alive, and post-death ritual and guilt come too late. Notes one clear advantage of their culture's approach: because death and cremation are visible rather than hidden, the subject is much easier to discuss.

4. With different beliefs in what happens after death tensions can evolve
5. When watching for signs from a deceased you will see them

6. People can have the same experience but completely different interpretation
7. When joy is normalised around death it also influences your experience
8. Public cremation etc. seems extreme but actually normalises death
9. As death part of lived reality it is discussed more openly
10. Showing you are mourning does not need to define anything

Individual 5 — Allowing space for the unexplainable (2)

Two sisters grieving their parents: one sees signs of their presence everywhere, such as a door opening at a funeral; the other reads the same events as coincidence or wind. The insight is that it does not matter who is objectively right. By allowing for the possibility of the unexplainable, a person creates a comforting space for themselves; the one grieving is the central actor, and their experience of that connection is valid regardless of logic.

Note: statements 5, 6 and 7 above are marked with the same symbol; see the note at the end of this appendix.

Individual 6 — Unexpected comfort and accessible media (●)

Lost both parents to cancer within a short timeframe at twenty-one, and needed professional support to cope. The tragedy brought their extended family unusually close, creating a warm and supportive environment that had not existed to that extent before. Severe grief made reading traditional books too difficult; they found solace in graphic novels, specifically *Dancing at the Pity Party*. The visual format and bright colours were easier to digest and helped them see that all emotions in grief are valid rather than sorting into positive and negative.

11. E.g. illustrated books can be easier to digest in difficult times
12. Still having colour or softness can lighten the dark and hard times
13. Difficult to accept happiness in sad times (but is there)
14. Reading about recognisable things gives comfort
15. Being alone is the worst

Appendix E - Clusters

Photos of all the clusters in Figures E.1-E.11.

Figure E.1. A space to allow

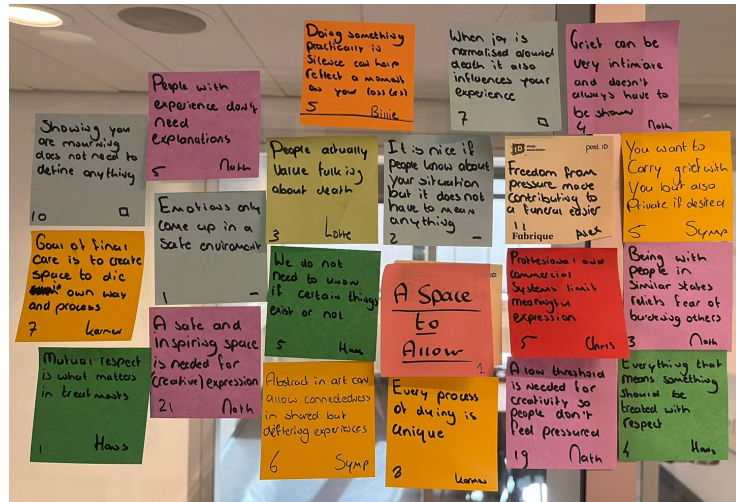


Figure E.2. Avoiding the discomfort

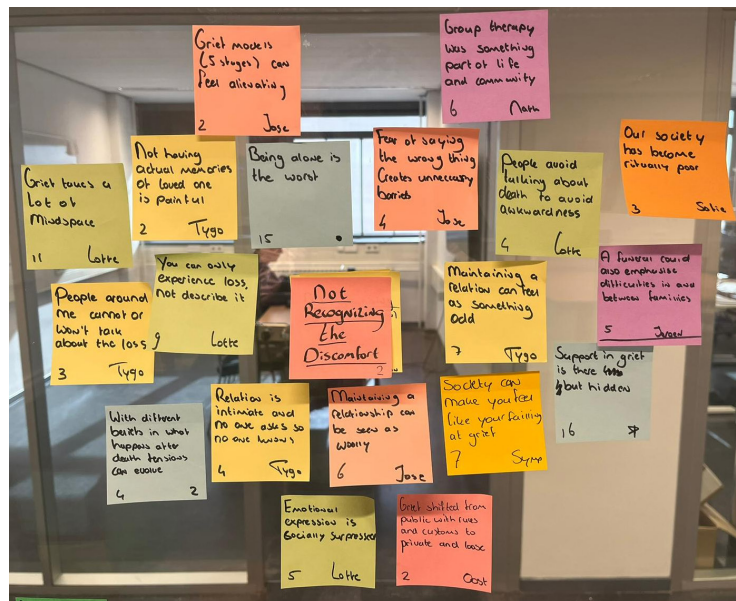


Figure E.3. Art of presence

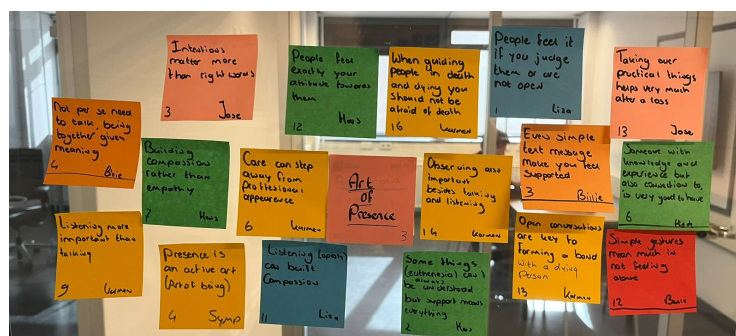


Figure E.4. Making meaning yourself

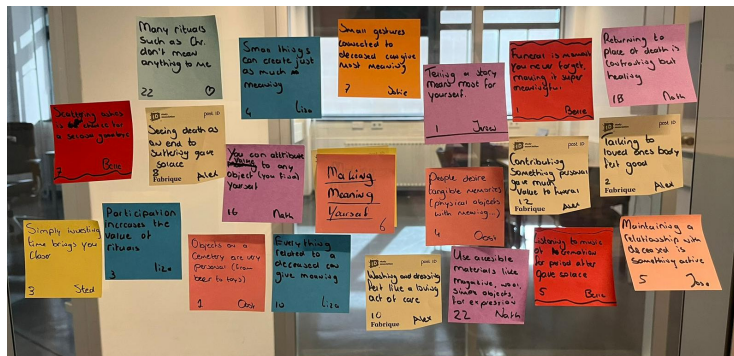


Figure E.5. An intertwined presence

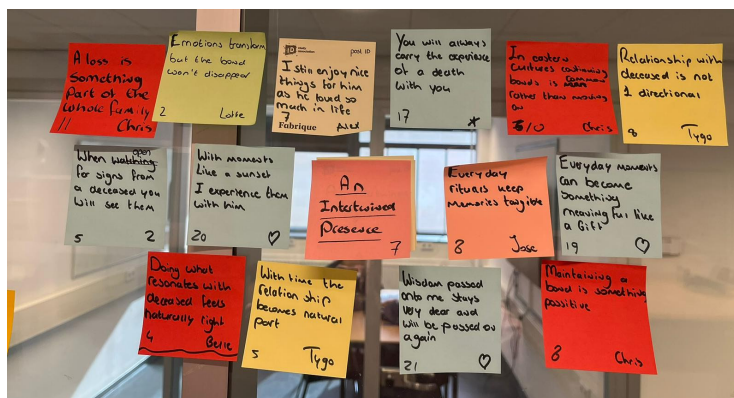


Figure E.6. Expression as experience

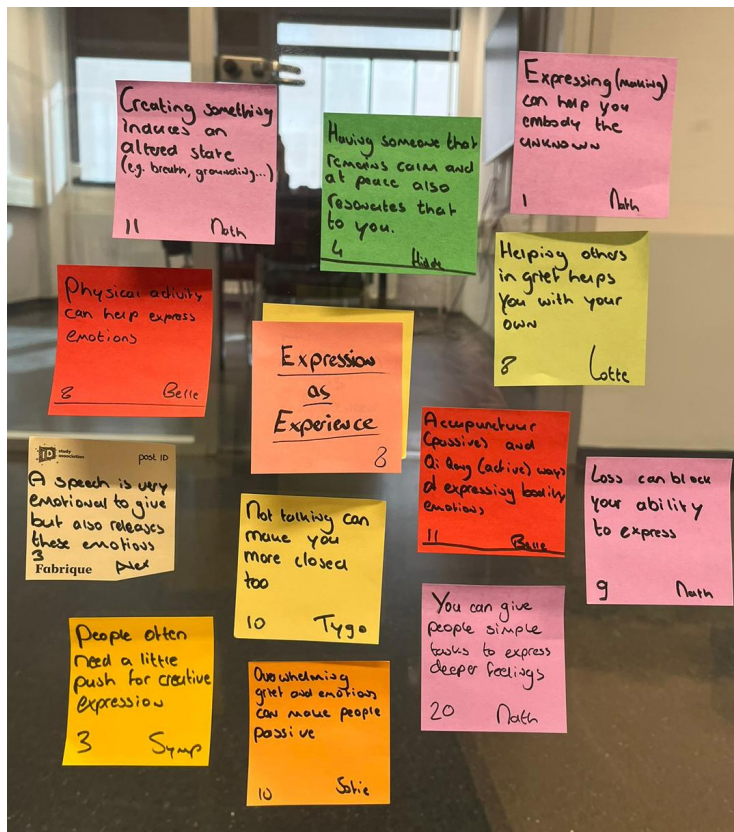


Figure E.7. Transforming a loss

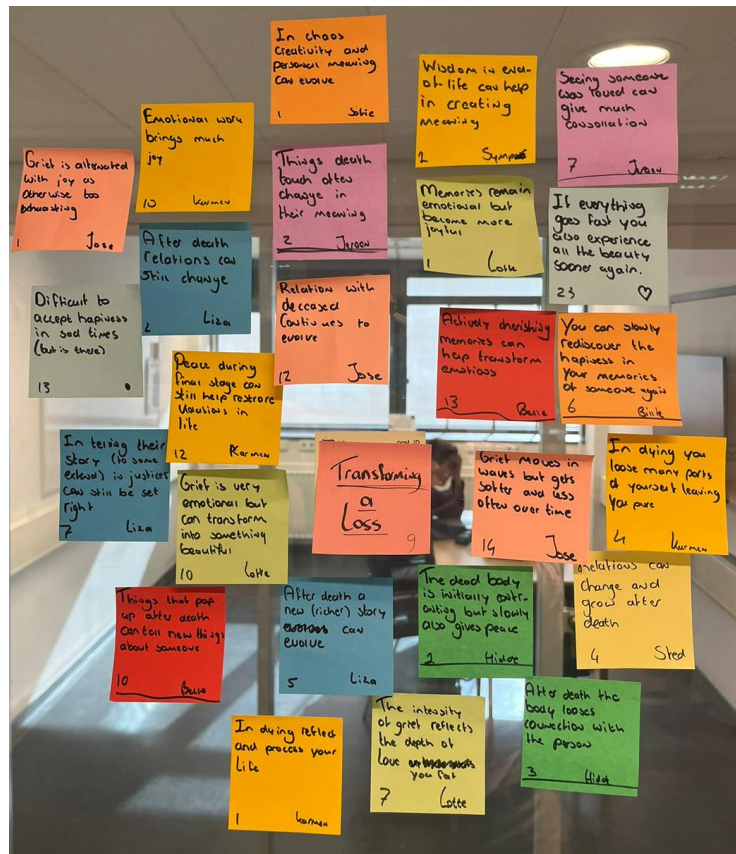


Figure E.8. Connected in uniqueness

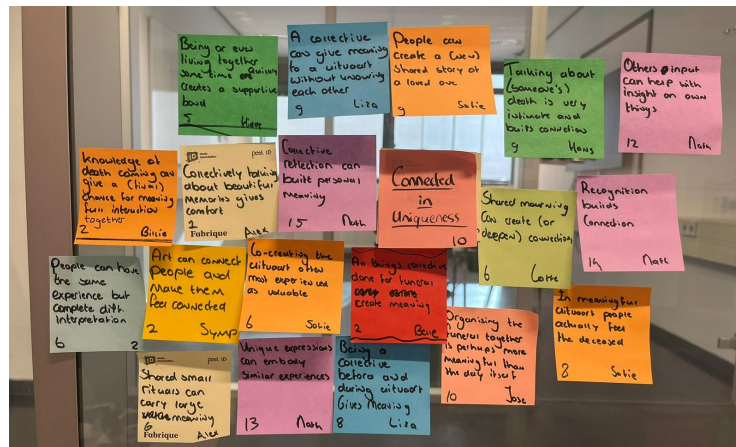


Figure E.9. Loss beyond the person

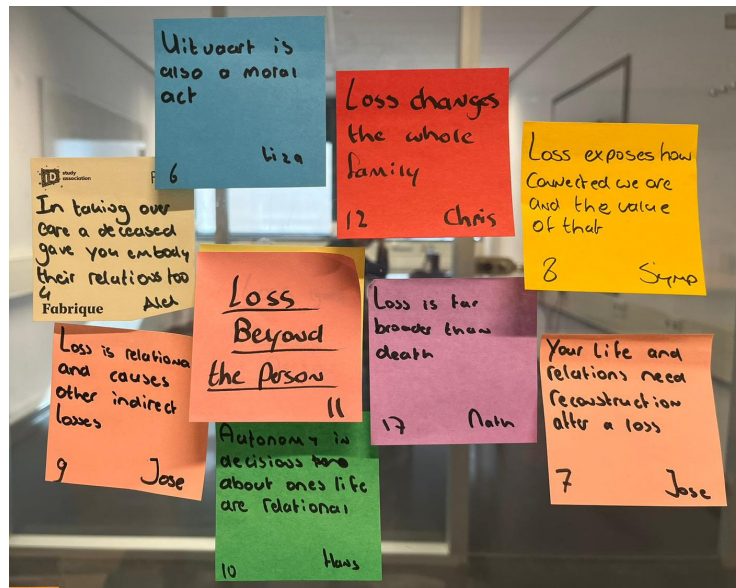


Figure E.10. How space shapes

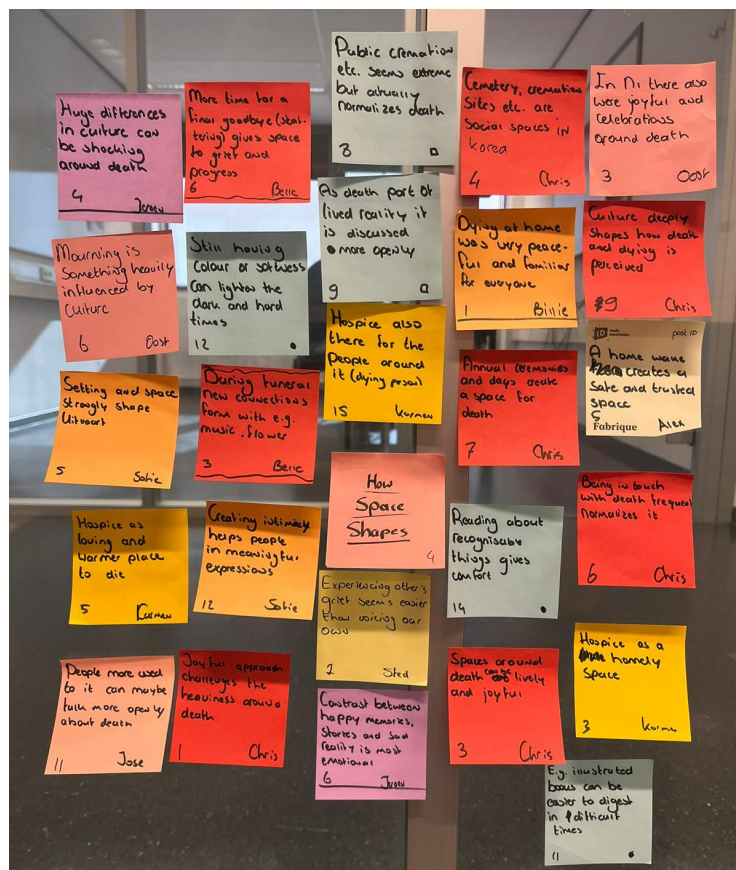
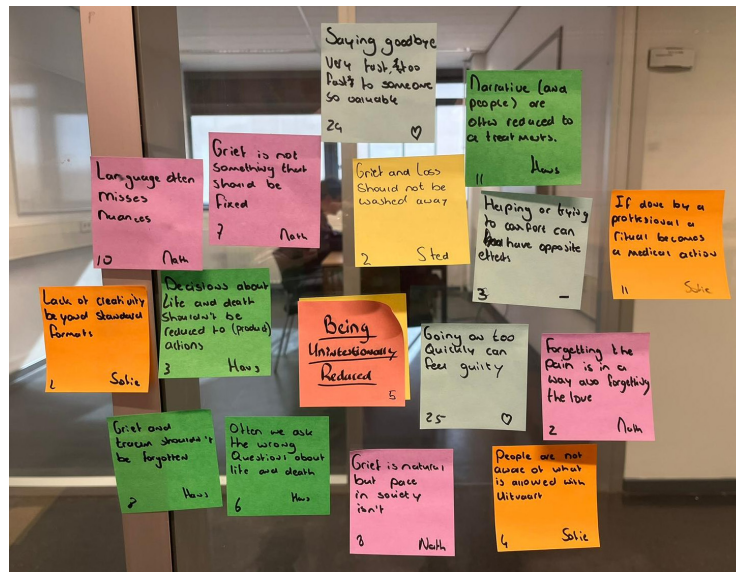


Figure E.11. Being unintentionally reduced



Appendix F - Tensions and inspiring qualities

F.1 Tensions

The clustering surfaced a set of tensions and inspiring qualities that run across the clusters. In the main text these are carried in nuance, woven through the thematic sections and the 4.3 Threads underneath several clusters; here they are held as a list, so that the design directions can refer to them by name and their origins remain traceable. Each entry names where it surfaced. The tensions are paradoxes a design needs to hold rather than resolve, since closing any of them would close something the bereaved depend on. The qualities are ways of being-with-loss that the field showed when it works well. The thread tags after the tensions refer to the four threads traced in Figure F.1 copied from the body, which condense several tensions into one movement.

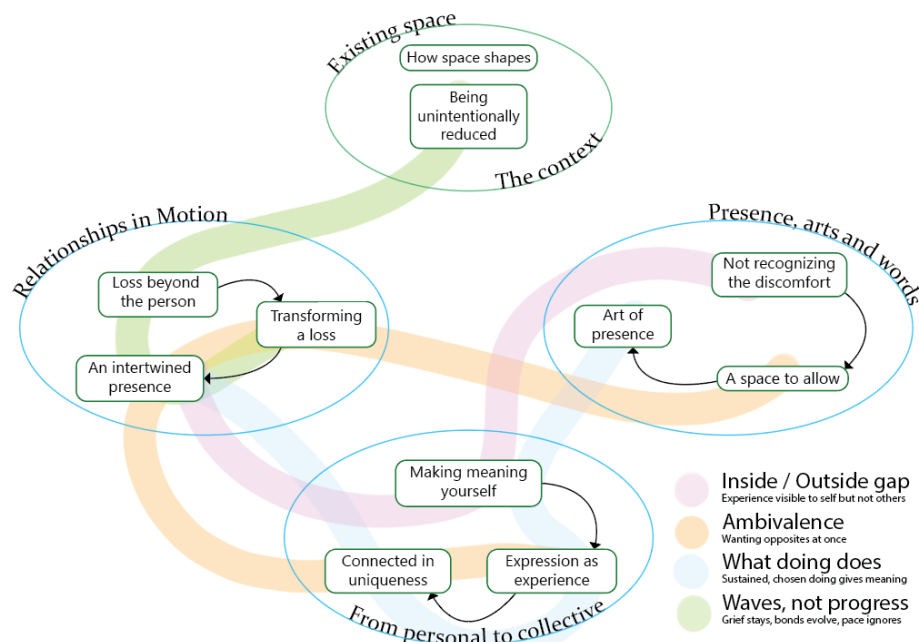


Figure F.1. The four threads running underneath several clusters, repeated from Figure 4.4 so the tensions below can refer to them.

Eleven tensions

1. Alone but not alone. The bereaved often want both to be alone and not to be alone; what is needed is not a choice between these but space in which both can coexist. From: Keirse (2023); chapter Presence, acts and words; cluster A space to allow. (Thread: Ambivalence)
2. Received form and personal meaning making. Inherited rituals carry deep meaning for some and mean almost nothing to others; value lies not in the form but in that it is made yours. From: cluster Making meaning yourself; Hidde alongside participants without religious framing; Stacey in Brand (2025). (Thread: What doing does)
3. Expression as release, loss as block. Doing reaches what words cannot, yet loss itself can block the ability to express, and overwhelming grief can make people passive. Sometimes a small push or a simple task is all that is needed. From: cluster Expression as experience; chapters Nathalie and Sofie; Alexander's speech. (Thread: What doing does)
4. Shared experience alongside individual meaning. People can have the same experience and entirely different interpretations of it, yet unique expressions can embody similar ones. Collective doing works when it leaves room rather than imposes. From: cluster Connected in uniqueness; chapter Nathalie; Josephine on co-creating the funeral. (Thread: Inside/Outside gap)

5. Natural from inside but abnormal from outside. Bonds and gestures with the deceased are real and joyful from within, yet described by the bereaved themselves as vague or woolly from outside. From: cluster An intertwined presence; Tygo, Josephine; Klass et al. (1996) on the older view of continuing bonds. (Thread: Inside/Outside gap)
6. Visibility and privacy. The ability to show, but also to keep inward; grief can be intimate and does not always have to be shown, enclosed but not erased. From: cluster A space to allow; Nathalie's kintsugi exercise. (Threads: Inside/Outside gap, Ambivalence)
7. Joy and grief coexisting, not alternating. Grief and joy exist together rather than taking turns, alongside sometimes difficulties of accepting happiness in sad times. From: cluster Transforming a loss; Josephine. (Threads: Ambivalence, Waves not progress)
8. Death as ending and as opening. After death a story does not just close, it also opens; what closes and what becomes possible are both real. From: chapter Liza; Belle's notebook; Despret (2021) on metamorphosis. (Thread: Waves, not progress)
9. The fact of absence and the felt presence. Both real, neither cancelling the other; the question is not whether the presence is really there but what it does. From: A way of looking; chapter Hans (Ghosts and Questions); cluster An intertwined presence; Despret (2021). (Thread: Ambivalence)
10. The pace of grief and the pace of society. Grief moves in waves and returns when expected to leave, while society's pace, and the compression of mourning into scheduled events, does not match it. From: cluster Being unintentionally reduced; symposium; Verhoeven et al. (2025); Stroebe and Schut (1999). (Thread: Waves, not progress)
11. Simple but not passive. Being with someone is different from just having company; presence is simple but active, and people feel exactly your attitude toward them. From: cluster Art of presence; Keirse (2023); Lotte. (Thread: Ambivalence)

F.2 Inspiring qualities

1. Art of presence. Being-with as the form of support that carries; intention matters more than the right words. From: cluster Art of presence; chapter Presence, acts and words; Carmen; symposium ("presence is an active art").
2. The bond in small chosen acts. The bond with the deceased actively kept through small, deliberate acts rather than held as static memory. From: section Lasting bonds; Josephine's ring, Belle's perfume and clothes, Tygo's conversations; Klass et al. (1996).
3. Body as well as mind. Grief is lived physically, and working with the hands reaches a layer that words do not. From: chapter Nathalie; Pearce and Komaromy (2020); Magsamen (2024).
4. Shared rhythm without shared meaning. Doing together binds, independent of what it produces or whether meanings align; carrying something as a collective. From: chapter Sofie ("We got this"); cluster Connected in uniqueness; Collins in Marquez (2013).
5. Visible repair, not erasure. Fracture lines highlighted rather than hidden, like a scar: not celebrated as damage, but recognised as something that happened. From: chapter Nathalie, kintsugi exercise.
6. Metamorphosis / re-authoring. Reconstructing history so that it now holds; what could not be done can still be done in death. From: chapter Liza; Despret (2021); Lordello and Silva (2025).
7. Particularity as opening. Uniqueness as what enables connection rather than what blocks it: although the difference, recognition is there. From: cluster Connected in uniqueness; chapter Nathalie; symposium on abstract art as shared not because we feel the same.
8. Ontological tact. Remaining in contradiction and not-knowing without grasping for explanations; not needing to settle what mode something exists in. From: A way of looking; Despret (2021).

9. And, and, and. Contradictory versions allowed to coexist rather than oppose; the fact of death and the felt presence need not cancel each other. From: *A way of looking*; Despret (2021); *What stayed*.

10. Reciprocity. Work, love, and care that move both ways: the openness of the other opens you as well; presence given returns to those who give it. From: chapter *Carmen*; Guité-Verret et al. (2023); conclusion of the expert chapter.

11. Being instructed rather than in charge. Stepping back from prescribing meaning toward facilitating a space where shared meaning can emerge. From: *A way of looking*; De la Cadena and Escobar (2023).

Appendix G - Pre-holiday brainstorm

This appendix holds the material behind the pre-holiday brainstorm described in Pre-Holiday Brainstorm. Table 6.1, the pairs used to think with and to build the axes from, is in the body of the report and has been drawn from Figure G.1 from the personal brainstorm.

G.1 Personal brainstorm

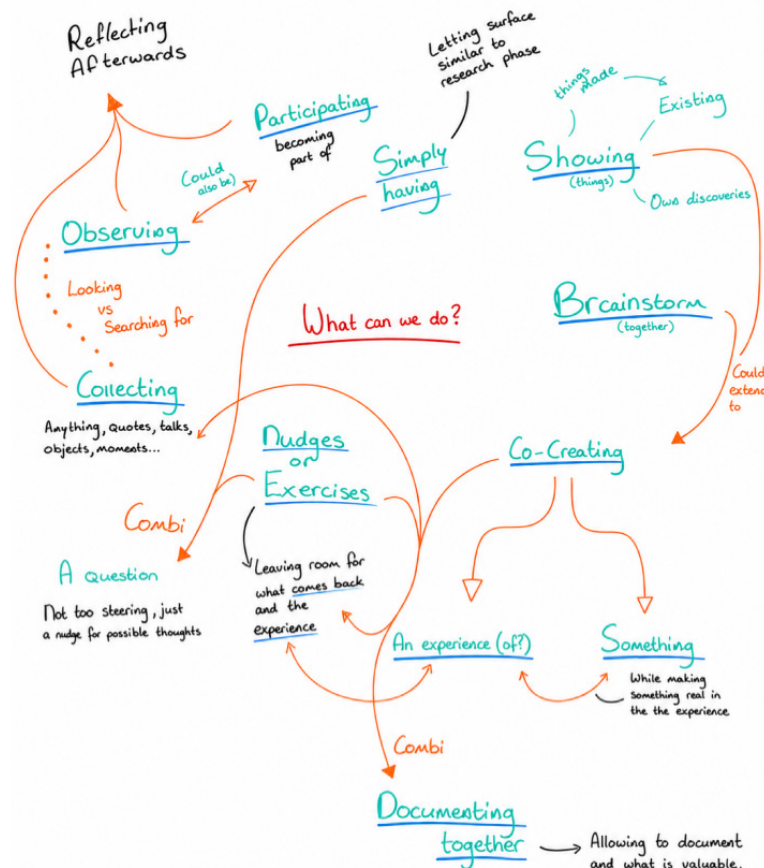


Figure G.1. The personal brainstorm, made alone before the joint session and before the trip. It aimed at qualities rather than concepts.

The brainstorm was done by the researcher alone, before the joint session, and before the trip. It was not aimed at concepts but at qualities to map what different approaches there are and which could be later discussed in the joint brainstorm.

G.2 Joint session: setup, ideas and discussion

Participants

- A mother and her daughter, aged around 50 and 20.
- Both experienced a similar loss, of a father and grandfather, mirroring the family on the trip.
- Equally close relationship with their family, and they often go on trips together.
- Professional background: the mother leads a family business, the daughter is an environmental manager with a background in design, specifically participatory design.
- Both received and signed consent forms adapted for co-creation.

Sensitizing. Before the session the participants were given a talk about the project so far and some personal stories about the loss in the family, and the chance to ask questions. They were then asked to think as if they were on a holiday themselves, and what they would actually enjoy and be comfortable with around loss on such a trip, relating to their own experiences around this.

Setting. The session was done while painting a wall, over 2 hours. The researcher wrote down what the participants came up with. Afterwards the participants were pulled in and the ideas were clustered and named together. The researcher also took notes about what was being said at the discussion around the activities was actually most interesting as nuanced opinions about what is suitable and the participants would enjoy surfaced.

Clusters and ideas. Here is the direct result of the brainstorm in Figure G.2, with pink (mother) and black (daughter) stars to mark, which they found most interesting. Together with the discussion notes this formed the What Stood Out in the body.



Figure G.2. The direct result of the joint brainstorm, clustered and named together with the participants, with the marks for what they found most interesting.

Marked ideas and their discussion

Marked separately and then also collectively:

- collecting things
- personal booklet
- personal booklet combined with a daily sensitizer
- favourite drink (discussed later, shifted from a drink in general to a tea, then to rooibos, simple to take along)
- activities she liked, like baking something

Personal expression. Stood out for both. Reason given: it can stay intimate. For grief and a loss this matters, being able to express things without feeling too much pressure.

Sensitizing. Stressed by the daughter, from her design background. Point made: sensitizing does the work before anything is asked, "it can gently open doors". Pushed toward sensitizing with small activities and things to handle or do, rather than text only.

Expression. Both agreed, mother more strongly. Writing suits some people and not others, since not everyone is verbally oriented in that way. The output should not be limited to writing, and the possibility to express in different ways would be important.

Activities she liked. Not an either/or. Ideas already mentioned or added here during the discussion: binoculars, baking, games like boggle and 'klaverjassen', a puzzle booklet, tea likely rooibos and eating or even baking her favourite cake. All could be taken along, and it would not matter much if some were not used in the end.

Appendix H - Booklet

H.1 Questions and answers per participant

The original Dutch prompts and the answers of each participant are given in Table H.1.
All signed a specific consent form for both the co-creation and the booklet. More on the participants can be found in Appendix I.1.

[] Table H.1. The daily statements and questions from the booklet, with the answers of the three participants.

Dag	Ochtend (statement)	Avond (vraag)	Son in Law	Daughter	Husband
1	Soms duiken de mensen die we verloren hebben op in de kleinste dingen, een geur, een liedje, hoe iemand zit. Je hoeft er niet eens naar te zoeken.	Was er vandaag een moment dat ze even dichtbij kwam?	"Als mijn moeder nu zie zitten, dan denk ik aan mijn oma."	"Mooie natuur en er zijn hier zoveel vogels, daar had ze van genoten."	"Ja, bij het afsluiten van de voordeur wat Oma altijd deed. Aankomst aan de meubel waar wij samen leuke momenten beleefde."
2	Oma kon enorm genieten van kleine dingen zoals vogeltjes, vlinders of gewoon het samen zijn.	Waar zou oma vandaag het meest van hebben genoten?	"Van Tom."	Post-it op visuele kaart: "De dierbaren die ik ben verloren zie ik terug in..."	"Van het samenzijn met de familie en een kleinkind extra genot. Kerkbezoeken en de duinen, het boeren en bloemen."
3	De dingen die oma was en deed kunnen op elk moment naar boven komen.	Wat is iets dat oma zou zeggen over een dag als vandaag?	"Wat een wereld."	"Genoten zo met z'n allen! Gezellige stad Bernkastel en even stilgestaan bij de mooie witte bloemen aan de boom en de zonsondergang ☒" ("zie obvia whatsapp")	"Was een fijne dag. Maar de loopbrug, dat doe ik niet, gaan jullie wel. Gezellig met z'n allen uit eten. Tom, niet zoveel alcohol nuttigen."
4	Oma liet de dag komen zoals hij kwam en genoot altijd.	Als oma vandaag mee was, waar was ze het liefst bij geweest?	niet ingevuld	"Fietsen niet, maar de vogels in het bos. De bloemen en de bakplaat gezelligheid. Ze vond zoveel leuk."	"Gezellig op het terras, kletsen en eten. Ook koffiedrinken met de kleinzoon 's morgens."
5 (onderweg)	Alles gaat voorbij, maar dat betekent niet dat het ook weggaat.	Wat is een ding van deze reis dat je haar zou vertellen?	"Dat je ze min of meer, bewust of onbewust, telkens weer mist."	"Klopt ma, maak je niet druk, geniet van het leven ☒"	"Dat ik haar gemist heb. Zeker met het wandelen door het bos."

H.2 Trip notes and gathered materials

Around the cards

- Grandma was the most mentioned subject of the holiday. Memories surfaced mostly in the more conscious moments of being together: a terrace, a meal, particular moments on a walk.
- Son in law on grandma: "Jaaa ze zou je in de gaten houden hoor, wat je bv pakt en qua drankjes."
- Often jokes, for instance about how nervous she could get in the car, stressed by small things like missing marker posts. Then she suddenly wanted to turn back.

Versions and roles

- Daughter names mostly the loving things, but also corrects her father: "Ja pa, als ze dat deed dan had je haar moeten horen hoor."
- Grandma could be critical and sharp with her husband, sometimes narrig. The husband hardly mentions this, or only mildly and with a laugh, not the way she actually did it.
- The husband seems to do some of the things she was critical of less, or not at all. Age? Was it partly teasing, and is there no one left to tease? Or does he hold himself to her line now, a kracht in Despret's words?

Material alongside the cards

- Daughter brought a pinecone in a small basket, with the note: "Denneappels sluiten zich, zo was oma ook. Bij onrust, verdriet of ellende. Of als dingen gewoon gevoelig werden." It connects in two ways: grandma already collected small things from nature, and the movement itself, opening and closing, as she did when things grew difficult.
- The husband wrote his answers for the first three days on a loose sheet before transferring them to the cards.
- On a walk he made alone, the husband wrote his wife's name in the ground and sat with it for a while. Only mentioned afterwards.

Reflections

- Daughter: you have to allow yourself things that feel good, even if others find them strange. That allowing may be something you have to learn.

Appendix I - Co-design session

I.1 The session and the participants

The session took place during the family trip in Germany in May, in Dutch, and lasted about two hours. The three participants were grandma's daughter and son-in-law, both in their fifties, and her husband, in his early eighties. They had lost her around six months earlier, each from a different position in the family, and all three had filled in the booklet during the same week (Appendix H). They knew the project, but had not seen the ideas before this session. All signed a specific consent form for the Co-Creation and Booklet.

The ideas were talked through one by one before any choosing began, so that the picks would rest on what each idea meant rather than on its title. The researcher did not take part in the choosing and was there to answer questions.. What was said was written down afterwards. In the pink round each participant was asked for three, so nine pink stickers stand on the window.



Figure I.1. The co-design session: the three participants read the ideas on the window and place their stickers.

I.2 The story

Dutch

Rouw kan vele vormen aannemen. Veel dingen worden gezien als gepast of ongepast, als verwacht of juist niet. Stel je nu eens een wereld voor die niet zo vastzit aan alle regels, waarin rouw alles kan zijn en alles kan doen met mensen. Een bruiloft lijkt op een begrafenis. Kinderen spelen op een begraafplaats en niemand stuurt ze weg. Niemand daar heeft besloten dat dit zo hoort. Het gebeurt gewoon. Zijn er ideeën die misschien een beetje gek lijken, maar die ergens toch iets moois hebben, op een bepaalde manier fijn voelen, of iets kloppends hebben? Die mogen een blauwe sticker.

English (translated)

Grief can take many forms. Many things are seen as fitting or unfitting, as expected or as exactly not. Now imagine for a moment a world that is not held so tightly to its rules, where grief can be anything and can do anything with people. A wedding looks like a funeral. Children

play in a graveyard and nobody sends them away. Nobody there has decided that this is how it should be. It just happens. Are there ideas that might seem a little odd, but that still have something beautiful in them, that feel good in some way, or that have something right about them? Those get a blue sticker.

I.3 The clusters, grounding and stickers

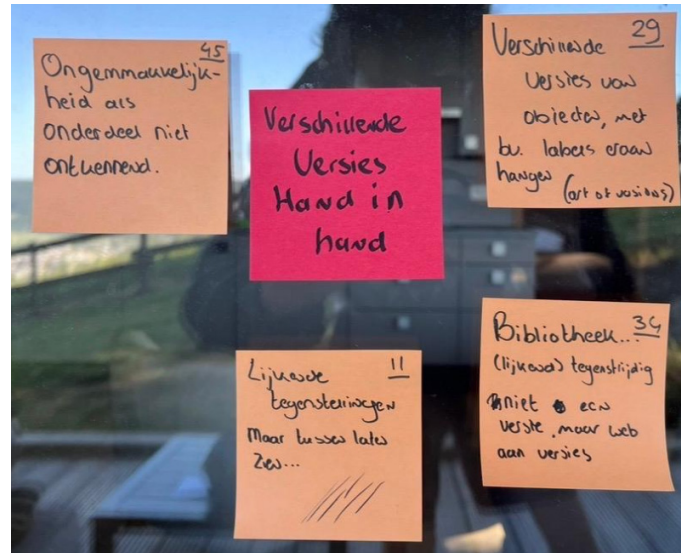


Figure I.2. Different versions hand in hand

Builds on: Despret's (2021) art of versions, where the different versions of someone do not compete but together make a fuller picture. The trip already showed this: the plurality did not need to be designed in, it needed room. Liza's flag and the atonement behind it, or Belle's notebook, are versions already seen that are both true, where the second does not erase the first.

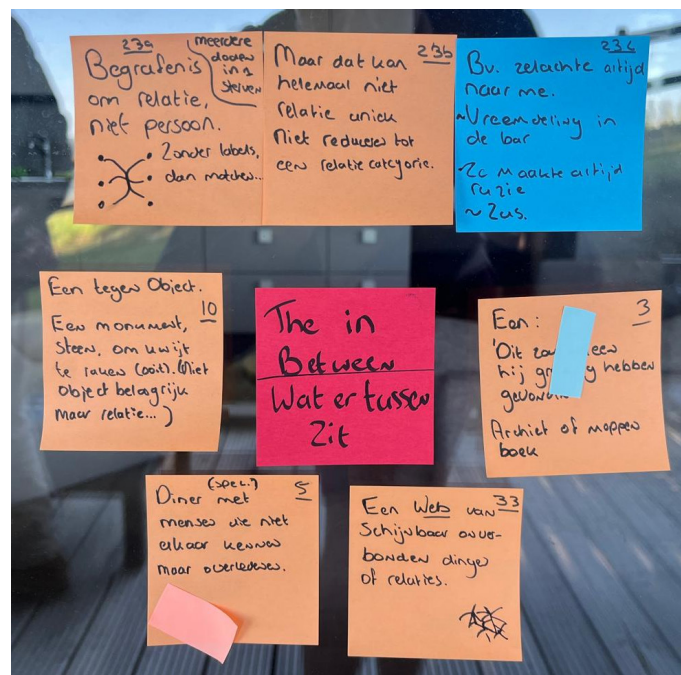


Figure I.3. The in between

Builds on: Josephine, who described losing her sister as also losing a piece of her parents, and Alexander, who grew closer to his grandmother through their shared loss. Stickers: pink on 5 Diner met mensen die elkaar niet kennen, maar de overledene; blue on Dit zou alleen hij grappig hebben gevonden.

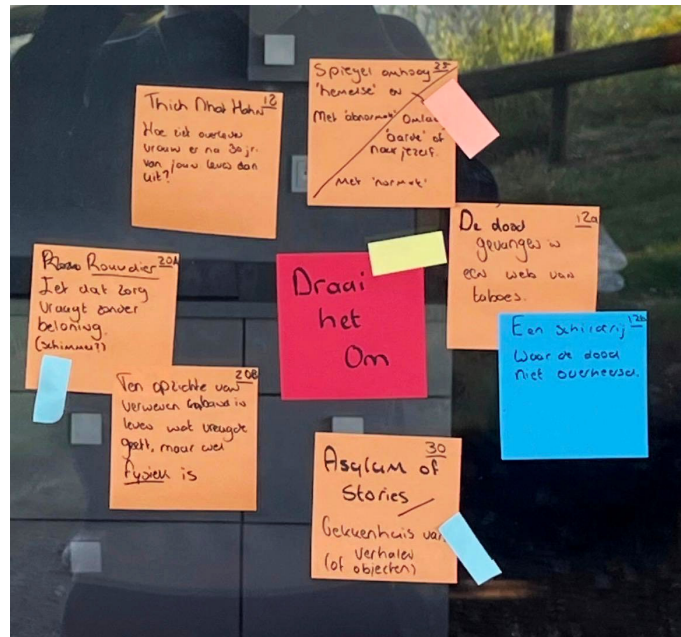


Figure I.4. Turn it around (Draai het om)

Grows from: the natural-from-inside, strange-from-outside tension of An intertwined presence, and the shift from is it real toward what does it do, as set out in Stances. Stickers: yellow from the husband, on the cluster label; blue on 20a Rouwder, iets dat zorg vraagt zonder beloning, with 20b as a companion note to it: Ten opzichte van verweven band in leven wat vreugde geeft, maar wel fysiek is. Blue on Asylum of Stories (Gekkenhuis van verhalen). Pink on 25 Spiegel omhoog “hemelse” en abnormale, omlaag “aarde” of naar jezelf, met het zogenaamd normale.

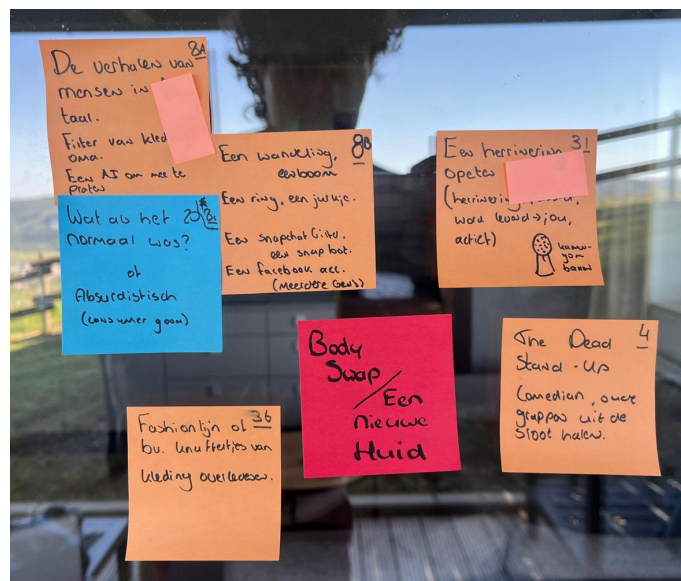


Figure I.5. A new skin

Builds on: Belle, who wears her mother’s clothes and perfume so it still feels like doing things with her. The wariness comes from Wizinsky (2022): objects shape the people who use them, the same point used earlier with the Sarco. The open question of the direction is whether such a skin lets a bond live out in the open or quietly turns grief into something to consume. Stickers: pink on 8a Verhalen in gen z taal and 31 Herinnering opeten.

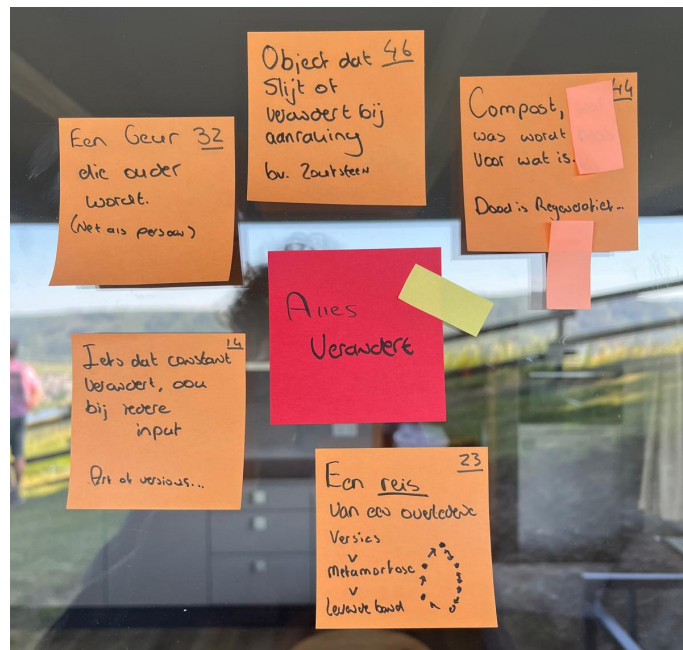


Figure I.6. Everything changes

Builds on: Despret's metamorphosis, and kintsugi, where the cracks are kept visible.
Stickers: yellow from the daughter, on the cluster label; two pink stickers on 44 Compost.

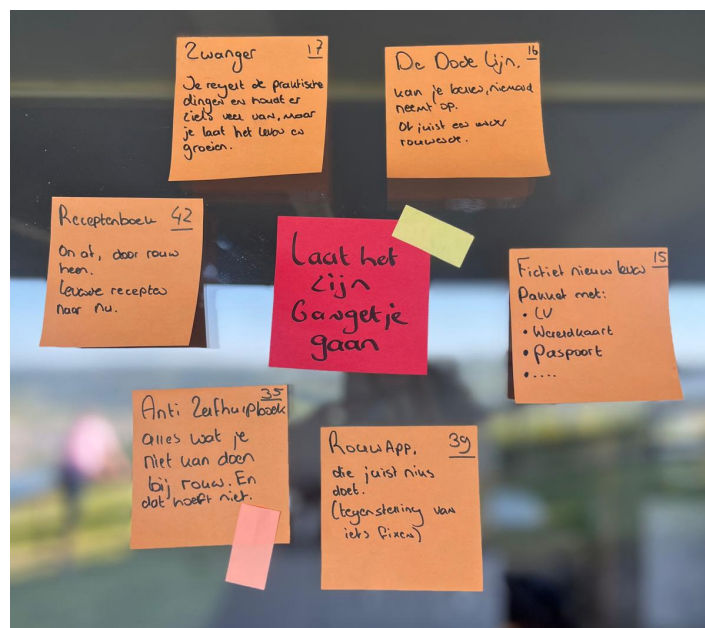


Figure I.7. Letting things be

Builds on: what Carmen means with everything is possible, and what A way of designing calls stepping back from the urge to fix.
Stickers: yellow from the son in law, on the cluster label; pink on 35 Anti-zelfhulpboek.

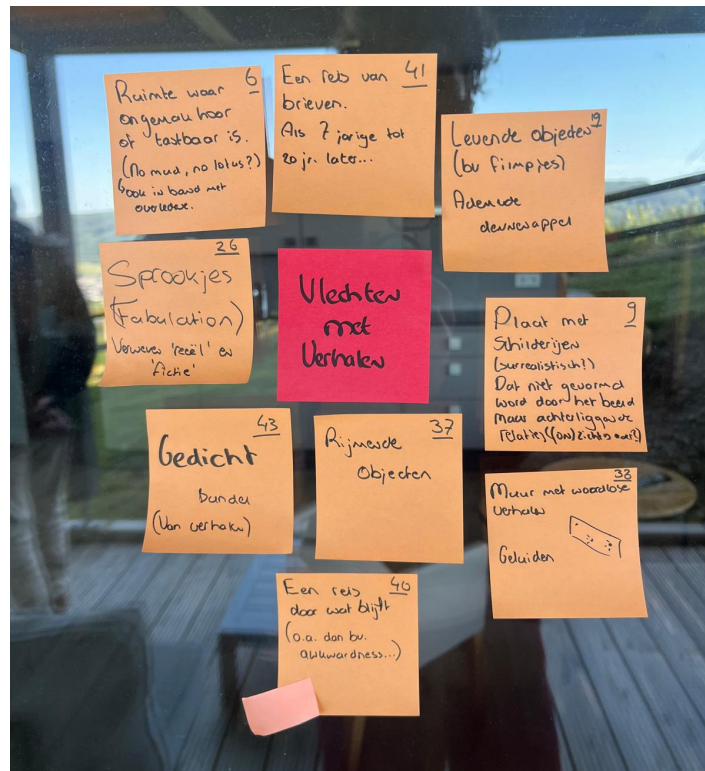


Figure I.8. Vlechten met verhalen

Builds on: Liza's daughter making a story that wasn't, but could have been. What is felt and how something is experienced is relational; intertwining versions does not make an experience fake.

Stickers: pink on 40 Reis door wat blijft.

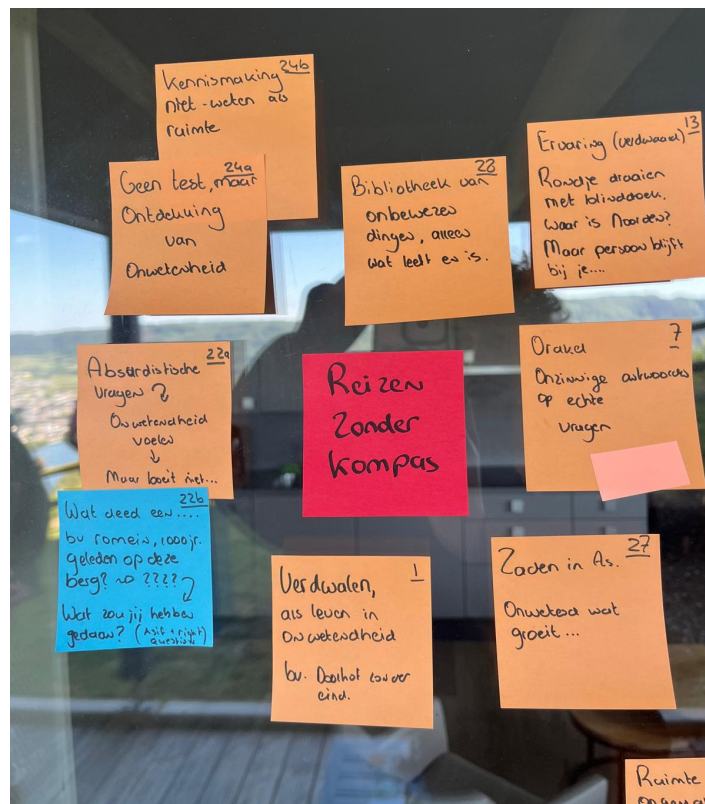


Figure I.9. Travelling without a compass

Builds on: the ontological tact of A way of looking, carried into the design phase, and the discussion with Despret on the search for answers and for real versus unreal.

Stickers: pink on 7 Orakel.

I.4 How each participant chose

The son in law was the most hesitant, and asked the most questions. He wanted to know exactly what each idea meant before committing, and weighed each on whether it really held potential. He talked most about Letting things be, which he also chose as his direction. His reasoning was that there are already countless things meant to help, and most of them do not fit a specific person. He used the image of no longer seeing the forest for the trees. People are not stupid, he said, and mostly know how to find their own way. A push or some inspiration can help, but in the end you have to discover for yourself what works. His way of choosing mirrored his point, careful and questioning, unwilling to be handed an answer.

The daughter was less hesitant. She looked at everything with attention, but once she was done she picked quickly. When she explained, she mostly said things felt right, rather than were right. The rouwdier was one of these: caring for something might fill you up, and combined with grief she thought that could be a good way to be with your feelings. She said things do not always have to be right, they can feel right, and that people do not always allow themselves to follow a feeling, maybe because they are not ready yet. She was drawn to ideas around things that change and grow, since feelings change too, and to her that is not something bad as long as it is not pushed. Her favourite direction was Everything changes.

The husband was the quietest, barely speaking about his own picks and mostly listening to the others. He chose Turn it around. For his own loss he said he will always miss his wife, but that this does not have to stand in the way of still doing everything they loved, for as long as he is able. In Turn it around he saw that death is not only an end to everything, if you do not let it be.

Appendix J - First concept cards

The texts below are the description cards used in the first version of the rouwdier, one for the creature and one for the bond. The bond text is composed in the first person from Tygo's interview (Appendix C.5); the rouwdier text mirrors it line for line, so that the two cards are identical in form and reversed in working. The last line of the mold card states the wager the whole version rested on, that nobody finds it strange to keep such a thing, which is what the first test turned over (Appendix M.1). They are given in Dutch as they were used, with a translation.

The bond (composed story from Tygo)

Mijn moeder overleed toen ik klein was. Ik heb niet veel herinneringen meer aan haar, niet echt. Toch praat ik bijna elke dag met haar. Als het tegenzit vooral. Het is fijn om het ergens kwijt te kunnen.

Ik vertel haar niet alleen de moeilijke dingen. Ook de mooie, de vrolijke. Anders krijgt ze alleen het nare mee, en dat is ook niet leuk voor haar.

Ik heb dit nooit aan iemand verteld. Ik denk dat ze zouden vragen of ik geloof dat ze me echt hoort. En dat weet ik niet.

My mother died when I was small. I do not have many memories of her, not really. Still I talk to her almost every day. Especially when things are hard. It is good to have somewhere to put it.

I do not only tell her the difficult things. The good ones too, the cheerful ones. Otherwise she only gets the bad, and that is not nice for her either.

I have never told anyone this. I think they would ask whether I believe she really hears me. And I do not know.

Het rouwdier (composed in first person, mirrors the bond)

Ik heb een schimmel. Ik verzorg hem elke dag, op vaste tijden. Als ik het vergeet voel ik me schuldig, dan denk ik dat ik tekortschiet.

Ik houd hem in zijn eigen kooi, apart van de rest van de wereld, zodat ik hem goed in de gaten kan houden. Zo hou ik hem in leven.

Het is fijn om iets te hebben om voor te zorgen. iets concreets, iets dat leeft. Niemand vindt het gek dat ik hem heb.

I have a mold. I tend it every day, at set times. If I forget I feel guilty, and think I am falling short.

I keep it in its own cage, apart from the rest of the world, so I can keep an eye on it. That is how I keep it alive.

It is good to have something to care for. Something concrete, something alive. Nobody finds it strange that I have it.

Appendix K - Ideas that were not built

Four ideas from the window clustering did not become full concepts but stayed close to the design. They are displayed here, with a short note on how each fed into the final design or survived elsewhere. The images are AI generated from the initial sketches for the ideas.

K.1 An object with labels

An object with labels drew no sticker, but it was developed further anyway, because it made the art of versions, which recurs throughout the research, concrete in a way the cluster label could not. A single object, standing for a relation rather than a thing, hung with many labels at once, each naming what it is in the voice of someone who knew it (Figure K.1). The labels do not compete. Where a museum label closes an object down to one reading, these keep it open. What it was reaching for happens in the reflection space of the exposition, where visitors are asked what their own roudier looks like and the many versions of one bond come to hang together, none of them the caption.

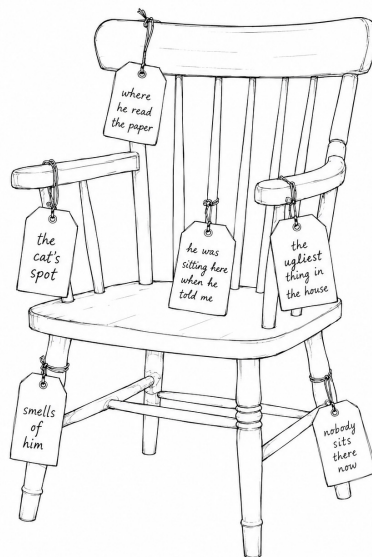


Figure K.1. An object with labels: a single object hung with many labels at once, each naming what it is in the voice of someone who knew it.

K.2 Compost

A speculative compost heap for grief. The bereaved bring something tied to the dead and add it to a pile that is never emptied and never finished: letters, worn objects, cuttings, words on paper. The pile breaks down what it is given and slowly becomes soil, so the loss is not stored intact but allowed to turn into something that feeds. Over time it stops being a collection of separate griefs and becomes one living mass, warm, decomposing, generative. It drew two pink stickers, the only idea marked twice, which suggests the image pulled at more than one participant before anyone had spoken.

It is the mirror image of the idea above. There the versions stay next to each other and none is the caption; here they are taken in and made into one thing, and what went in cannot be picked back out. That is the appeal and also where it stops. The project does reframe,

verwerken towards verweven, but it tries to make a condition in which something can be found rather than deliver the finding. The compost delivers it. The idea holds as an image and does not hold as a design.

K.3 De verhalen in gen z taal

De verhalen in gen z taal drew a pink sticker. The gathered stories of continuing bonds retold in a register that does not belong to grief: gen z language, or an absurdist world in which the acts are simply normal and the familiar rituals are the strange thing needing explanation. Nothing in the stories changes, only the voice, and the voice does the judging. Its move survives in the Asylum of Acts, where the flat clinical tone performs the same inversion from the other side: there the strange is filed as pathology and the expensive coffin goes unquestioned.

K.4 Eating a memory

Eating a memory drew a pink sticker. A chewing ball like machine that turns a memory into something to eat (Figure K.2). What goes in is left open: a memory written down, as in Figure K.2, but as easily a dish the dead always made, a taste or smell bound to them, anything that can be handed over. It could stand in the living room of someone who has died, where those around them each add a taste. What comes out is eaten, so nothing remains to visit afterwards.

It stayed an image rather than a design. A favourite dish can be cooked and eaten, but the step from something as loose as a memory to a thing that can actually be chewed asks for so much invention that the making would take over, and by then what the idea was reaching for is hard to still feel.



Figure K.2. Eating a memory: a machine that turns a memory into something to eat, so that nothing remains to visit afterwards.

Appendix L - Marjolein's practice and the three textures, unpacked

The chapter holds Marjolein's practice and each texture to what it does. What is set out here is the material behind them: how her work is made, and the theoretical moves the textures rest on, in the order the chapter follows.

L.1 Marjolein's practice

On the day itself, Marjolein says, the voortbestaanden cannot see past the farewell, and most of it happens out of their sight: they face the coffin and the speakers while the rest plays out behind their backs. The dog that settles by the wood, a hand laid on it, a child placing something inside, these pass them by, and what you did not catch you cannot later remember.

She does a great deal of work. She composes, preparing not on which moments to catch but on what matters most to the people who asked her, and she shoots the small things rather than the overview. The result is delivered as an album built as a story, never as a file of images, and the ordering is not necessarily chronological: photographs of children, for instance, are gathered together rather than spread across the book. What she makes is a composed version rather than a neutral record, but it does not attach a single explicit meaning to the day. Nothing in the album says what the day meant, so the story the voortbestaanden make around it is still theirs to make. This is close to what Despret (2021) calls instauration: not made from nothing, not simply already given, but established through shared effort.

The bears, Figure L.1, are the same gesture from the soft side. The clothes stop being clothes of the dead and become a new thing that carries the person forward, metamorphosis in Despret's sense, continuity through change. She makes them for children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and makes comfort toys for young families in difficult circumstances as well. The photography keeps the memory raw, the bear turns it soft. Neither says what it is for.



Figure L.1. The bears Marjolein makes from the clothes of the dead.

L.2 Awkwardness

Kotsko (2010) distinguishes between awkwardness as a cultural phenomenon and awkwardness as a condition of sociality itself. The first arises from uncertain norms, from not knowing how one ought to behave. The second remains even when the norms are known, because being-with another always exceeds them. Continuing bonds appear to involve both forms at once. The cultural awkwardness can be softened by design. The second cannot, because it belongs to what it means to address another at all. Kotsko himself writes about the living, so the move made in the chapter is an extension: what the mood becomes when the other in the relation cannot answer is a question he does not ask.

L.3 Uncertainty

Hans compared asking whether a felt presence is real to asking someone whether they believe in the treatment of an ingrown toenail (Section 3.2). What that comparison suggests is that practical efficacy and ontological certainty need not coincide. Despret's move is similar: rather than settling the reality of the dead, she asks what forms of relation become possible, from does it exist to in what way does it exist, and what does it make us do. This relocates uncertainty from a problem to be solved to a condition within which action takes place.

L.4 Complexity

A person was never a single thing, but many relations and many versions, more than could ever be fully grasped or known (Despret, 2021). Haraway (2015) develops the argument the chapter draws on in relation to irreversible ecological loss and extinction rather than interpersonal bereavement, yet its structure translates. She offers two ways of getting it wrong: to pretend the dead are not really gone, so nothing has to change, or to cut them off completely, so nothing can. The point is not that human loss and ecological loss are equivalent, but that both require resisting two symmetrical temptations: denying absence, or denying relation.

Appendix M - Iteration tests

M.1 Test 1: the caged mould and two cards

Aim. Whether people move from “does it really exist” toward “what does it do”, the shift the rouwdier is built around.

Setup. Informal, three participants, about fifteen minutes each, notes only, no prior framing. A friend's holiday home, June. The caged mould and the two cards on a table. Each participant received one guiding question, each entering from a slightly different angle: what does the one give, and what does the other give (forward-looking); which of the two would you want to have yourself, and why (reflective, through a choice); what is for you the difference between these two (reflective, open). Further questions arose in conversation, with attention to what the test did with the participant.

Participants.

P1: female design student, mid-twenties.

P2: late twenties, studied media design, works freelance in web design.

P3: early thirties, works as a supermarket branch manager.

Material shown. The two first cards, reproduced in Appendix J: the bond card (based on Tygo, talking to his deceased mother) and the rouwdier card (caring for a caged mould).

Observations (raw notes).

P1

- Je moet hem eigenlijk de hele dag meenemen dan, geen haak maar aan een lijntje.
- Tralies zouden er beter uitzien dan gaas, dan is het meer een kooitje.
- Beetje raar dat de ene een object heeft en de andere niet. Je moet echt duidelijk maken dat het verschillende verhalen zijn, dat is lastig als je zo twee teksten naast elkaar legt.
- Nu lijkt het of er twee dingen naast elkaar staan, maar toch een beetje over één ding. Je moet het echt splitten of iets toevoegen, want die ene is nu zweverig. De ene gaat meer over wat je kan doen en of dat fijn lijkt, de ander voelt al gewoon goed voor de persoon.
- Maar als het veel werk is, voelt het dan niet als rouwwerk? Fysiek is het ergens wel concreet, dat kan voor sommige mensen concreet voelen, maar zo is rouw misschien nou eenmaal niet altijd.
- Rouw komt niet op vaste momenten. Dat je er op vaste tijden voor moet zorgen klopt dan juist niet, het kan op ieder onverwacht moment opspelen. Kun je hem niet een lampje of buzzer geven die onverwacht om aandacht vraagt, en dat je er dan voor moet zorgen?

P2

- Vindt niet echt duidelijk dat het om een relatie gaat. Voor haar ging het rouwdier erover dat je er echt iets mee moet, terwijl de band met de overledene echt voor jezelf is. Het rouwdier geeft misschien alleen houvast.
- Met een overleden moeder zou je wel willen praten als dat fijn voelt, en voor iets zorgen ook, maar niet als het te needy is en je je schuldig gaat voelen als je het vergeet. Je hebt al genoeg moeilijkheden als je rouwt.
- Mensen praten wel vaker met overledenen, maar een schimmel houden rondom rouw doet niemand. Een schimmel is ook gewoon een beetje vies, weet niet of dat de juiste associatie is. Een plant zou minder vaag zijn. Nu heb je: wtf, waarom een schimmel? Mycelium is misschien een mooiere naam voor ongeveer hetzelfde. Of je moet juist iets doen met dat het echt iets is waar je ziek van wordt.

P3

- Rouwdier lijkt een soort coping mechanism, maar dan iets fysieks buiten jezelf.
- Jongen en moeder is meer een natuurlijke manier van ermee omgaan, ze houden een mooie relatie. Al voelt het nu of hij er ook mee zit. Het geeft hem misschien rust, maar ergens voelt het als niet-echte rust, alsof hij er geen vrede mee heeft.
- Het rouwdier daartegenover is echt een giftige relatie die niks goeds brengt.
- Stel ik zou dit aan collega's vertellen: het praten met een overledene zouden mensen wel snappen, ze zouden het zielig vinden van je verlies. Het rouwdier zouden mensen raar vinden. Al weet ik niet of ik het eerste zelf snel zou vertellen.
- Ook verwarrend dat de ene een object heeft en de andere niet.

What it changed. The aim as stated was not settled here. The guiding questions already asked what each of the two gives, so the move toward what it does sat partly in the asking, and the question whether the bond is real did not come up on its own. What came up instead was whether others would find it acceptable (P3). The wager turned over: people found keeping the mould stranger than the bond, not easier to accept. If the bond already reads as ordinary, it does not need defending. The "why a mould" question, and the disgust behind it, led via Tsing to the mycelium, where the strangeness moves from dirt to violation. The observation that the two cards read as almost one thing led to the exhibition-like arrangement of test 2, and the point that grief does not arrive on schedule became the light that asks at unexpected moments. The call for a harder enclosure was noted but not acted on at this point; the mesh was replaced by bars only after the second test, and for reasons of appearance rather than argument.

M.2 Test 2: the labelled rouwdier and the bond, set apart

Aim. Whether the changes made after test 1 did what they were meant to do, in particular whether the satire in the label landed and whether the two stories now read as separate.

Setup. This version followed the findings of test 1, summarised in Table 7.1: the stories set clearly apart in a more exhibition-like arrangement, the mould replaced by a mycelium, both stories rewritten, and the clinical label added. Two participants, informal, notes only. At the IDE faculty.

Participants.

P1: male colleague, forties, works at TU Delft.

P2: IPD student, also at TU Delft.

Material shown. The rewritten cards and the label, reproduced in Figure [X].

Onze momentjes

Mijn moeder overleed toen ik nog klein was. Ik heb niet zoveel herinneringen samen, want ik was pas 7 jaar oud. Toch praat ik nog bijna dagelijks met haar. Als ik even een momentje ervoor heb. Ik vertel haar van alles, als het soms tegenzit, maar ook juist de leuke dingen. Ik wil namelijk niet dat ze alleen wat van me hoort als het tegenzit, want dat is voor haar ook niet fijn.

Het voelt soms een beetje raar en ik vertel het eigenlijk aan niemand, het is ook wel iets dat echt van mij is. Ik ben soms bang dat andere mensen zouden vragen of ik denk dat ze me echt hoort of geloof dat ze ergens is. En heel eerlijk gezegd weet ik dat eigenlijk niet.

Rouwdier

Mijn rouwdier is een mycelium. Het is veel werk wat je bezighoudt, maar zo hoort het nu eenmaal, iedereen krijgt er mee te maken. Die van mij zit in een kooi, maar waarom weet ik niet precies. Ook heeft hij heel duidelijke instructies. Zo moet ik hem zo'n 50 keer per dag water geven en de kooi geeft met een lampje aan wanneer. Soms wel heel onverwachts, wat een beetje gek is, kan dat niet op vaste momenten? Verder moet ik hem een beetje verstoppert voor anderen, want hij schijnt verlegen te zijn.

Soms wil ik hem stiekem even vasthouden, misschien zelfs knuffelen, maar door de tralies lukt dat niet. Ze worden gemiddeld 8-10 weken oud, wat precies overeenkomt met hoe lang het duurt om alles te verwerken. Toch hoop ik niet dat ik hem ga missen, maar ergens voelt het ook wel handig eigenlijk, dan weet je tenminste wanneer je weer verder mag met de normale gang van zaken. Het stappenplan maakt in elk geval duidelijk wat wel en niet normaal is, en dat geeft houvast.

The other thing that is displayed is the clinical label that can be seen in Figure M.1.

VERZORGINGSETIKET
BEWAAR DEZE INSTRUCTIES

MOD. RD-01
REEKS: NAASTEN

ROUWDIER

TASTBAAR EN ALTIJD AANWEZIG

TYPE	Rouw om een oom
VOEDING	Enkele seconden aandacht
VERZORGING	Ongeveer 50 keer per dag
LEVENSDUUR	8 tot 10 weken*
BEWAREN	Bij voorkeur uit het zicht van anderen houden.

! Leeft uw rouwdier langer dan 10 weken, raadpleeg dan een professional.*

8 712345 678905
NL · RD-01

Figure M.1. The care label as it was shown in the second test.

Observations (raw notes).

- Participants read the rouwdier story first and the label second. The satire lives in the label, so it did not land until the label was read. Once they read the label, it clicked.
- Ja dit label is wel een beetje gek, van wie krijg je dat rouwdier dan? Wat heeft die nodig om eruit te komen?
- Wil je dat rouwdier nou eigenlijk wel?
- Maar wat hebben deze twee verhalen dan met elkaar te maken? De tweede lijkt iets moois, de eerste soort van ook, maar de persoon vindt sommige dingen vervelend aan dat rouwdier.
- (Asked whether they also saw a rouwdier in the other story.) Uhm, dat ligt eraan wat het rouwdier is. Is dat echt een beest of iets van een object, dan niet per se. Misschien moet die jongen dan nog zijn rouwdier vormen.
- Maar op zich is wat hij doet ook best mooi, alleen lijkt hij het niet volledig te hebben afgesloten.
- (After a short explanation that a rouwdier could be anything, including a way of relating such as

talking to a late parent.) This landed well, but it was not clear that a step sat in between. That the rouwdier in the second story is in fact broken free remained vague. The rouwdier and its cage had a strong image first, which would make you expect that in the other part as well.

- Het rouwdier is een mooie metafoor omdat het zorg vraagt, maar het is ook wat verwarrend, omdat het een dier is en dan is het volgende verhaal opeens een gesprek met een moeder.

What it changed. The satire only works when the label is read before the story. The vagueness between the two stories, which the exhibition-like separation had not resolved, showed that the problem was the image rather than the placing: nothing marked the second rouwdier as broken free. That became the broken-open cages in the exposition.

Appendix N - The exposition

N.1 Procedure and conditions

Sessions ran over three days. Participants were welcomed, signed the consent form, and walked the route at their own pace while the researcher took notes; anonymous photographs were made of filled labels and the space. The spoken text at the pinecone was started manually when a participant stood before it. At the reflection space, participants typed their habitat answer themselves; generation took roughly five to fifteen seconds, and earlier images kept rotating between entries (the station is described in N.5).

Conditions per participant: Andrea walked alone thinking aloud; Desiree and Sander, and Stijn and Lotte, walked as pairs in silence and reflected afterwards; Sanne and Bente walked as a pair in conversation; the remaining participants walked alone. The pairs differed in how well they knew each other. The label prompt was changed partway through the sessions. The first ten visitors received the question whether something already lives along with them; the last five received the question what a rouwdier of theirs might look like, the first two of those in a handwritten version and the remaining three printed. Both texts are given in the body. Participant words in body and appendix are translated from Dutch; originals are kept in the raw notes.

N.2 Full texts: label and spoken text

The final label Figure N.1.

VERZORGINGSETIKET BEWAAR DEZE INSTRUCTIES	MOD. RD-01 · Standaard REEKS: NAASTEN
ROUWDIER EEN EFFICIENTE VERWERKING	
TYPE	Rouw om een ouder
VOEDING	Enkele seconden aandacht
VERZORGING	Ongeveer 50 keer per dag
LEVENSDUUR	8 tot 10 weken*
BEWAREN	Bij voorkeur uit het zicht van anderen houden.
 Leeft uw rouwdier langer dan 10 weken, raadpleeg dan een professional.*	
8 712345 678905 NL · RD-01	

Figure N.1. The final care label as it hung in the exposition.

Full spoken text (the pinecone).

Toen ik jong was waren er veel dingen met mijn gezondheid die voor mijn moeder bijna niet leken te bestaan. Alsof mijn pijn en verdriet er niet echt waren, en dat deed nog meer pijn. Maar toen we na haar overlijden dit schrift vonden, veranderde dat. Ik weet nu dat ze het altijd al zag en zich diep zorgen maakte. Dat het te moeilijk was om te bespreken, om haar zorgen uit te drukken. Wat ze nooit kon zeggen, weet ik nu toch. Als het buiten te ruig wordt kan een denneappel zich snel sluiten. Net als mijn moeder, die bij te veel emoties hetzelfde kon doen.

N.3 Rouwdieren per participant

Here is textually gathered in Table N.1 what the participants said about there rouwdieren.

Table N.1. Documentation of what visitors said about their rouwdieren in reflection space.

Participant	Rouwdier	What it is	What it does	Where it would live
Sara	Her childhood cat	An animal she never said goodbye to	Holds the missing	The ocean
Andrea	A small dot, far away	Grief itself, grown small	Stays, no longer overwhelms, still asks some care	The ocean
Bente	Grandpa in a photo frame	Someone living on in an object	Keeps him strong in her memory	Captured in her memory, by a photo frame
Sanne	Rouwdieren that come alive together; a marble	Shared moments of remembrance; grief itself	Gathers family on birthdays and anniversaries; rolls through body and tongue, sometimes unfelt	A little house on a star; in your body
Hidde	A collective peace; psalm 23	A shared feeling; words that summon her	Lets him feel his grandma and the love for her	Heaven
Desiree	The guardian-angel thought	A recurring thought her father gave her	Flashes in: maybe she sees me	The sky
Sander	A cat that suddenly appears and messes your house up (or you)	Grief itself	Comes back suddenly	The Garden of Eden
Madelief	A little mouse, grandpa's name for her	A pet name kept alive	Pipes up now and then, small but dear	The heathland
Stijn	His own shade; a wounded bird	Himself as the one who grieves	Hovers between acceptance and helplessness	A surreal round space full of birds
Lotte	A white butterfly	An animal that appears around oma	Marks her presence at meaningful moments	Free in the open air, near her loved one
Kars	His oma's bed in Vietnam	A place living on, central in her house	Gathers the family; children who never knew her play on it	That bed
Kasper	An abstract drawing	Hard to put into words	Lives along with him wherever he is	Everywhere he is

Tijn	"Wat een stunt"; the parakeet	A saying; a family symbol	Remembers him and his mother at grandpa; carries his grandfather	-
Roos	The two sisters she could have had	An absence felt in good company	Surfaces when she enjoys someone else's siblings	A dark, dense forest full of flowers
Tobi	A half-ethereal forest being	Grief personified, half in life, half outside it	Asks to be followed to quiet places, then recedes	City life, and sometimes the wilderness

Nineteen rouwdieren were given by fifteen participants; four named two. Where a participant named a second thing, it is counted separately when it does something of its own rather than describing the first differently. Eighteen images were made: Sara's rouwdier was her childhood cat, of whom photographs exist, and no image was generated for her.

N.4 Design feedback

Legibility. The glass dome was not always read as something broken free (one participant asked whether it had come loose). The relation between the caged creature and the three stories wobbled: the middle read as being about people rather than creatures, participants asked what exactly had escaped, and one asked why the third station had no cage. One participant suggested the first station might carry better under the name rouw in een kooi.

Satire. The eight-to-ten-week lifespan was read as genuine by one participant, who grew irritated; a few saw the exaggeration immediately; a third found a fixed endpoint almost reasonable. One participant read the label after the story rather than before, and one did not read it at all; both were before the read-me fold was added.

Atmosphere. Background music was suggested to soften the silence, which could otherwise become a small pressure of its own. One participant suggested making the label's light and trembling real.

Suggested additions. More and more varied cages, so the cages read as ours rather than as belonging to the creature; a rouwdier still in the process of breaking free; the wish for a cage one would want to break through; a closing question at the last station: where does it live now?

N.5 The habitat station

At the table in the reflection space stood a laptop, connected to a beamer projecting onto the wall beside the bench. On screen was a single question: where would your rouwdier want to live? What a visitor typed was generated as an image of that place and projected large, joining the rotation of environments left by earlier visitors.

The station ran as a single HTML file on the laptop, without a server, an account or an API key. This was chosen over generating images locally so that there were no model loading times and no risk of the laptop failing during the sessions. Images were generated through the free anonymous endpoint of Pollinations.ai (`Üí í é ë W L á ã ~ Ö É K é ç ä ä á â ~ í á ç â ë K ~ á L é ê ç ã é í L ô é ê ç ã é í ò`), using the Flux model at a fixed width and height, with a stored seed per entry and the safety filter enabled, since the station stood unattended and took open text input from visitors.

Two choices carry the concept rather than the technique. The rouwdier itself never appears in the generated image; only the habitat is generated, since the rouwdier is given no fixed form anywhere else on the route. And a new image does not replace the previous one: every image is added to a collection that keeps cycling fullscreen, roughly one image every ten seconds, so that earlier environments stay present alongside later ones instead of being displaced, and side by side rather than merged into one landscape.

The interface was a single writing line, without a form box or a submit button. The input stayed quietly available during the rotation, so that a visitor could add an environment without interrupting what was on the wall for the others. While an image was generating, the screen showed a slowly changing line of text rather than a loading indicator.

Everything typed was stored locally in the browser, together with the time and the image URL, and survived a reload or a restart of the laptop. Three hidden key combinations were built in: one to export all entries as a CSV file, one to erase the collection, which required typing a confirmation word, and one to toggle fullscreen. None of them were visible to visitors, so that nothing could be deleted by accident during the sessions.

The images returned to participants a month later (Appendix O) were not made by this station. Those were generated separately, in conversation with a model, from what visitors had left behind.

Appendix O - Testing the AI-returned form

O.1 Purpose, materials and participants

The exposition already used AI to return an image, of a habitat, to the visitor who typed an answer. Whether the same mechanism could return a rouwdier is a heavier question, and this test runs it once, on real input, before the design is built on it. It asks what the returned image does for the person who receives it, what they recognise in it, whether it arrives as theirs or as something made for them, and whether they want it shown to others. A closing question asks whether anything of the exposition stayed with the participant, which the month between the two makes answerable.

Materials

Input. For each participant, the words they left in the exposition: the text on their label and their answer to the habitat question. Nothing of mine was added to that input.

Generation. Rather than writing a prompt from a template, I worked toward each image in conversation with the model, reading the participant's label and habitat answer and adjusting across several exchanges. This is interpretive work, and in a version where the visitor holds the conversation, it is the work that conversation would do. It means the images carry two authors, the participant and me. The exchanges were not kept, so which elements came from my steering and which the model introduced is no longer traceable. Because each image came out of its own conversation, the set shares no visual style: the results range from photography to illustration to a sketch laid over a painted ground.

Four participants received two images rather than one. Stijn, Hidde and Sanne were sent both at once; Hidde chose between them, and the other two responded to one image without addressing the other. Roos was sent a second only after responding to the first. One image carried the participant's own words as text within it, and one incorporated a drawing the participant had made.

Images are sharper in style than the habitat images shown during the exposition, since a returned rouwdier is the harder case and the test should run on that rather than on a landscape.

Participants

Fourteen of the fifteen exposition participants were contacted individually by WhatsApp in August. All are students. Eight responded within the timeframe of this research; the remaining five had not answered at the point of writing, several having said they still intended to. Two of the eight, Hidde and Lotte, also took part in the interviews earlier in this research. The consent form signed at the exposition covers this further use of their material. Roughly a month passed between the exposition and this test, so for several participants what they wrote had faded. This sits closer to a returned form encountered later than a response taken straight after writing would.

O.2 Procedure and message

Each participant received their own image or images above the message below. The message says that the image was made from what they had said and written, so participants knew the image came from their own input, but their words were not repeated back alongside it, so that recognition was not prompted by re-reading what they had written. In one case this could not be held: the words themselves had been rendered into the image.

Hii, ongeveer een maandje geleden was je door mijn expositie heen gelopen op IO. Nog heel erg bedankt hiervoor, de input was super waardevol! Op basis van wat je gezegd hebt en de dingen die je hebt opgeschreven heb ik een beeld gemaakt met AI en heb daar wat korte vragen over.

1. Wat doet dit beeld met je?
2. Wat herken je hierin?
3. Voelt dit als van jou, of als iets dat voor jou gemaakt is?
4. Mag ik dit beeld anoniem laten zien in mijn eindexpositie, met jouw woorden of een deel daarvan erbij?
5. Is iets van de expositie of het vormen van je rouwdier je bijgebleven, of niet echt?

Alvast heel erg bedankt en groetjes, Tom

O.3 Responses per participant

Responses are read as they came, and the passages the body draws on are quoted or paraphrased there. Where participants name something the image added or changed, that is reported, but it was not asked for: the questions ask what the image does and what is recognised, and additions surface there or not at all. Seven participants agreed to have their image shown. Sanne did not, on grounds set out in the body; her image appears in this report but not in any public showing, in line with what she asked.

Roos

Input: twee zussen die ze had kunnen hebben, donker dicht bos met bloemen

Reactie: tegelijk onheilspellend en rustgevend; de twee schimvormen in het midden vindt ze eng. Kreeg een tweede, lichter beeld en dat vond ze veel passender. Keuzemoment: verbeterde het oordeel van eng naar wel een mooi beeld en beter past bij wat met haar meeleeft.

Lotte

Input: witte vlinder bij oma's begrafenis, wil in de lucht leven, ongrijpbaar

Reactie: het beeld doet haar glimlachen, ze herkent de vlinder direct. Bezwaar zit niet in de inhoud maar in het abstractieniveau: zij verbeeldt zich dingen abstracter, het beeld is specifiekere dan haar herinnering.

Stijn

Input: twee rouwdieren, de schim van zichzelf en de gewonde vogel. Hij kreeg beide.

Reactie: de abstracte schim raakte hem meer dan de vogel. Niet "van hem" omdat hij met een paar woorden deze gevoelens nooit kan beschrijven, daar is meer tijd voor nodig. Over AI zelf: voelt onpersoonlijk.

Kasper

Input: een abstracte tekening zonder tekst, plus "overal waar ik ben leeft mijn rouwdier met me mee"

Reactie: kalm beeld dat het einde van een donkere periode aangeeft, licht aan het einde van de tunnel. Voelt als voor hem gemaakt. Kanttekening: zijn input ging juist over niet te snel doorgaan; het beeld geeft een voortgangsverhaal terug, het tegenovergestelde.

Tijn

Input: het gezegde "wat een stunt" van pake (met tekst in het beeld)

Reactie: hij voelt vooral iets bij de tekst, herkent zichzelf als de persoon links, maar de persoon rechts niet, en de achtergrond lijkt op een café. Gesplitste reactie: door de tekst wel deels van hem, door de niet herkende figuur moeilijker.

Hidde

Input: psalm 23, collectieve vrede, de hemel

Reactie: doet hem niet zoveel, herkent visuele kenmerken van religieuze plaatjes van het internet. Niet van hem, eerder heel generiek: "ik heb hier niet zoveel zelf van gemaakt". Over AI zelf: dissociatieve beleving door eigen omgang met AI-tools.

Tobi

Input: half etherisch boswezen, zwevend, half in het leven

Reactie: mooi én eng, want dit is vrijwel hoe hij het zich voorstelde tijdens het vertellen. Het beeld klopte dus. Toch niet van hem, maar om een andere reden: het voelt als een render van iets dat hij heeft uitgelegd, alsof iemand anders het voor hem heeft uitgetekend. Over AI zelf: hedendaagse sfeer rondom AI interessant.

Sanne

Input: huisje op een ster, herinnering aan haar achternichtje

Reactie: een mooi beeld, ze had niet verwacht dat het over haar verhaal zou gaan en moest even slikken bij het laden. Ze herkent het persoonlijke verhaal. Toch niet van haar: ze herkent zich niet in de donkerte, want in haar hoofd is de ster in een lichte wereld en het huisje gekleurd. Het beeld zit al een paar jaar in haar hoofd en is daarom moeilijk te vervangen. Toestemmingsvraag: nee, omdat haar familie ook aan dat beeld vasthoudt en zij dat voor hun privacy niet in de eindexpositie wil. Over de expositie zelf: haar rouwdier bestond al voordat ze binnenliep, de expositie liet zien hoe fijn het is om daaraan vast te kunnen houden en dat het steun biedt. Voor wie er al een heeft geeft het herkenning, voor wie er geen heeft kan het inspiratie zijn.

O.4 Limitations

The images were made by me in conversation with the model. A version in which the visitor holds that conversation assumes the interpreting can be handed over. That assumption is not tested here, and because the exchanges were not kept, neither is the question of what the model contributes on its own.

The third question asked whether the image felt like theirs. Nothing made by another party is likely to clear that bar, so the answers say less about the mechanism than the question implies. What the responses can be read for is whether the image came close enough to what the participant had expressed, and that reading is applied in the body.

Nothing was asked about whether the image was of any use, whether it gave the participant something they did not have, or whether it added to what they carried. Asking directly would have invited them to look for a value that may not be there, but the omission means the test can report reception and not effect.

The input is thin. Participants wrote a label and one habitat answer, where a conversation would give the model far more to work with. This runs one way: what fails on thin input will probably not fail less on richer input, while what already works has room to improve.

Participants shaped a rouwdier in twenty minutes rather than carrying one, and several said they had not experienced a loss of that weight. Both tilt the responses toward the milder end.

Each image is the endpoint of a conversation rather than a single return. A version that generates in one pass, or lets someone ask again, would produce a different experience than this test measures.

Appendix P - Placements

Where the exposition could stand was explored in a brainstorm before the four placements in the final concept were selected. Figure P.1 shows the result: nine settings, each with notes on what that place does to grief and what grief does there. Green notes mark what the setting offers, pink notes what it complicates.

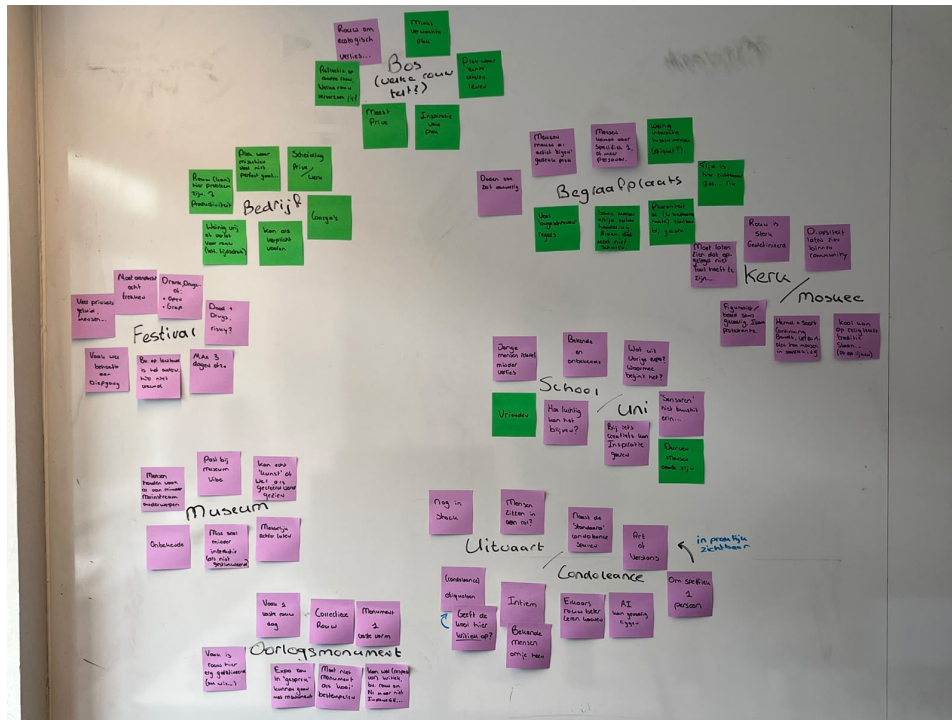


Figure P.1. The nine settings explored in the brainstorm, each with notes on what that place does to grief and what grief does there. Green notes mark what the setting offers, pink what it complicates.

The settings considered were a museum, a company, a funeral, a war memorial, a cemetery, a church or mosque, a school or university, a festival and a forest.

Three axes ran through them:

- strangers and intimates, which decides whether visitors meet the plurality of people they will never know or see how the others carry the same dead
- grief-laden and neutral places, which decides whether grief is already present in the room or has to be brought in
- lighter and heavier losses, which decides how recent and how sharp what visitors carry is likely to be

The four in the final concept were chosen because they differ most from one another, and because what they do runs into each other or stands opposed in ways that are worth showing side by side. Between them they also cover the three axes: a museum sits at the neutral end among strangers, a war memorial is grief-laden and collective, a funeral is grief-laden among intimates, and a company is a neutral place where a recent loss is nonetheless in the room. The remaining settings sit close to positions these four already hold, or bring a relation to grief that the design would have to argue with before it could stand there.

The notes on the board also raised questions that returned in the final concept. At a company, whether contributions from strangers should be selected before they arrive, which is where the curator comes in. At a war memorial, whether the cage can be pointed at a monument without disrespecting it, and what can travel on from a place where grief has a fixed form. At a funeral, that the versions arrive there of their own accord.

Appendix Q — The website

Q.1 What it is, and how it was made

The website is the second half of the making space described in 10.4, alongside the material worked with by hand. This appendix sets out what a visitor encounters, what the design decides at each point, and where this version stops, so that what the body claims about it can be checked. Interface text is given in Dutch, as it appears on screen.

It began as something narrower. After the exposition a visitor would hold a spoken reflective conversation with AI through a QR code, and from that transcript a rouwdier would be distilled and an image generated. The instruction to the model was already cautious: not therapeutic, filling nothing in, seeking no closure, offering any form as one refutable version. The mechanism stayed the problem, since it still ended in one returned form, and the responses in 8.5 pointed away from it: participants described the image as made for them rather than as theirs, and what they named as mattering was the shaping or the exposition itself. What followed took that conversation apart and distributed it over separate choices, each of which the visitor now makes.

The site was built by vibecoding with ChatGPT and Claude (see the AI statement). The concept, the interaction and the wording of every screen are the researcher's; the models wrote the code and were steered across many exchanges rather than briefed once. The repository holds 138 commits between 16 August and 13 September 2026. What is described here is version 128. It is published as a ChatGPT Site at <https://rouwdieren.tomdenhartog2000.chatgpt.site/>, which is also what the QR code at the exposition opens; if that address no longer resolves, the code is at github.com/tomdenhartog2000/rouwlandschap-site.

Q.2 The route

The opening screen offers making and looking around as equals: “Leg iets vast of geef het vorm” and “Kijk eerst rond”, under the line “Misschien heeft wat met je meeleeft al een vorm. Misschien krijgt het hier voor het eerst vorm.” A third link leads to a page about AI and participation. The wording went through several versions. “Maak een rouwdier” suggested there was none yet, and “waar mag jouw rouwdier uit bestaan” would have made the site the one giving permission; the present question, “Waar kan jouw rouwdier uit bestaan?”, describes possibilities without guarding them.



Figure Q.1. The opening screen.

Step 1, iets meenemen. Six entrances in two groups. Vastleggen holds Fotograferen, Opnemen and Aanwijzen; Vormgeven holds Schrijven, Teken en Klank maken. Several can be combined, and none is preselected. Aanwijzen takes a title, sentence, place or song and optionally a link, with the note that the reference stays the visitor's and that AI looks nothing up. Opnemen and Klank maken both say the result can stand on its own. Continuing without choosing anything is allowed, although AI then has nothing to work from and only “zelf verder” remains available.

1 van 5 · iets meenemen

Waar kan jouw roudier uit bestaan?

Je kunt iets vastleggen, iets vormgeven, of verschillende vormen combineren.

Vastleggen

Fotograferen
voeg toe

Opnemen
voeg toe

Een beeld van iets dat je al bij je hebt of hier maakt.

Je stem, een klank of een moment van geluid dat op zichzelf kan blijven staan.

Aanwijzen
voeg toe

Een liedje, tekst, gezegde of plek die al bestaat.

Vormgeven

Schrijven
voeg toe

Tekenen
voeg toe

Een woord, herinnering of iets dat nog geen vorm heeft.

Een spoor, schets of vorm die je hier maakt.

Klank maken
voeg toe

Een klank die ontstaat uit hoe je tekent en op zichzelf kan blijven staan.

Je kunt iets kiezen, of meteen verdergaan.

[terug](#) [verder](#)

Figure Q.2. Step 1, the six entrances in two groups.

Klank maken draws a line on the screen and turns it into sound while it is being drawn. The visitor picks a character and one or more instruments, and chooses separately whether the drawn image is kept as well, since the sound rather than the trace is the work here. The first instrument load needs a moment of internet, and on iPhone sound has to be activated by an explicit tap, which the screen says rather than hides. No model is involved: “Al luistert niet naar deze klank.”

Welke klank wil je tekenen?

laag en rustig warm en rond licht en helder

Welke instrumentklanken wil je horen? maximaal twee

strijkers piano gitaar fluit

— fijn — gewoon — breed

begin opnieuw

bewaar en beluister je geluid

De eerste instrumentklank vraagt kort internet. Daarna wordt de klank uit je tekening gemaakt. AI luistert niet naar deze klank. Alleen als je ook het tekenbeeld bewaart, kan AI dat beeld als uitgangspunt gebruiken.

Figure Q.3. Making sound by drawing.

Step 2, vormgeven. Three paths: “Ik wil zelf verder”, “Ik wil samen met AI verder werken”, “Ik wil AI mijn input laten vertalen”. Choosing an AI path opens which form it may take, and only forms that fit what was brought in are offered: an image, ordering the visitor’s own words, or a movement that appears when someone opens the contribution.

← terug naar het landschap

2 van 5 - vormgeven

Wat wil je nu met je roudier doen?

Je kunt zelf verdergaan, iets samen met AI maken, of AI vragen jouw input naar een andere vorm te vertalen.

Ik wil zelf verder

Je roudier blijft zoals het nu is. Je kunt er zelf nog iets aan toevoegen.

Ik wil samen met AI verder werken

AI werkt met wat je hebt ingebracht. Jij bepaalt wat er gebeurt.

Ik wil AI mijn input laten vertalen

AI maakt een nieuw beeld vanuit wat jij hebt ingebracht.

[terug](#) [verder](#)

Figure Q.4. Step 2, the three paths.

Working together with an existing photo or drawing requires saying what may change, and the instruction to the model forbids adding any object, symbol, decoration or background detail that was not asked for. Translating gives the model room to make a new image, and then the original may be kept visible beside it or not, which is decided on the card. Nothing is sent before a consent box is ticked, and what that means differs per path. Images are made with gpt-image-1-mini, with a cap of a hundred generations a day across the whole site.

What comes back is shown only to the visitor, with four answers: “Dit voelt passend”, “Ik wil iets veranderen”, “Ik wil opnieuw kijken”, “Ik wil zonder AI verder”. Changing builds on the current version and keeps what already worked; looking again returns to the original contribution and drops the AI interpretation; continuing without AI removes it altogether.

Dit voelt passend

Ik wil iets veranderen

Ik wil opnieuw kijken

Ik wil zonder AI verder

[terug](#) [verder](#)

Figure Q.5. An AI proposal, with the four ways of answering it.

Step 3, even stilstaan. One question, “Wat doet dit met jou? En wat vraagt jouw rouwdier van je?”, with a field and the line “Je kunt ook meteen verder.” What is written is offered back at the next step as a suggestion, where it can be changed or emptied.

Figure Q.6. Step 3, the question that can be passed by.

Step 4, het kaartje. A name and a description, both optional. The card can be saved as an image, and a recording or sound drawing is saved as a separate file, since a PNG carries no sound. The card holds a fixed QR code that opens the project explanation at /over-rouwdieren, which sets out what a rouwdier is and that what is shown is one version at one moment; a button there opens the landscape the contribution belongs to. A second QR code can be added pointing at the visitor's own reference. The card therefore reaches someone who was never at the exposition with an explanation around it, rather than as an image on its own.

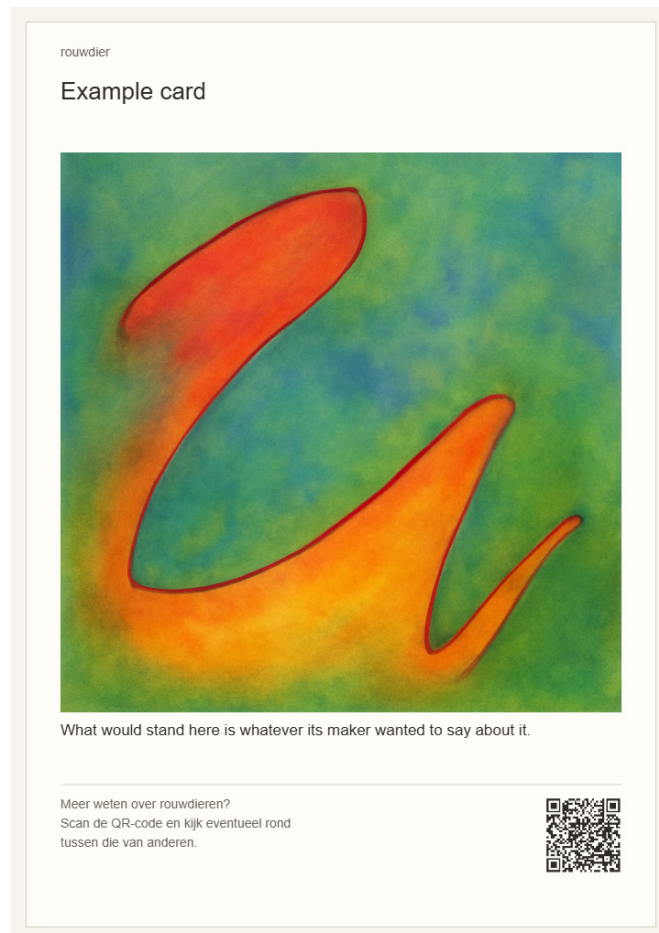


Figure Q.7. Step 4, the card.



Figure Q.8. The project page a scanned card opens first.

Step 5, waar mag het leven. Above the four choices: "Je bijdrage verschijnt zonder naam. Je tekst, beeld of stem kan wel herkenbaar zijn." Taking it back is where the step starts, and nothing is stored in that case. The other three require a ticked box and open a written explanation.



Figure Q.9. Step 5, how far from its maker the contribution may go.

Choosing this setting or other places opens one more screen: shaping it together with the designer, receiving a proposal first, or staying anonymous. The first two ask for an email address and a separate permission to be contacted. All three state that this is no guarantee of being exhibited. The closing screen differs by what was chosen, and ends on the same position either way: “Hiermee is niets afgerond. Een rouwdier verandert, en je kunt er later nog een maken.”

Figure Q.10. The extra question that follows a choice for a physical version.

Figure Q.11. The closing screen.

Q.3 The landscape and the management side

Shared contributions appear as small moving sparks that open in a panel over the landscape. A newly added one brightens briefly so its maker can find it, and then settles among the rest. Nothing is counted, rated or ranked. The sparks were made smaller and softer in successive versions so that they would read as an entrance rather than as stars or decoration, which works against being found at all; the landscape therefore opens with one line naming what can be done, “Klik op een van de vonkjes om een rouwdier te openen.”

A menu at the top left shows which landscape the visitor is in and which others exist, with the line “Wil jij iets toevoegen?” beneath it. A contribution is bound to the landscape that was active when it was left. The Landschap van de expositie holds the eighteen rouwdieren given

shape during the exposition of chapter 8, shown with the permission of the people they belong to; the Landschap van de afstudeerexpositie stands ready and empty. A landscape opened from a card runs in a viewing mode in which adding something is not offered.

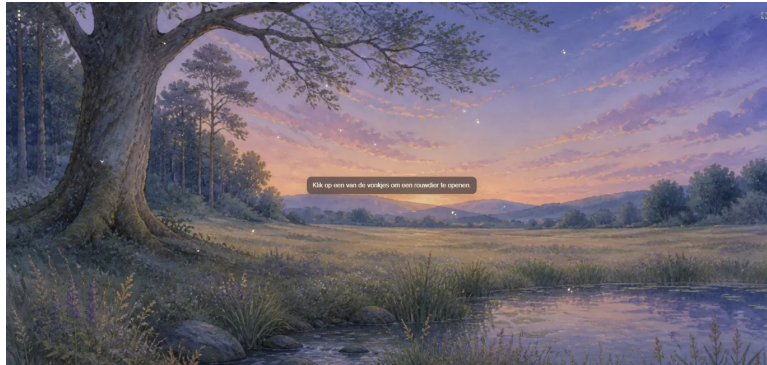


Figure Q.12. The landscape as a visitor first sees it, with the line shown on opening.

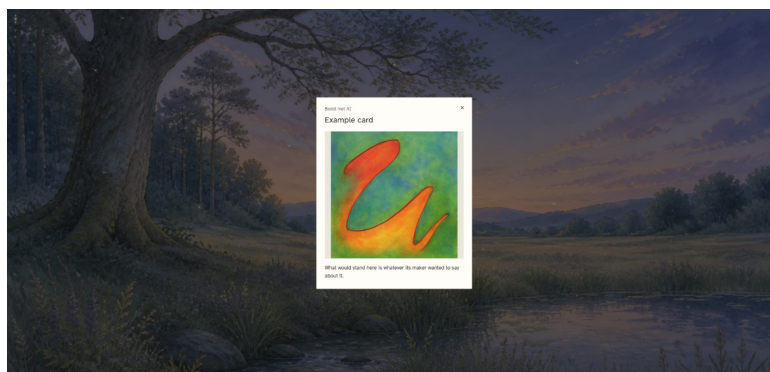


Figure Q.13. An opened contribution, in a panel over the landscape.

Behind a password sits a management page. It lists contributions per landscape, shows what each person chose about where it may live and how they want to be involved, and allows hiding or deleting; deleting removes the stored files as well. Landscapes can be created, renamed, made visible to visitors, and set as the active one.

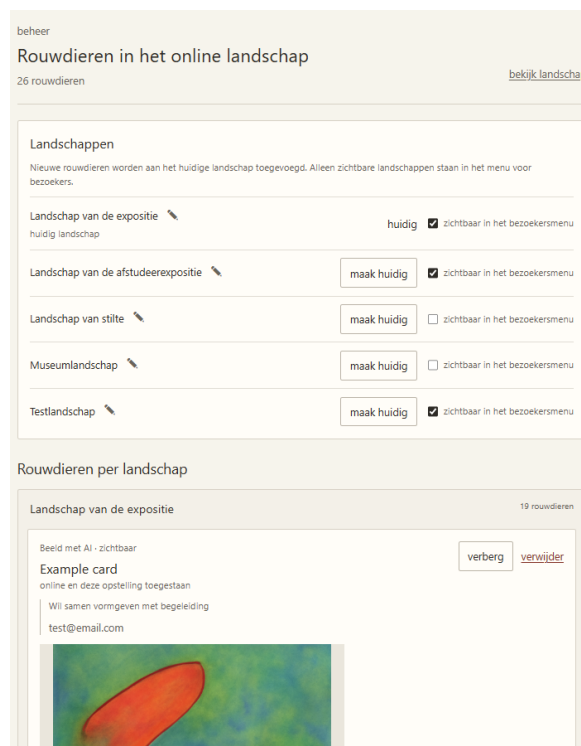


Figure Q.14. The management page.

Q.4 What happens to what is given

The site states its own terms on a separate page, reachable from the opening screen. Nothing is stored when a visitor takes their contribution back. When it is shared, what is kept is whatever they chose to share, a photograph, drawing, text, recording, reference, title or description, held in the project's own database and file storage, which run as part of the ChatGPT Site the landscape is published on. An email address is kept only when someone asked to be involved in a physical version, is used only for that, and is visible only in the management page.

AI is reached over the OpenAI API and only after the consent box is ticked. What goes there is the input chosen for the AI version and whatever the visitor wrote as an instruction. Spoken words from a recording are converted to text only after a separate consent, once, and other sound is not interpreted at all. The page states that input sent through the API is not used to train OpenAI's models unless that is separately chosen, and that OpenAI may hold it briefly for abuse monitoring, with a link to their documentation.

Q.5 How it looks, and what was left behind

The making pages and the landscape carry two registers. The making pages were kept from becoming solemn: the first version was dark and wide with large display typography, which made the screen the most ceremonial object in the room, and it was replaced by what is closer to a worksheet on a table, in warm off-white with dark brown-grey text, Atkinson Hyperlegible, short plain sentences, and no texture, glow or symbolic background. Colour comes from what the visitor makes. The landscape is image-led and darker, and a contribution opens in a panel over it rather than beside it, so the landscape stays present as surroundings.

The site is built for phones. Opening automatically in landscape and full screen proved unreliable on iPhone, so it works upright as well, and not seeing the whole landscape at once is treated as something to explore rather than as a fault.

Two directions were tried and abandoned. Contributions appeared for a while as subtle distortions of the background rather than as sparks, which read as a technical warp and were hard to find at all; presence had to stay subtle without becoming unreachable. And a spark was going to take its colour, tempo and behaviour from the contribution, which would have let the interface interpret someone's rouwdier before its maker had chosen anything. The spark is now an entrance and nothing more.

Q.6 What this version does not do

Contributions appear straight away and are hidden or removed afterwards rather than checked first. There is no way for a visitor to return to what they left, edit it or delete it themselves. Presence at the exposition is not checked, so the making route can be opened by anyone with the address. Anonymity is not guaranteed, since a voice, photograph or text can make someone recognisable. And consent is given by one person, also when a rouwdier belongs to more than one.

Appendix R. Testing the making space website

The website was built as a working prototype and tested in two rounds in August 2026. Both rounds are described here because the second follows from the first. Testing the build with a developer before the prototype had been used by anyone would have produced remarks about something unfinished.

R.1 Testing during development

The website was tested several times while it was being built, each time after changes had been made. Among the testers were two people with less digital fluency than younger visitors, chosen because the exposition cannot know who is standing in front of it. Both used Android phones. Until then the website had only been checked on iPhone, and it worked on both. The remark that returned was that the website is sometimes slow.

R.2 Walkthrough with a web developer

The website was walked through step by step with a freelance web and app developer, referred to here as Gabi, who works for various companies improving websites and building apps. The walkthrough followed the whole route, from the opening screen to the final choice about where a contribution may live. Her written remarks are set out below with what followed from each. Photographs were taken with permission.

1. The hosting provider is visible in the link. Free hosting on GitHub is not possible, since the website needs a server for the AI, the contributions, the audio and the storage. Removing the provider from the link requires registering a domain. This was left as it is for the graduation version, since the cost and effort outweigh what it adds at this stage.
2. Visitors should be made aware that AI is involved. The opening screen now states that AI can be used when giving shape to something, with a link to a page setting out what is sent where.
3. It is not clear which contribution is your own. A newly added spark now briefly grows larger and brighter, then settles smoothly back into the landscape.
4. The result is shown three times. The order was changed. The card and the download now sit together, the choice of where it may live follows, and the closing screen only confirms.
5. The sparks could move. Already implemented.
6. Fullscreen does not work on iPhone. This is a constraint of the browser on iOS rather than a design choice. A version that runs fullscreen would have to be an app.
7. A scanned code should open the landscape belonging to that placement. Each placement now has its own landscape, and the code opens that one. The button names which landscape is being opened.
8. Sharing a contribution without context leaves the receiver with something vague. A shared card now opens a separate page that shows the rouwdier together with a short text about the project. That page shows and does not invite, so making remains tied to the exposition.
9. Landscape names were inconsistent. Corrected throughout.
10. It was not clear that something made on paper could be photographed and added. Gabi had drawn on paper and then drew it again in the website, saying afterwards that she had not

realised the first drawing could be used. The step now states that a photograph of something made physically can be added.

11. A plain colour instead of a landscape would be more abstract. Not adopted. The spatial language runs through the whole design, in where a contribution may live and how far from its maker it may come to stand, and a surface does not carry that.

Appendix S. The twelve rouwdieren

The selection shown at the graduation exposition. Five people were met in interviews and six at the exposition described in chapter 8; together they carry twelve rouwdieren, since Tygo's has two components. Each text is either written by its maker or written from their words and returned to them to change, add to or approve, and the medium was settled in the same exchange. Texts stand in the language they were given in.

S.1 Tygo — Onze momentjes / Flessenpost

Rouwdier: the almost daily conversations with his mother, who died when he was seven; and the bottle, which he named a message in a bottle himself.

Origin: interview, followed by a phone call.

Medium: two separate boards rather than one text. A bottle with a letter inside it stands beside the second.

Mijn moeder overleed toen ik nog klein was. Ik heb niet zoveel herinneringen samen, want ik was pas 7 jaar oud. Toch praat ik nog bijna dagelijks met haar. Als ik even een momentje heb, dan vertel ik haar van alles, als het soms tegenzit, maar ook juist de leuke dingen. Ik wil namelijk niet dat ze alleen wat van me hoort als het moeilijk gaat, want voor haar is dat ook niet fijn.

Het voelt soms een beetje raar en ik heb het eigenlijk nooit aan iemand verteld, het is ook wel iets dat echt van mij is. En soms ben ik bang dat andere mensen zouden vragen of ik denk dat ze me echt hoort of geloof dat ze ergens is. En heel eerlijk gezegd weet ik dat eigenlijk niet.

Ik verwacht niet iets terug, maar als ze ergens is, hoop ik dat het toch aankomt en dat ze weet dat ik haar mis en niet zal vergeten. Misschien verdwijnt het en bereikt het nooit iemand. Maar toch voelt het goed om het haar te vertellen.

S.2 Belle — De dennenappel

Rouwdier: the pine cone — what can close itself quickly when it gets too rough outside, as her mother could.

Origin: participant in the family trip (chapter 6) and the interview.

Medium: the pine cone itself.

Toen ik jong was waren er veel dingen met mijn gezondheid die voor mijn moeder bijna niet leken te bestaan. Alsof mijn pijn en verdriet er niet echt waren, en dat deed nog meer pijn. Maar toen we na haar overlijden dit schrift vonden, veranderde dat. Ik weet nu dat ze het altijd al zag en zich diep zorgen maakte. Dat het te moeilijk was om te bespreken, om haar zorgen uit te drukken. Wat ze nooit kon zeggen, weet ik nu toch. Als het buiten te ruig wordt kan een denneappel zich snel sluiten. Net als mijn moeder, die bij te veel emoties hetzelfde kon doen.

S.3 Remy — The Rose

Rouwdier: what one song did in a room where it meant something different to everyone in it.

Origin: phone call, written up from those notes and sent back by WhatsApp; approved by him.

Medium: a spoken recording, with a photograph of his trombone beside it.

Van jongs af aan maak ik al muziek: thuis, in de kerk, bij het Leger des Heils. Als ik speel spreek ik een taal die voorbij gaat aan woorden. Eigenlijk spreekt het instrument zelf die taal beter dan ik.

Precies een jaar na de begrafenis van mijn moeder speelde ik The Rose, als duet, bij de kerstmaaltijd van het Leger des Heils. Niet per se omdat het over haar ging, want het is ook een mooi liedje dat eigenlijk over liefde gaat. Maar toch wist iedereen in de zaal het. Het was ook zeker niet mijn beste solo, als je het terugkijkt denk je wel echt oei. En toch werd de hele zaal muisstil, zelfs de kinderen, en daarna klapte iedereen overweldigend een minuut lang.

Daarna kwamen er mensen naar me toe, allemaal met iets anders. Over mijn moeder, of over iemand die zij verloren hadden. Ik weet nog steeds niet waar iedereen op dat moment aan dacht, en toch leefde de hele zaal in een gedeeld moment.

Dat is wat muziek kan doen. Rouw zit niet alleen in je hoofd, en woorden komen er vaak niet bij. Muziek soms wel.

S.4 Marjolein — Zware shag

Rouwdier: the smell of her father's Brandaris tobacco in the house, which stopped on the day her mother died.

Origin: interview. Written from her words and sent back by WhatsApp; she wrote a version back herself and approved this one.

Medium: a tin of tobacco with a perforated lid, to be smelled and not seen into.

Mijn vader overleed op vrij jonge leeftijd en sindsdien heb ik het idee dat hij nog heel lang bij mij thuis heeft gewoond. Hij rookte Brandaris zware shag. En soms rook ik een vleug van die geur. Bij belangrijke momenten in het leven van ons gezin kon ik het ruiken.

Als er wat met mijn moeder was, rook ik hem in mijn huis. Alsof hij mij waarschuwde dat ik naar haar toe moest gaan.

Op het sterfbed van mijn moeder, 36 jaar na zijn dood, zat ik stil in een hoekje te waken. Ze deed haar ogen open, keek het donker in en zei: oh lieverd, wat heb ik jou gemist. Ik rook de zware shag.

Twee dagen later overleed ze.

Vanaf dat moment heb ik hem nooit meer geroken. Hij heeft op haar gewacht.

Je kan zeggen dat het toeval is, mijn man en andere familieleden hebben er niks mee. Maar voor mij is het duidelijk. Ze zijn samen nu.

S.5 Fabian — Mijn oude vader

Rouwdier: the relief after the death of his father, who had been ill for a long time — and what returned in it: his father as he was before the illness.

Origin: phone call, written out.

Medium: none. The text is the rouwdier.

Mijn vader was lang ziek. En de laatste tijd was erg zwaar, ook voor hem. Ik hield ontzettend veel van hem, maar er was op een gegeven moment weinig over van de man die mijn vader was.

Toch wilde ik hem natuurlijk blijven zien en er voor hem zijn, maar toen hij overleed voelde ik wel een opluchting. Niet omdat ik hem kwijt wilde, maar omdat het voor ons allebei pijn deed.

Hier voelde ik me eerst heel erg schuldig over, ook al weet ik dat dat niet hoeft. Ergens haat je de opluchting, omdat het ook je vader heeft gekost, maar het gaf me wel mijn leven terug, wat hij denk ik ook had gewild. En in die opluchting kwam ook mijn oude vader weer tot leven, hoe ik hem kende voor hij ziek werd.

From the exposition

S.6 Lotte — White butterfly

Rouwdier: a white butterfly during her grandmother's funeral, which now often appears around her things.

Origin: exposition; interviewed earlier as a bereaved participant. Responded to the WhatsApp test.

Medium: a butterfly she makes herself.

There was a white butterfly, during my grandmother's funeral. Now it often appears around her things, free and beyond reach, and still close to the people she loves.

S.7 Tobi — Forest creature

Rouwdier: a half-ethereal forest creature, half in life and half outside it.

Origin: exposition. Responded to the WhatsApp test, calling the returned image close to how he had pictured it.

Medium: the image made with AI.

Half in life and half outside it, floating. When it touches the ground with two feet I know I have to follow it, towards quiet, coolness and nature, and when it has had enough attention it sinks back into the background.

S.8 Tijn — Wat een stunt

Rouwdier: his pake's saying, which he and his mother still say to each other.

Origin: exposition. Responded to the WhatsApp test: the text did something for him, the image did not.

Medium: the saying, printed large, chosen over the image returned to him.

My pake always said it, what a stunt. Me and my mother still say it to each other, with it being reminded of him.

S.9 Stijn — My own rouwdier

Rouwdier: himself, floating between acceptance and helplessness.

Origin: exposition. Responded to the WhatsApp test at length, and proposed sound instead of image.

Medium: the image made with AI, with his own drawn figure in it.

I am my own rouwdier, floating between acceptance and helplessness, because in the end I am the one who experiences the grief. Accompanied by many feeling such as: guilt, sorrow, comfort, love and melancholy.

S.10 Kasper — Everywhere I am

Rouwdier: the rouwdier is wherever he is; in his mother's family things were celebrated again too early, so perhaps it may mourn for a while as well.

Origin: exposition. Responded to the WhatsApp test.

Medium: the image made with AI — his drawing in a room with a lit doorway that the model added on its own.

Wherever I am, my rouwdier is as well. In his mother's family people celebrated things too early for him. Maybe the rouwdier is allowed to be in mourning for a while too.

S.11 Roos — Twee zussen

Rouwdier: missing two sisters who were never born, which comes up when she is with other people and their brothers or sisters.

Origin: exposition. The one case in which saying what did not fit changed what came back (see chapter 8).

Medium: none. The text is the rouwdier.

Ik heb geen broers of zussen. Mijn moeder was voor mij twee keer in verwachting van mijn zussen, maar beide zwangerschappen eindigden in een miskraam. Meestal denk ik daar niet over na. Maar als ik bij iemand ben die wel een broer of zus heeft, of als er zoiets voorbijkomt als een broer-en-zusdag, dan merk ik dat ik ze mis. Dan doet het pijn dat die van mij niet mochten leven.