

## Design for broken hearts : an exploration of how design is involved in coping with relationship loss

**Citation for published version (APA):**

She, W. J., Desmet, P. M. A., & Schifferstein, H. N. J. (2014). *Design for broken hearts : an exploration of how design is involved in coping with relationship loss*. 51. Abstract from 20104 International Conference on Culture and Creativity (ICCC 2014), Tainan, Taiwan.

**Document status and date:**

Published: 05/12/2014

**Document Version:**

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of Record (includes final page, issue and volume numbers)

**Please check the document version of this publication:**

- A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
- The final author version and the galley proof are versions of the publication after peer review.
- The final published version features the final layout of the paper including the volume, issue and page numbers.

[Link to publication](#)

**General rights**

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

If the publication is distributed under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license above, please follow below link for the End User Agreement:

[www.tue.nl/taverne](http://www.tue.nl/taverne)

**Take down policy**

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at:

[openaccess@tue.nl](mailto:openaccess@tue.nl)

providing details and we will investigate your claim.

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280153779>

# Design for Broken Hearts; An exploration of how design is involved in coping with relationship loss

Conference Paper · December 2014

---

CITATIONS

0

READS

49

1 author:



[Wan Jou \(Lavender\) She](#)

Technische Universiteit Eindhoven

1 PUBLICATION 0 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

## Design for Broken Hearts; An exploration of how design is involved in coping with relationship loss

Wan-Jou SHE

Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands

Corresponding author: [w.she@tudelft.nl](mailto:w.she@tudelft.nl)



Wan Jou She,  
PhD candidate (Design Aesthetics)  
Industrial Design Engineering, TU Delft

Prof.dr.ir. P.M.A. Desmet, Professor  
Industrial Design Engineering, TU Delft

Dr. ir. H.N.J. Schifferstein,  
Associate Professor (Design Aesthetics)  
Industrial Design Engineering, TU Delft

Relationship loss is a fundamental life experience for all human beings. It is the experience of losing someone significant such as a parent, friend or lover. Whether it is through the breakup of a romantic relationship, the passing away of a family member, or in other ways, coping with loss is inevitable for all individuals. Besides inevitable, coping with loss is highly individual because people differ strongly in terms of how they experience loss and in terms of the strategies they use to cope with their loss. Loss is a frequently studied subject in various disciplines such as philosophy, psychology and sociology. However, in the design field, loss is relatively less explored. This study aims to explore how design is involved in the experiences of loss and in loss coping. The main proposition in this study is that even though design cannot solve the problem at hand (the loss is a given fact), it can support people in their coping processes. A phenomenological study with 18 participants is reported to understand the roles design plays in people's loss coping experience. The study consisted of two phases: a sensitizing phase and an interview phase. The results indicated that design can intervene people's loss experience, and that it can do so both by facilitating and impeding the loss coping process. On the basis of the results, seven main functions are proposed that design can have in the loss coping process.

Keywords: design approach, relationship loss, loss experience, loss coping process