

Filling the identity voids

This document was developed in partnership with the PNH community and Dr. Guy Winch, psychologist and renowned expert in the science of emotional health.



The PNH effect

For some, PNH may mean taking a step back from favorite hobbies or sports, shifting your social network, or a home environment that feels less 'at home.' At times, you might feel as though you've lost touch with who you used to be, or question who you are now.

So how do we fill these voids in our physical world, our relationships, and our sense-of-self? How can we boost our emotional well-being and adjust to new realities?

Three steps to make a change



1 Identify what's missing

Make a list of the losses or voids that were created by PNH for each of the below categories:

IDENTITY & SELF-PERCEPTION

List how your identity or your view of yourself has changed.

Example: ***I'm less athletic** — I used to run and I can't anymore*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

List the people in your life to whom you feel less connected.

Example: ***My best friend** — she/he hasn't been supportive of the impact of PNH on my life*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS

List what you miss about your environment.

Example: ***My bedroom** — I often sleep on the couch due to PNH fatigue*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Now, circle the ones that are most important to you, and continue to the next page

2

Explore how to fill, replace, or redefine

Transfer your circled words to the lines below. Then, write an idea for how you might redefine, replace, or fill those voids. Examples:

REDEFINE Become a running coach to maintain your identity as an athlete

REPLACE Identify a friend who can support you throughout your PNH journey

FILL How can you make your new room feel more like 'home?'

LOSSES • VOIDS

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

REDEFINE • REPLACE • FILL

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

3

Check in regularly

Check in with yourself when big life events happen or you feel unsure. Go through this exercise again to see what needs to shift. Give yourself permission to change — do what's best to maintain your sense of identity and emotional well-being.

REMEMBER!

Our identity is always in flux as we adapt to life's changes and curveballs. You have the power to make the necessary adjustments to feel more like how you want to be.



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