

Griefwork *for* Teens

Healing from Loss

Reproducible
Interactive
& Educational
Handouts

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* Specifically Related to Death

About *GriefWork for Teens*

We intend to provide school counselors, therapists and other mental health professionals with resources that will elevate conversations about loss and aid in the grieving process. Through our work with teens who are grieving, and drawing from our personal experiences, we have become fully aware of the complexities associated with grieving. We live in a society where people are expected to 'get-over' their loss quickly and we understand this is not realistic. We know there are many ways that teens grieve and we support one's right to grieve in an individual and unique fashion.

GriefWork for Teens is for facilitators to help grieving teens heal from their losses. Everyone experiences loss. We refer to the psychological process of coping with a significant loss as grief work. The range of behaviors, emotions and attitudes is huge. Throughout the book we use the terms *normalize* and *New Normal* to convey that everyone's grief has a unique expression and is that particular teen's 'normal.'

The handouts in *GriefWork for Teens* will engage those who grieve any type of loss and encourage them to identify, internalize and/or verbalize personal feelings while working through the grieving process. The only page specific to death is *How Can I Honor _____*, pages 113 and 114.

GriefWork for Teens contains activity and educational handouts and journaling pages which can be used in individual counseling sessions, educational settings and support groups. We strongly suggest that before sharing the handouts in this book, you complete them yourself, remembering a loss you have experienced. By doing the activities you will better understand the value, and some of the likely reactions to the activity. It will also increase your comfort level and your confidence in using the handouts. It is possible and quite probable that you, as well as the teens you work with, will grow emotionally and spiritually while doing this important work.

Each interactive activity has comments and suggestions on the back explaining the purpose of the activity and at least one way to use it. Read them prior to using the handout to get the most out of each one and to give you a 'starter-idea.' Be creative in using this book. Although the handouts are written for use in groups, they may be adapted to use with individuals or as homework assignments.

(Continued on the next page)

The Grief Experience

One of the important aspects of grieving that has been largely overlooked is the relational aspect. Each person's grief is unique because he or she:

- Had a unique relationship with a deceased person (loving, ambivalent, challenging)
- Brings a unique personality and coping mechanism to the situation
- Has a particular world view which will impact how he or she enters the process
- Has ongoing relationships which may or may not be helpful
- Came to this particular loss with a unique history of dealing with earlier losses
- Has particular expectations about what dealing with the loss means and wonders how dealing with the loss "should" proceed
- Has misconceptions or preconceptions of dealing with death from the media
- Is dealing with death for the first time

The grieving process can occur in many types of losses; most of these pages are applicable to any type of loss. See asterisk on Table of Contents for the page that focuses on death only.

The grieving process is impacted by each teen's developmental stage and issues. A teen may experience profound grief over losses that adults in his/her life may think are trivial or fleeting. While not encouraging over-dramatization, which some teens are prone to, it is important to be accepting of each teen's unique emotional state.

We view the grieving experience as a long, winding path that curves back on itself, traverses hills and valleys, and has many obstacles. It is a path that is challenging to negotiate, time-consuming to travel along and may provide opportunities for personal and spiritual growth. Grieving is a part of the human experience. A teen attached to someone will mourn the loss of that relationship and miss that person's physical presence – even when loss is caused by moving, break-up, or loss of friendship – not necessarily death.

THE HEALING PATHWAY

The purpose of THE HEALING PATHWAY is to provide a framework and a common language for talking about the grieving experience without timelines. As teens go through the process of grieving a loss, they will likely go through this process and experience:

1. Shock
2. Disorganization
3. Reorganization

We view the process as recursive. As the shock of the loss wears off and teens start to experience their feelings fully and learn to manage them, they will begin to reorganize their lives. As this healing occurs, they will have times when they find themselves dealing again with very primitive feelings and think they are back at the beginning of the process. We liken this to a path that keeps curving back on itself. Holidays, birthdays and other special occasions can flip the grieving person back; these setbacks will not be as intense nor will they last as long as previous setbacks. Perhaps they will also be less surprising, therefore lessening the feeling of being blindsided.

Teens who have an ill loved one may experience anticipatory grief and anticipatory mourning as their loved one's health declines. Many people are surprised when this anticipatory work does not inoculate them against the pain of the loss. We know that it does not! Anticipatory grief may mitigate the intensity and duration of the shock of the loss, but will not reduce the need for learning how to manage.

In THE HEALING PATHWAY we explain that the first experience is one of *shock*. The numbness that is associated with this can be very misleading; often others think that the teen is not grieving. In addition to numbness, shock is often characterized by disbelief that the loss actually occurred, and searching behavior (looking for the loved one in crowds or familiar places) is quite common.

Shock can last for a few days or longer, often depending on the circumstances. Teens who are coping with a sudden, tragic loss will often be in *shock* for a long time.

Shock gradually wears off and as that is happening, and reality sinks in, teens move to a phase we call *disorganization*. This is 'the pits.' It is the phase that takes the longest to emerge from and is the place which everyone who grieves returns to time and time again, with diminishing intensity and duration. *Disorganization* is characterized by feeling the full impact of the loss. Yearning, missing, sadness, heavy-heartedness are all common. Teens also experience relief, fear of life without the missing person, and/or anger. The important work during this phase of THE HEALING PATHWAY is to ultimately feel the wide array of emotions.

(Continued on the next page)

Tasks of Healing from a Loss For the Facilitator

Four tasks are related to the work of grieving.
Personal growth and healing are built on these tasks.

1. **Accepting the loss** is the starting point for the work of grieving. Accepting the loss refers not only to intellectual acceptance, it also refers to emotional recognition. Intellectual acceptance occurs as a person emerges from *shock*. Full emotional acceptance may take longer and occurs as the other tasks are being accomplished.
2. **Feeling the feelings** is counter-intuitive for most teens. They would rather deny feelings, push them aside, distract themselves and/or 'stuff' them instead of experiencing the full weight of any uncomfortable emotions. Experiencing feelings is imperative and is a primary task during *disorganization*. Not all teens will be able, or willing to express their feelings, and that is okay. It is helpful to be able to identify them. Some teens feel what they are feeling and do not need to emote. We must allow for differences in expressive styles and not insist that feelings be expressed in any particular way.
3. **Adjusting** relates to learning to live with the loss. Reorganizing one's life depends on the nature of the loss. For teenagers, this means being able to return to prior levels of functioning with schoolwork, friends, and in the context of their homelife. We associate this process with the stage of *reorganization* along THE HEALING PATHWAY.
4. **Moving forward** is when we notice that the grieving teen has been able to adjust in a way that allows for personal growth. Moving forward does not imply forgetting. It is a recognition of living life fully, being grateful for all we *do* have, with a genuine capacity for joy, in a newly constituted way and formulating a vision for the future. This coincides with the concept of *NEW NORMAL*.

Facilitation Tips *(Continued)*

JOURNALING

Journaling is a time-honored way to help people sort out their thoughts and feelings. Many different techniques can be used to begin a journaling practice. One way is to set aside some time each day – maybe 15 to 30 minutes in the morning – to simply write whatever comes to mind. Another way is to pick up a journal and write when the person has a ‘thinking loop’ that seems stuck. In the act of writing, often the thought or situation will lose its intensity. Others find that journaling is a substitute for ‘talking.’ Some people use their journals as a way of writing letters to their loved ones.

Many people find that they are surprised at how their thinking has evolved when they re-read their journals. For most people the changes that they are experiencing are subtle. Often people grieving do not realize the hard work that they have done, nor do they recognize the changes they have made.

Re-reading a journal can provide an opportunity for self-appreciation.

CLOSING RITUALS

It is useful to establish a ritualized way to end each group session. Group participants will come to expect and appreciate the consistency of how the group process is managed. Ending rituals for each session can be informal, with the facilitator simply making the same statement at the end of each session, or asking the same question of the group. One possibility is to ask participants, about five minutes before the end of the session, to share what, if anything, was particularly helpful during the session.

It is important to create a special ritual or ceremony to end the group during the last session since members have shared intimacies and need to end this part of their relationship, honoring the process. Open the last session in the usual format and proceed as you normally would. Allow sufficient time for your closing ceremony.

One closing ritual is to invite participants to light a tea candle and place it in a bowl of water. After floating the candle in the bowl, each shares a comment on any one of these ideas/topics:

- what has been most beneficial for them, or
- the most important thing they learned during the course of the group, or
- what they learned about the relationship with their loved one, or
- what they learned about themselves

This is done as the very last activity, so any activities, discussion, and filling out evaluations (if you are using evaluations) are completed first.

SECTION II — CHAPTER 1

Let's Get Started

INTRODUCTION FOR THE FACILITATOR

The purpose of this chapter is to lay the foundation for grief education and/or support group. It is of utmost importance that at the first meeting (and during any informational and/or screening contacts) all teens feel welcomed, valued and safe. Creating a space that is safe, accepting and comfortable will enable teens to share freely.

Maintain a stance of acceptance while remaining alert for signs that a group member may need additional therapeutic assistance. Teens should NEVER be coerced into sharing thoughts or feelings. If any of the teens consistently choose not to share, it may be wise to meet with that person alone to discuss the process and ask if he or she is benefiting from listening to others. His or her presence and listening may be a way of participating.

If any of the teens display behaviors or share thoughts that the facilitator finds disturbing, a private conversation with that person is in order. One of the functions that group facilitators provide is the identification of persons who may need individual counseling. Referrals are appropriate and facilitators should have a list of qualified counselors in their area they can make available to participants.



Permissions and Guidelines

Grief is a part of life. These are reminders to give yourself permission to grieve, as well as how to manage your grief with other people.

Your grief is legitimate.

Your grief is unique to you.

Your spirituality and belief system is yours and is to be honored.

Thoughts and feelings are neither right nor wrong. They just are.

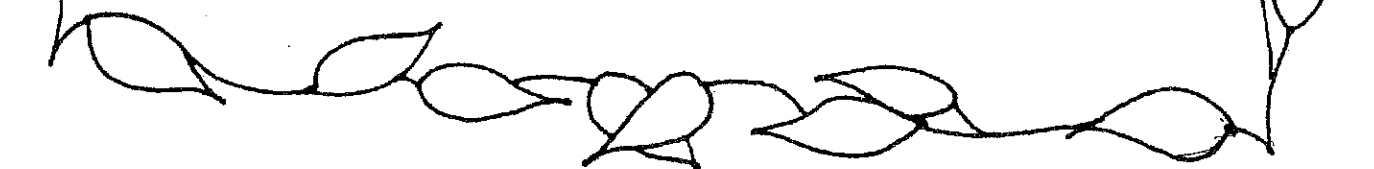
Share only as much as is comfortable for you.

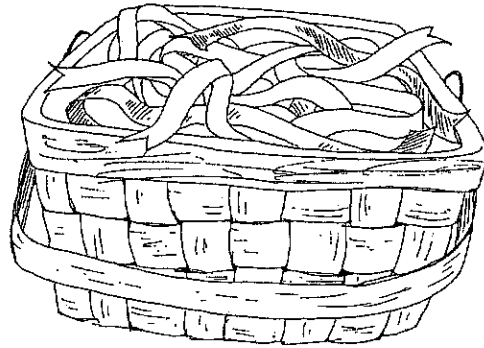
Listening to others can be helpful.

If you feel pressured to talk but don't feel like it, say so.

There is no time limit set on your grieving process.

What is spoken here stays here.





Ribbon Activity

Imagine each ribbon in the basket represents a different aspect of the grief process.

You can select the ribbon that is related to how you are feeling today and what is meaningful to you now. You may select more than one ribbon, and you may be thinking about more than one person as you select ribbons.

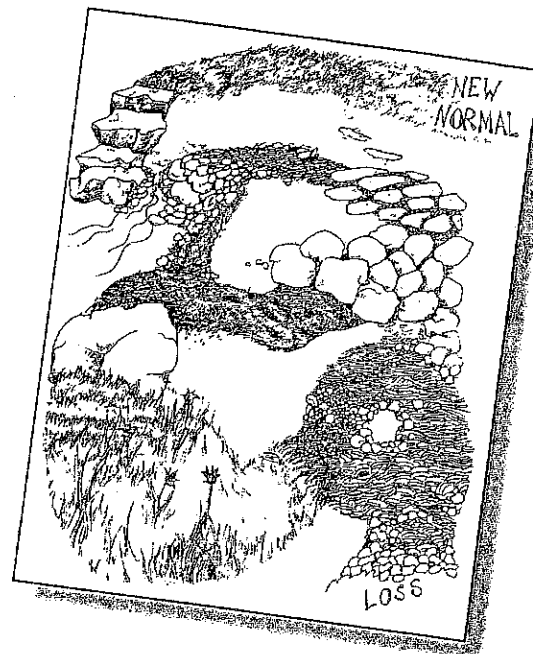
You can share as much or as little, as you like.

The ribbon colors and their meanings are:

- BLACK Recent loss, active grieving
- PURPLE Disorganization, early stage of moving forward
- GREEN Healing, moving forward
- BLUE Anniversary of the loss or another memory trigger
- WHITE Unsure of where I stand

THE HEALING PATHWAY

The journey from Loss to *NEW NORMAL* is a long, winding and complicated one. There are markers along the way to help you better understand the characteristics of the phases of the grieving process.



SHOCK - THE REALITY OF THE LOSS HAS NOT SUNK IN

Some symptoms of SHOCK:

- Disbelief
- Numbness
- Searching
- Suicidal thoughts*

DISORGANIZATION - THE REALITY OF THE LOSS IS REAL

Some symptoms of DISORGANIZATION:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| • Accident prone | • Fear | • Nightmares |
| • Aimlessness | • Forgetfulness | • Physical distress |
| • Anger | • Guilt | • Preoccupation |
| • Anguish | • Hopelessness | • Relief |
| • Anxiety | • Internal conflict | • Restlessness |
| • Apathy | • Isolation | • Risky behavior |
| • Avoidance | • Loneliness | • Sadness |
| • Childlike behavior | • Loss of appetite | • Sleeplessness |
| • Confusion | • Loss of faith | • Slowed reaction time |
| • Depression | • Loss of interest | • Suicidal thoughts* |
| • Diffulty concentrating | • Loss of meaning | |

REORGANIZATION - REBUILDING A SATISFYING LIFE - *NEW NORMAL*

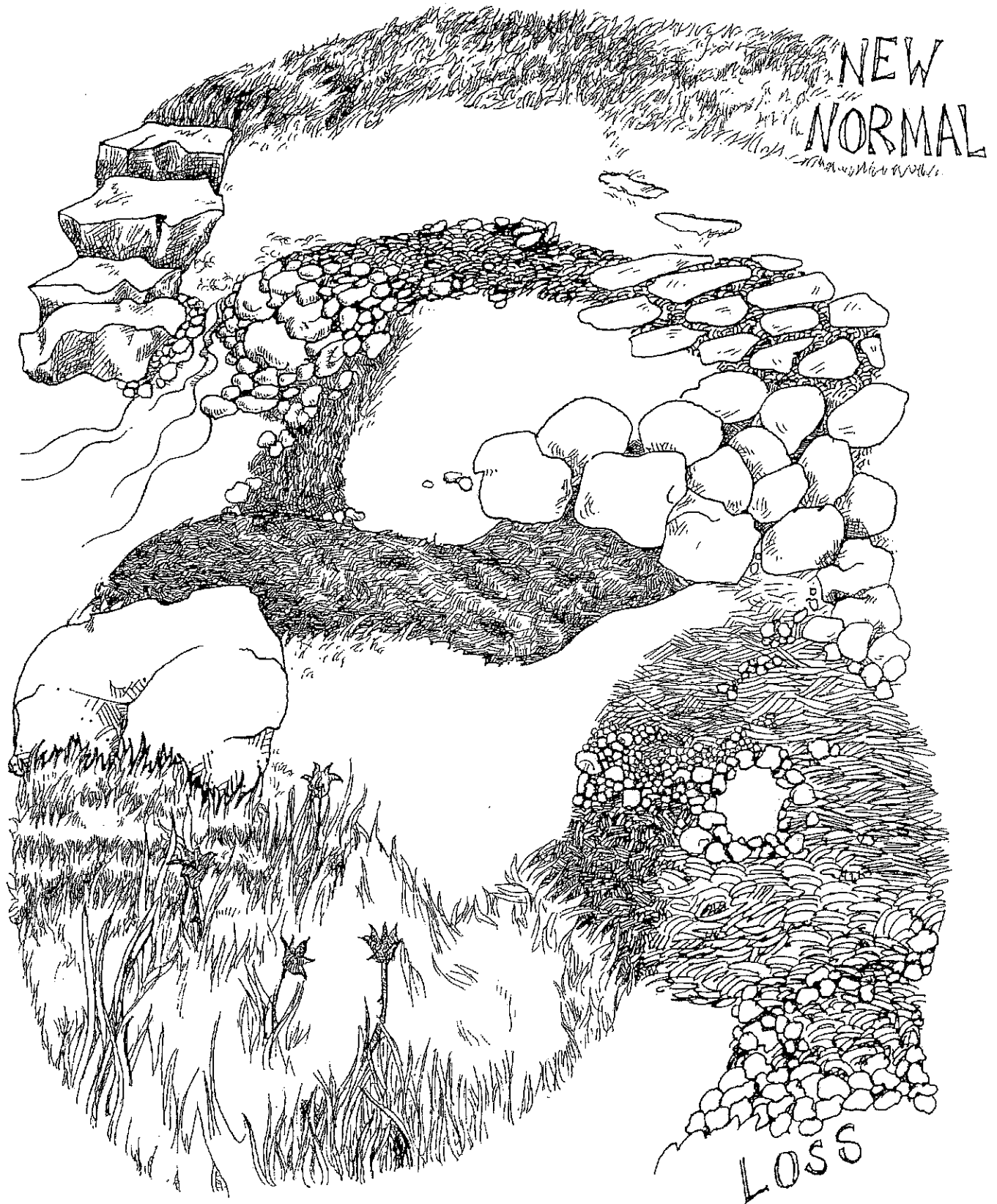
Some symptoms of REORGANIZATION:

- Ability to remember the good and bad
- Hope for the future
- New priorities
- Pleasure in remembering
- Return to or surpass previous levels of functioning

These symptoms are NOT checklists. These are *some* of the symptoms that *some* people feel *some* of the time. Every person's experience of grief is different and each has different feelings and reactions. Remember, THE HEALING PATHWAY is not a one-way or one-lane path. There is potential for a great deal of movement among the phases as we move towards a *NEW NORMAL*, which is constantly changing.

* If you have suicidal thoughts, seek professional help immediately.
The National Suicide Prevention Life-line telephone number is 1-800-273-8255.

THE HEALING PATHWAY



"The path to healing from a loss is different for each person, one which may have unexpected twists and turns, but a road that has been traveled by many."

— Kirsti A. Dyer, MD, MS, FT

TASKS OF HEALING FROM A LOSS

Four tasks are related to the work of grieving. Personal growth and healing are built on these tasks.

1. **ACCEPTING THE LOSS** is the starting point for the work of grieving. Accepting the loss refers not only to intellectual acceptance, but to emotional recognition. Intellectual acceptance occurs as a person emerges from *shock*. The full emotional acceptance may take longer and occurs as the other tasks are being accomplished.
2. **FEELING THE FEELINGS** is counter-intuitive for many teens. They would rather deny feelings, push them aside, distract themselves and/or 'stuff' them instead of experiencing the full weight of any uncomfortable feelings and concerns. Experiencing emotions, including fear and confronting change, is essential to the healing process. This is a primary task during *disorganization*.
3. **ADJUSTING** relates to learning to live without whatever or whomever is no longer present. Reorganizing one's life depends on the nature of the loss. We associate this process with the stage of *reorganization* along THE HEALING PATHWAY.
4. **MOVING FORWARD** is when we notice that the grieving teen has been able to adjust in a way that allows for personal growth. Moving forward does not imply forgetting. It is recognition of living life fully, being grateful for the loved ones and all that we do have, with a genuine capacity for joy, in a newly constituted way and formulating a vision for the future. This coincides with the concept of *NEW NORMAL*.

RIGHTS OF TEENS EXPERIENCING GRIEF

PURPOSE

This handout is designed to help teens experiencing grief understand their rights and normalize their experience. Since it is a new experience or situation, and because emotions are raw, it is sometimes confusing to know what is okay.

ACTIVITY

It will be helpful to review this handout at the beginning of your sessions and elicit comments from the teens. Ask each participant to read a line. The facilitator can also explain that these are the rights that the authors came up with, and challenge the individual or group members to think of additional rights. They can write those rights on the back of the handout and take it home, posting it in a visible spot, where they can be reminded of their rights.

We deliberately did not number this list so as not to imply ranking. However, when using this handout in a group, it might be helpful for you to have the list numbered, to better refer to each one. If so, number them prior to reproducing the page.

SECTION II — CHAPTER 2

Getting in Touch









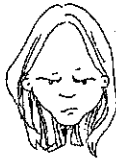




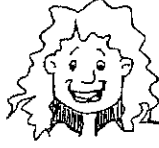



























INTRODUCTION FOR THE FACILITATOR

Before teens can “move through their feelings,” they need to know what they are experiencing. The purpose of this chapter is to help teens develop a language and an ability to recognize what they are feeling. Many people believe that the best way to cope with unpleasant feelings is to ignore or ‘stuff’ them. This is not true. In spite of the counter-intuitive nature of this, teens need to be encouraged to sit with and feel what they are feeling. The more this is done, the greater the likelihood that they will see that feelings wax-and-wane, and the capacity for pleasant feelings exists along side of difficult ones.

Teen GriefWork Emotions

Check the emotions you are experiencing right now.

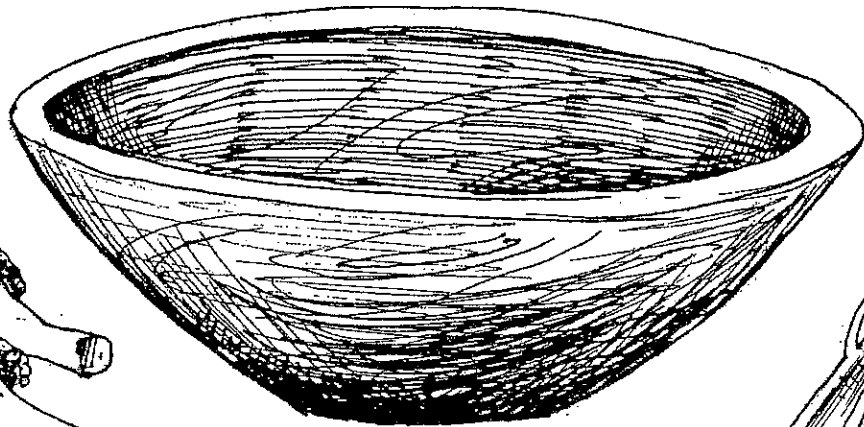
"I feel ..."

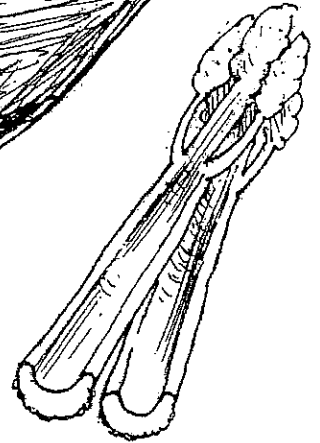
 Cautious <input type="checkbox"/>	 Annoyed <input type="checkbox"/>	 Loved <input type="checkbox"/>	 Lonely <input type="checkbox"/>	 Discouraged <input type="checkbox"/>	 Jealous <input type="checkbox"/>
 Frustrated <input type="checkbox"/>	 Helpless <input type="checkbox"/>	 Hostile <input type="checkbox"/>	 Apathetic <input type="checkbox"/>	 Disappointed <input type="checkbox"/>	 Numb <input type="checkbox"/>
 Relieved <input type="checkbox"/>	 Confused <input type="checkbox"/>	 Restless <input type="checkbox"/>	 Sad <input type="checkbox"/>	 Judged <input type="checkbox"/>	 Hysterical <input type="checkbox"/>
 Hopeless <input type="checkbox"/>	 Guilty <input type="checkbox"/>	 Anxious <input type="checkbox"/>	 Angry <input type="checkbox"/>	 Forgetful <input type="checkbox"/>	 Regretful <input type="checkbox"/>
 Disconnected <input type="checkbox"/>	 Miserable <input type="checkbox"/>	 Unsupported <input type="checkbox"/>	 Yearning <input type="checkbox"/>	 Shocked <input type="checkbox"/>	 Capable <input type="checkbox"/>
 Aimless <input type="checkbox"/>	 Denial <input type="checkbox"/>	 Acceptance <input type="checkbox"/>	 Fear <input type="checkbox"/>	 Hopeful <input type="checkbox"/>	 Determined <input type="checkbox"/>
 Supported <input type="checkbox"/>	 Unfocussed <input type="checkbox"/>	 Overwhelmed <input type="checkbox"/>	 Needy <input type="checkbox"/>	 Resilient <input type="checkbox"/>	 Abandoned <input type="checkbox"/>

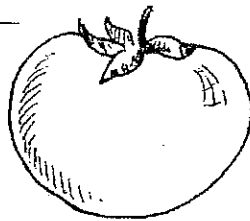
The Emotions Salad Bowl

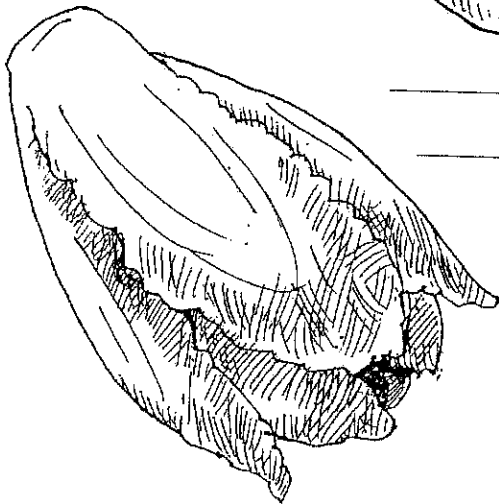
Grieving can be difficult because we feel many emotions at once.

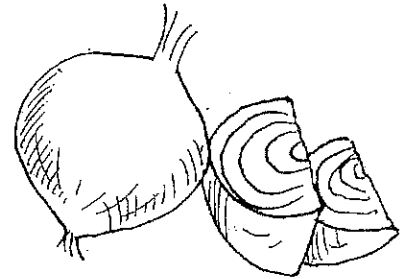
Under some of the salad ingredients write the emotions you are feeling now.











Having many different emotions at the same time adds to the richness of our lives and makes for a much more interesting salad!

Serenity Prayer

Grant me the serenity to

Accept the things I cannot change...



Courage to change the things I can...

And the wisdom to know the difference.

Control

THINGS I CAN CONTROL

example: my attitude

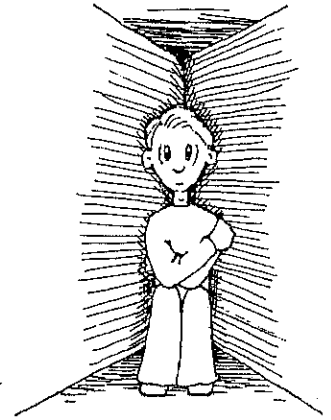
THINGS I CANNOT CONTROL

example: the loss

A hand-drawn notebook page with two columns for journaling. The left column is titled "THINGS I CAN CONTROL" with the example "my attitude". The right column is titled "THINGS I CANNOT CONTROL" with the example "the loss". Both columns have horizontal lines for writing. The notebook is drawn with a spiral binding on the left and right sides.

FEAR

Fear is a normal response to loss - fear of the unknown, fear of the unfamiliar and fear of the changes in your life.



What do you fear? _____

What are you avoiding because of this fear? _____

What else may be adding to this fear? _____

What steps could you take to work through this fear? _____

What do you fear? _____

What are you avoiding because of this fear? _____

What else may be adding to this fear? _____

What steps could you take to work through this fear? _____

What do you fear? _____

What are you avoiding because of this fear? _____

What else may be adding to this fear? _____

What steps could you take to work through this fear? _____



My Regrets

We all experience losses in our life,
and it is common to have regrets.

Identify your recent loss: _____

Finish the sentence-starters below that apply to you and this loss:

I'm sorry I _____

I knew _____

We didn't talk about _____

I wish _____

I never should have _____

If only I _____

How could I have _____

Why didn't _____

I wish I had _____

I am angry _____

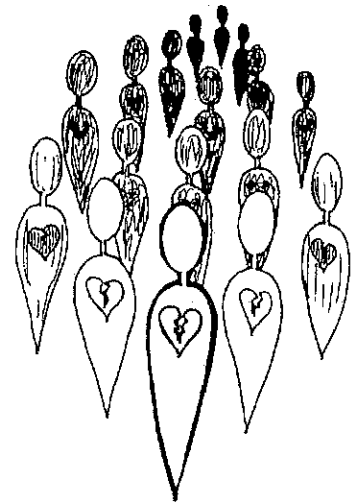
I did not honor the request that _____

I still get upset about _____

When I think back I _____

You're Not Alone

It is comforting to know that grief symptoms happen to everyone.



Which do you recognize?

- I am unable to concentrate
 - I don't want to go anywhere
 - I feel angry and/or irritable
 - Nothing interests me
 - I am upset that the world goes on as normal
 - I hear a familiar song and cry
 - I feel like I am losing my mind
 - I do not want to get out of bed in the morning

Additional grief symptoms that happen:

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

Where do you think you are right now on THE HEALING PATHWAY?

- Shock
- Disorganization
- Reorganization

SECTION II — CHAPTER 3

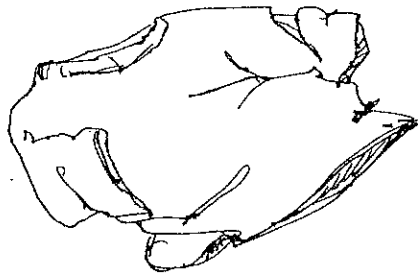
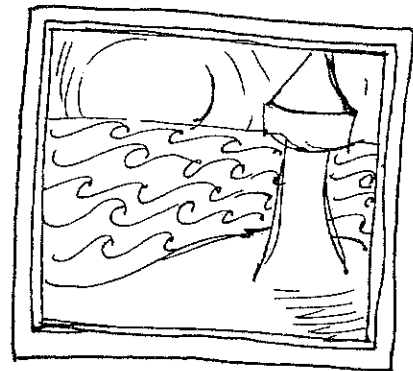
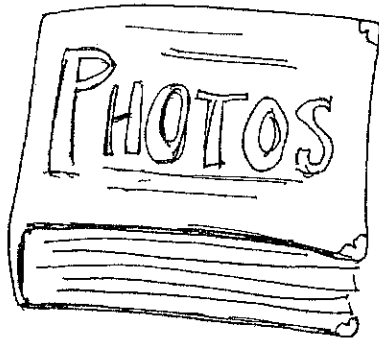
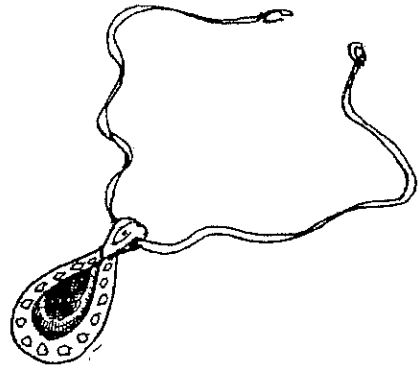
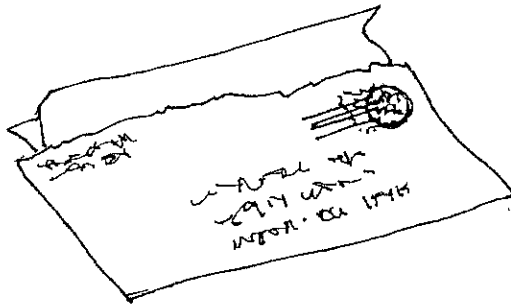
Telling Your Story

INTRODUCTION FOR THE FACILITATOR

The value of giving teens who are grieving the opportunity to share their stories cannot be overstated. It is extremely important for teens to process their experiences by talking about them. Journaling is another way of “talking” and at this point, it may be helpful to present teens with a blank journal to use. Teens will benefit by relating details of their story.

Memento Activity

This is a reminder to select any memento to share.



WHAT I MISS

PURPOSE

Journaling is an activity that often helps teens sort through memories and feelings. This handout is a journal page-starter.

ACTIVITY

After discussing the general value of journaling, explain the value in reminiscing. It is helpful for grief-stricken teens to remember happier times. Looking back in time provides the opportunity to focus on pleasant memories. This may also provoke a sadness regarding what was lost, however, valuing what was can be quite healing.

*Ideas can come from anywhere
and at any time.*

*The problem with making mental notes
is that the ink fades very rapidly.*

~ Rolf Smith

PART OF MY STORY IS . . .

PURPOSE

Journaling is an activity that often helps teens sort through memories and feelings. These sentence-starters will inspire both.

ACTIVITY

After reviewing the value of journaling, encourage participants to use these sentence-starters and expand, if strong memories are flowing, into their journals. Because this activity takes a great deal of time, and rushing through would be counter-productive; distribute this handout after the discussion and complete the first sentence-starter as a group. Encourage participants to complete them at home in their journal or on the reverse of the handout.

WHEN I EXPERIENCED THE LOSS OF

PURPOSE

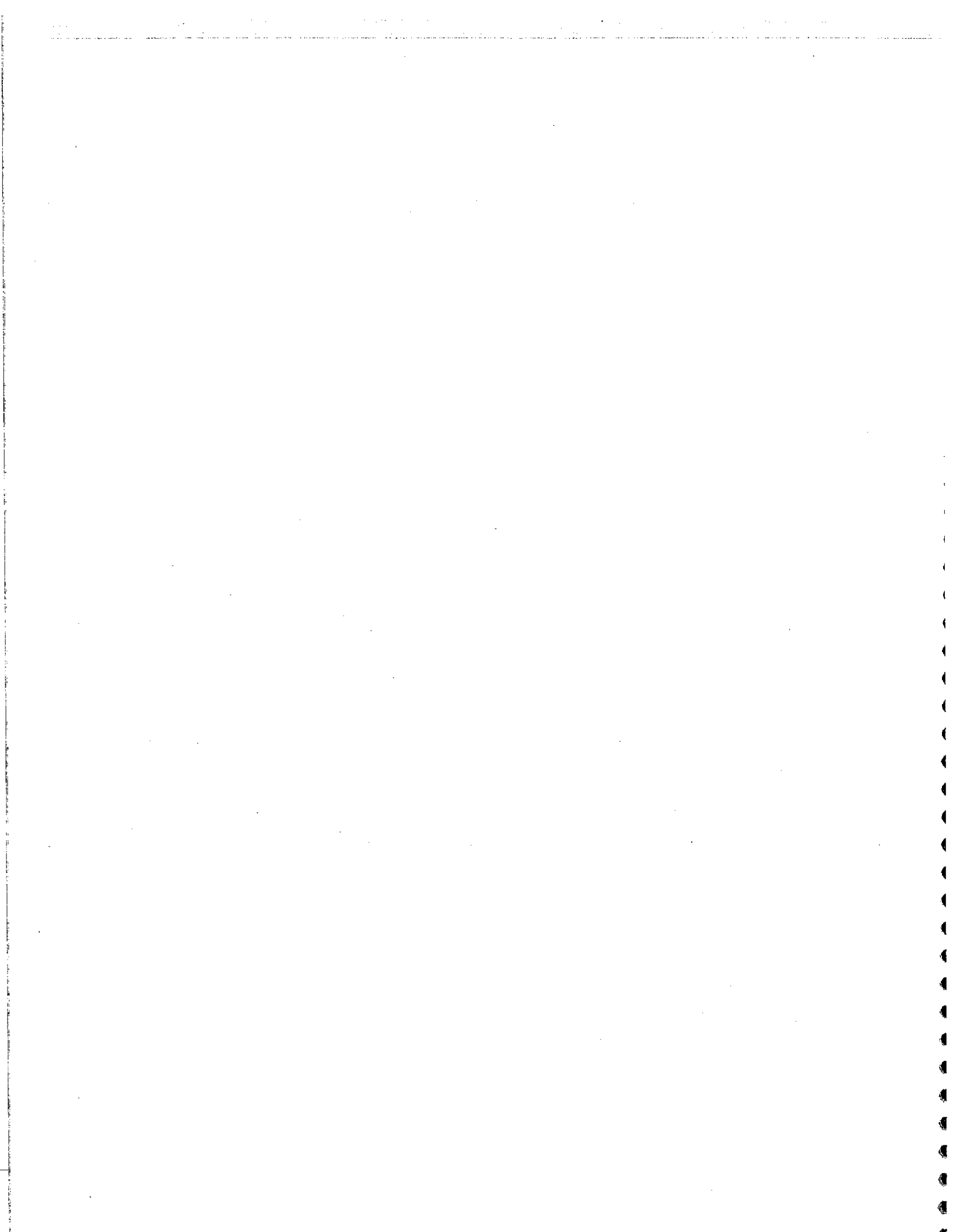
Journaling is an activity that often helps people sort through memories and feelings. These sentence-starters will inspire both. It is very important for people to have the opportunity to tell the story of their loss, and their feelings at the time, as often as they need. Many people, well-meaning friends and family members, cannot tolerate hearing the story repeated. Journaling is a wonderful way to continue sorting through memories and feelings. These sentence-starters can help someone who needs a bit of prodding to get started with a journal.

ACTIVITY

After discussing the value of journaling, distribute the handout. Review it and ask participants to complete the first sentence-starter aloud in the group. Allow people who want to participate to expand beyond one sentence if they desire. Encourage them to complete the rest at home.

*Journal writing is a voyage
to the interior.*

~ Christina Baldwin



SELF-CARE DOMAINS

PURPOSE

It is important for everyone to understand the need to take care of one's self in all five domains of living. This pie chart illustrates that each domain is of equal importance and needs attention.

ACTIVITY

Educate the teens about the importance of all five domains: physical (body), intellectual (mind), emotional (psychological), social (relationships) and spiritual (different for each person). Explain that most people tend to do a reasonable job of taking care of themselves in a few areas while neglecting others. Ask group members to share one or two self-care activities they currently engage in and discuss in which domain(s) they fall. Point out that the same activity could fall into different domains for different people. Distribute the handout as homework. Participants are asked to record what they do for themselves over the course of a week, noting the self-care activity in the appropriate piece of the pie. It is extremely important to help group members understand that many activities will fall into more than one domain. Encourage them to think about the benefit they derive from the activity and list it in every appropriate domain.

At the next session, ask people to report what they learned from this activity.

Some examples are:

Exercising

- *Physical because it is good for my body and my health* _____
- *Social because I exercise with friends* _____
- *Emotional because I release some anger and/or frustration when I exercise* _____

Walking/hiking

- *Physical because of health benefits* _____
- *Spiritual because I walk in nature and find that to be my spiritual connection* _____
- *Emotional because walking is a stress-buster for me* _____

Reading

- *Intellectual because I'm stimulating my brain by thinking* _____
- *Emotional because I'm reading escape novels* _____
- *Spiritual because I'm reading uplifting books* _____

ARE YOU TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF?

PURPOSE

This self-assessment tool can be used to help determine what the teens are doing to take care of themselves and what they are willing to try.

ACTIVITY

After a discussion regarding the need and benefits of self-care, distribute the handout and ask teens to look over the list, checking the appropriate columns. The group can then discuss why the various suggestions on the list are important and how they manage the things that they do. It is also worthwhile to discuss some of the items they judged negatively which might be reframed as self-care. (i.e. sleeping more than usual could be escapism or it could be restorative.)

Ask for a show-of-hands for who checked "No, not yet," for a particular item. Ask when they think they will begin that activity or a comparable one. If participants have additional suggestions for self-care, encourage them to share.

COUNTING MY BLESSINGS

PURPOSE

It is widely acknowledged that focusing on the positive aspects of life is beneficial. This handout is designed to help teens identify and appreciate their blessings and to focus on gratitude.

ACTIVITY

One way to use this is to give teens several copies with the expectation that they will fill in a minimum of three blessings at the end of each day.

This can be used for "big" blessings like

- family
- community
- good health
- safety

or for the "little" blessings one has during the course of the day like

- seeing a beautiful flower
- feeling the warmth of the sun

Suggest that they keep their completed papers and post them in obvious places, where they can be reminded of the blessings in their lives.

WAYS TO NOURISH MYSELF

PURPOSE

Some teens do not recognize the various ways that they already take care of themselves, or do not consider some of the things they do as self-nourishing. This handout is designed to help people acknowledge the self-nurturing behavior they already engage in and provide some additional ideas to consider.

ACTIVITY

Discuss the importance of self-care and ask participants to share some of the things they already do to take care of themselves. Ask if anyone did some things in the past that they are no longer doing. Discuss the obstacles to returning to previous activities.

After distributing the handout ask each person to check off those things that they already do and, in the blank spaces, add things they do as "nourishments" that are not on the list. With another color pen, check the things that they are willing to try in the next month, again adding items in the blanks. Have the group share after everyone has completed the handout. This can be used effectively with SELF-CARE DOMAINS, page 61.

SPONTANEITY AND IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR

PURPOSE

It is very common for teens to be impulsive. When grieving, often teens behave more impulsively than usual. Heightening their awareness of the potential downside of risky behavior while acknowledging the value of spontaneity is very important.

ACTIVITY

Engage the group in a discussion about the difference between spontaneity and impulsive/risky behavior. Distribute the handout and give everyone the opportunity to share and discuss consequences of risky behavior and the ability to be spontaneous while having fun, without being dangerous.

Examples:

SPONTANEITY

- Going out with friends at the last minute
- Sitting at a different lunch table

IMPULSIVE/RISKY BEHAVIOR

- Using drugs and/or alcohol
- Unwanted sex

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PURPOSE

Teens who are grieving often feel disoriented, disorganized, and unable to function as usual. Sometimes they truly believe that they are not doing anything at all. This activity is designed to help teens realize that they are getting things done, but probably taking more time and energy than they would like. This will help those who are grieving normalize their experience, honor what they are accomplishing, and be motivated to do a little bit more.

ACTIVITY

After discussing how difficult it is to accomplish seemingly mundane tasks, distribute this handout. Ask group members to complete it during the week. Remind them that distractions, decreased energy and confused thinking at this time mean most tasks may take longer than anticipated.

BEING THE BEST YOU CAN BE

PURPOSE

This handout is designed to remind teens to think about self-care during grief; this is a time when it takes extra energy that they may not have. This often impacts relationships as well as how they feel about themselves.

ACTIVITY

After discussing the importance of self-care and relating it to the five domains (see SELF-CARE DOMAINS, page 61) ask participants to read this handout and make notations about the things that they can do, things they can add to what they are already doing, or why they are *not* doing them. If they think they are doing a particularly good job in some areas have them note what it is that they are doing well.

A SACRED SPACE

PURPOSE

For some teens creating a special place for quiet, prayer, meditation or reminiscing can be very healing. This handout is designed to help them envision such a spot.

ACTIVITY

Review the idea of a sacred space as a place to be with one's self and one's thoughts. Explain that it need not take up much room, but that it should be a place where one can be alone, quiet and comfortable. Some teens may want mementos in the space and others may want a soothing space without mementos. Validation of these differences is important. Discuss creative ideas where people can construct such a space and how they can create time to spend in it. Distribute the handout and have group members share their responses once they have finished.

MY PRAYER

PURPOSE

Prayer or meditation can provide an opportunity for a teen to communicate with a higher power — God, spirits, the universe, etc. It can be very useful to journal this monologue. Some people may be angry and yell while others may want or ask for guidance. Still others may want to pour out their hearts.

ACTIVITY

This handout is best used as homework. Encourage teens to let loose and share in any way that they need to. At the next session, follow up with discussion about how it felt.

Source of Healing

*Spread over me
the shelter of your peace,
that I might reside there,
through this journey
of sadness and pain
that I might some day
find the strength to return
to life and its blessings.*

~ David Feldt

Abraham Joshua Heschel says,

In the act of prayer . . . we restore our own mental health.

NEED A GOOD CRY?

PURPOSE

For some teens it is difficult to cry. We know that crying can be beneficial in terms of releasing hormones and pent up feelings. Participants who feel blocked and want to cry, but have been unable to, may find this useful. If they are unable to cry, that is okay. It is not imperative that they cry now.

ACTIVITY

Review that crying is a good thing, not only emotionally, but also physiologically. Like laughter, crying releases tension and can help our bodies repair. Discuss with the group how they feel after they cry (relieved, embarrassed, tired, relaxed, etc.). Distribute the handout and ask group members to think of additional ways to get the tears flowing. Ask them if they have any suggestions about specific movies, books or music that might help initiate crying.

*There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark
of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently
than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers
of overwhelming grief . . . and unspeakable love.*

~ Washington Irving

IT HELPS TO SMILE

PURPOSE

So many teens believe that it is not appropriate to smile, laugh or enjoy oneself after a loss. It is our intention to help participants recognize that not only is it okay to have a good time, it is beneficial to healing.

ACTIVITY

Review with the participants that smiles, laughter and humor have healing properties. Not only do they make one feel better but they also help others feel more comfortable. Encourage a discussion of what it has been like to laugh and what some obstacles have been for having moments of joy and pleasure. Discuss the fact that we can have several emotions at one time, referring to GRIEFWORK EMOTIONS, page 33 and EMOTIONS SALAD BOWL, page 35. Invite the group members to complete this handout and discuss their responses. As homework each participant can bring in a recommendation of a funny movie or a joke.

*Birds sing after a storm; why shouldn't people feel as free
to delight in whatever remains to them.*

~ Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy

Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened.

~ Dr. Seuss – Theodor Seuss Geisel

SELF-TALK

PURPOSE

Self-talk is internal dialogue — the words we use when we talk to ourselves. Our self-talk often reflects and creates our emotional state. It can influence our self-esteem, outlook, energy level, performance, and relationships. It can even affect our health, determining, for example, how we handle stressful events.

Most people have a self-critical voice that talks almost non-stop. This negative self-talk CAN be replaced by positive self-talk. The things we say to ourselves, silently or aloud, have great influence on our mood, energy, self-esteem and attitude. Our messages influence how we interpret the world and greatly influence our emotional state and the power of the words we use.

ACTIVITY

Discuss the notion of self-talk with the group. Ask group members to share some of the phrases they are aware of saying to themselves. Ask if they have examples to share how the self-talk has impacted them.

Distribute the activity sheet and ask group members to come up with phrases they can use to counter the negative self-talk. Some examples are listed below:

As an additional activity, participants can add their personal negative self-talk in the blank lines of the left-hand column, and then reframe.

MY NEGATIVE SELF-TALK	MY POSITIVE SELF-TALK
I do everything wrong.	<i>I do some things wrong. That means I do <u>some</u> things right!</i>
I am so unsure of myself right now.	<i>I need to remember that I do trust myself.</i>
I need to be on time and never late.	<i>Being late isn't the end of the world.</i>
I will not ask for help. It shows I'm incompetent.	<i>It is a sign of strength to ask for help. It does <u>not</u> mean that I am not competent.</i>
I am so tense all the time.	<i>I have reason to be tense and I can help myself by relaxing!</i>
It shows weakness if I cry.	<i>It's all right to cry.</i>
I feel so anxious I can hardly breathe.	<i>I can breathe deeply and let go of some of the tension.</i>
I will never ever get over it.	<i>This is a long and slow journey and I will heal.</i>
I cannot handle this.	<i>I will survive, maybe even thrive.</i>
This is impossible.	<i>I can do it. I can do it.</i>



MY SUPPORT NETWORK

PURPOSE

Often teens who are grieving feel lonely, isolated and confused. It is hoped that this handout will remind group members that they do have supportive people in their lives. This activity can be used in conjunction with SELF-CARE DOMAINS, page 61 and SUPPORT SYSTEM, page 89.

Emphasize the use of a name code rather than the person's name or initials.

ACTIVITY

Brainstorm the types of needs that supportive relationships meet. Remind participants that some needs are met by more than one relationship and seldom does one single relationship help us meet all of our needs. Distribute the handouts and allow participants to complete.

Participants can share answers or discuss which needs are easy to meet and which are more challenging. Problem-solve ways to expand support systems, reminding each of the group members that they have each other too.

The healthy and strong individual is the one who asks for help when he needs it, whether he has an abscess on his knee or in his soul.

~ Rona Barrett

SUPPORT SYSTEM

PURPOSE

Teens who are grieving often feel lonely, isolated and confused. This handout will remind group members that they have supportive people in their lives. This activity can be used in conjunction with MY SUPPORT NETWORK, page 87.

Emphasize the use of a name code rather than the person's name or initials.

ACTIVITY

Brainstorm with group members the types of needs supportive relationships meet. Refer to SELF-CARE DOMAINS, page 61. Remind them that some needs are met by more than one relationship and seldom does one single relationship meet all of our needs. Distribute the handout and allow participants to complete.

This activity may be overly stimulating for some group members, depending on their loss.

RELATIONSHIPS CHANGE

PURPOSE

Throughout life, relationships change — nothing is static. After a loss, our sensitivities to these changes may be heightened. This activity is designed to help group members be aware of some of the relationships in their lives, and try to see if those relationships have changed, and if so, in what way. The foundation of this exercise is to help the participants notice and accept the movement or shifts that are a part of all relationships.

This is a possible follow-up activity to NOTES TO FAMILY & FRIENDS AFTER A LOSS, page 99.

Emphasize the use of a name code rather than the person's name or initials.

ACTIVITY

Discuss the nature of relationships in general. Ask participants to think of relationships that they had as young children — maybe a best friend or a beloved teacher. How did that relationship change and shift?

Distribute the handout and ask participants to fill in the name codes of people in their lives. Once that is done, ask them to indicate if the relationship has changed, or stayed the same. Remind the participants that we are comparing the relationship just prior to the loss to the present time.

Some additional questions to pose:

- Are you able to talk to some of these people about your feelings?
- Are you able to reduce the amount of time you spend with those who affect you negatively?
- Do you understand that throughout life relationships change?
This may be a time when the changes are more noticeable.
- Do you realize that feeling over-sensitive is common when grieving?

After the handouts are completed, ask group members if they notice a pattern in their relationships and if there is something that they want to do about the pattern. Are there other strategies that they might employ to deal with uncomfortable changes?

SUPPORTIVE FRIENDS

PURPOSE

Throughout life, our needs are in constant motion. It may be that this is a time when grieving teens need more support and encouragement than they had needed in the past. Maybe they are the teens who were always giving and do not know how to sit back and receive. Now may be a perfect time to take time for them to look at their friendships and see how they are meeting their needs.

Emphasize the use of a name code rather than the person's name or initials.

ACTIVITY

Discuss how friendships shift with changing life circumstances. Distribute the handout and instruct participants to use name codes only and fill out the sheet. The facilitator will collect the handouts and cut them apart, mix them up and put them in a basket. Have group members pick a sheet from the basket and read it aloud. Group members can comment. The people who wrote the sheets do not need to reveal their identities.

THEY MEAN WELL

PURPOSE

Often well-meaning people say things that upset us. They mean well, but either do not know what to say and are clumsy, or say things they believe will bring comfort, but what ever they do say is not comforting. People sometimes think they are complimenting us, but it may feel like pressure ("You're being so strong"). Sometimes we are stunned by the comment and don't know how to respond. This handout is designed to help grieving teens understand that they will continue to hear those sorts of things; some may be upsetting and others may not. It provides an opportunity to plan and rehearse how to respond.

ACTIVITY

Have a discussion about some of the things that well-meaning people have said that were upsetting. Most groups will have ample examples! Engage the group members in a conversation about what they imagine are the motives behind what is being said. Always emphasize that this mind-reading is our way of making some meaning out of the encounter and that we don't know anyone else's motivation unless we ask. Emphasize the possible positive motives — like he didn't know what to say or she thought she was being comforting. Encourage participants to think about responses that speak to underlying good intentions. During the discussion acknowledge that sometimes saying nothing is perfectly fine.

Distribute the handout and continue the discussion after participants have completed it.

WHY DO FRIENDS DROP AWAY?

PURPOSE

Many teens experience the secondary loss of friends who no longer reach out to them. It is helpful for them to understand that this phenomenon is not unique to them.

ACTIVITY

Discuss the commonality of friends dropping away and ask group members to think about experiences that they have had with other losses.

- Were they ever friends with someone who suffered a loss?
- Were they attentive to that friend in ways they now think would be appropriate?
- Have they observed changes in friendships of others who have experienced a loss?

After distributing the handout, ask the group members to each read a sentence. As the sentences are being read, participants should think about their circumstances and check the sentences that they think may apply. Next, ask the group if they can think of other possible explanations for friendships changing.

Brainstorm with the group to think of some ways to maintain contact:

- Call people they haven't heard from
- Make plans and invite someone to join the activity
- Be sure to return calls
- Send an email
- Reach out through social media

SECTION II — CHAPTER 6

A New Normal

INTRODUCTION FOR THE FACILITATOR

Reorganizing one's life after a major loss is the hope and expectation we have for all teens who are grieving. This *New NORMAL*, like life itself, is filled with ups and downs; highs and lows; joys and sorrows. The focus of this chapter is to guide the teen who is grieving toward the development of his or her *NEW NORMAL*, with a full range of emotions.

THE HEALING PATHWAY is the journey; the *NEW NORMAL* is the destination. *NEW NORMAL* is not a place on the map and is not static — it is constantly evolving. The personal growth experienced while journeying is a predictor of how dynamic the *NEW NORMAL* is — and will become.

It is our hope that each teen who is touched by this book will develop a sense of himself or herself as learning, growing and loving in their *NEW NORMAL*.



HEALING

PURPOSE

This self-evaluation is a way to notice progress and become aware of areas that may still need work as the teens continue on THE HEALING PATHWAY towards a *NEW NORMAL*.

ACTIVITY

Review the THE HEALING PATHWAY, page 23 and notion of a *NEW NORMAL*. Ask participants to consider where they are on their unique HEALING PATHWAY.

Distribute the handout and invite teens to rate themselves in each category. This is a self-assessment and does not need to be shared. It can be used as a group activity or homework. Suggest to participants that they date it and return to it at regular intervals for an updated assessment.

Encourage participants to notice if they are neglecting one of the five life domains. Refer to SELF-CARE DOMAINS, page 61.

*Things may not be as good as they were,
but they can still be pretty darn good.*

~ Harry Rebell

You can cope, or you can cope well.

~ Mae Zelikow

WHAT HAS CHANGED IN MY LIFE?

PURPOSE

It is often helpful to notice what has changed. Recognizing that life has changed and accepting the changes as part of the new normal, is a significant part of healing and accomplishing the task of moving forward.

ACTIVITY

Discuss life changes with the group. Ask participants to share at least one significant change in their lives and how that change has impacted them. The group will usually come up with the sad, challenging and unpleasant changes. Encourage examples that may be perceived by some as positive to add balance.

Distribute the handouts and allow time for it to be completed. When the group is finished, ask them to share if they have an overall sense of positive or negative changes, or no changes at all. Encourage the participants to revisit this at regular intervals.

*For everything there is a season,
And a time for every matter under heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to break down, and a time to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;
A time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones
together;
A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
A time to keep, and a time to throw away;
A time to tear, and a time to sew;
A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time for war, and a time for peace.*

~ Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

COPING WITH SPECIAL DAYS AND HOLIDAYS

PURPOSE

Holidays and special events like graduations, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. are very difficult to manage for teens who are grieving. They simply may not anticipate the difficulty they may have or the emotions that may be stirred up.

This educational handout should be distributed and discussed whenever a major holiday is approaching, even if it means disrupting the set curriculum for the group.

ACTIVITY

Engage in a discussion of how the teens envision holidays and special events will be. Encourage them to share specific upcoming or anticipated special events in their lives. Ask if anyone has gone through the experience of a celebration since their loss. If a group member is willing, have that person share what it was like and what helped in managing the situation.

Distribute the handout and ask each participant to read a bullet point aloud. Discuss which suggestions seem worth trying.

Bring up the upcoming special day, if there is one, and ask participants if they have thought about how they may honor the day. Encourage group members to begin a conversation with their family, or others with whom they traditionally celebrate, about altering the usual way of doing things.

HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

PURPOSE

Helping teens anticipate their reactions gives them an opportunity to plan ways they might not have considered. This handout is designed to help them tap into their feelings and anticipate bumps in the road.

ACTIVITY

Have a discussion of the general upset that may occur with holidays and special events after using COPING WITH SPECIAL DAYS AND HOLIDAYS, page 107. Remind participants of the value of sitting quietly, getting in touch with their feelings, and journaling. Distribute the handout.

Give the members ample time and opportunity to process afterwards, or it may be follow-up homework after a full discussion.

EXAMPLE:

My birthday will not be as much fun as it was last year.

EMPTY HOUSE

PURPOSE

This handout is designed to focus on the teen who has had a loss at home, i.e. a death, breakup, divorce, sibling off to college, etc. This loss may also be a beloved pet. Coming home to a house that feels empty is a difficult part of the adjustment to the loss.

ACTIVITY

This is a wonderful handout to stimulate brainstorming. With all brainstorming activities, it is important to remember that the first step is to create a list of ideas, without judging. Once the group runs out of ideas, discuss them with an eye to practicality and desirability. It is imperative to remind all the participants to be respectful. What may be an off-the-wall idea for one person may be the perfect solution for another.

Some possible suggestions might be:

- Bring a friend home from school so the house doesn't feel so empty.
- Play music.
- Curl up where the dog's bed used to be for a short time.

HOW CAN I HONOR _____ ?

PURPOSE

Healing rituals are very important ways that survivors can, in a concrete way, remember their loved one and continue the process of moving on. This handout offers suggestions and encourages thinking about developing personalized rituals.

ACTIVITY

Discuss the benefits of the ritual of remembrance. Ask teens to share any rituals they have performed. Help group members understand that rituals do not have to be religious or culturally specific; any remembrance activity can be considered a healing ritual.

Distribute the handout and encourage teens to share other ideas as they occur to them. Suggest that group members write down those ideas that have some appeal.

I LOVED JUST THE WAY _____ WAS, HOWEVER... (name)

PURPOSE

Often when a person is no longer present, the reaction is to idealize that person. Beginning to remember his/her flaws is usually difficult. Sometimes feelings of disloyalty emerge. This handout is designed to help teens who are grieving recognize that these memories add to the full picture of that person and are perfectly normal. Actually beginning to see him/her as a complete person, warts and all, is an indication of movement along THE HEALING PATHWAY.

ACTIVITY

Engage the group in a discussion of how common it is to idealize loved ones and how each person has flaws, eccentricities and habits that may be annoying to family and friends. As the discussion unfolds, see if participants can recognize how they may be idealizing their loved one. You may want to ask the group members to think about the purpose this may serve for them. Discuss the need for a full and balanced picture. Are they able to see some flaws? How do they feel when these thoughts come up?

Distribute the handout and ask participants to select five sentence-starters and complete them. Encourage sharing after the exercise is completed. Remind the group that idealization is very common, serves a purpose, and that seeing the whole picture is not disloyal, it is real.

Example:

I wish she would have communicated better with me.

I wish he could have been nicer to me.

I wish she had a better understanding of my feelings.

I wish I had said how I was feeling.

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

PURPOSE

It is a sign of health and growth to be looking forward to, and beginning to imagine, what the future will be like without the physical presence of the person the teen misses.

ACTIVITY

Remind the participants of the concept of *NEW NORMAL* and THE HEALING PATHWAY. Ask them to think about where they currently see themselves on this healing journey. Ask them to describe signs and symptoms of approaching their *NEW NORMAL*. Remind them that this is a long and winding path. This handout can be adapted for participants to imagine their future in shorter or longer time-frames. Stress to the participants that they need not take the time-frame literally.

Distribute the handouts and give participants time to do some imagining about their future and write their responses. Invite members of the group to share some of their thoughts after all have completed the handout.

I Have Choices

PURPOSE

This handout is designed to prompt teens to spend time thinking about the choices they have, the decisions they are making — and will continue to make — as they move forward. It is our intention to guide teens to stop, think, and check in with themselves prior to making decisions. People make most of their decisions out of habitual thinking and reacting. Use this opportunity to help heighten awareness of these patterns and interrupt them.

ACTIVITY

Engage the group members in a discussion about the role that brainstorming choices makes. Ask participants to identify one decision they are facing. Have them list the wide variety of options (choices they have). Encourage them to use the questions on the handout to help them sort through all of the choices to make a decision.

Remind the group that they are presently in a different circumstance and need to check in with themselves about how they feel now, as opposed to how they used to think about the particular situation.

Distribute the handout and encourage teens to keep it available to refer to as situations arise.

*You are free to choose, but the choices you make today
will determine what you will have, be, and do in the
tomorrow of your life.*

~ Zig Zigler

MOVING FORWARD

PURPOSE

Breaking goals into steps is often helpful. Analyzing the barriers to completing the goal is also a useful way to move forward and get things done. This handout is intended to help teens clarify actions to accomplish goals.

ACTIVITY

Ask participants to think of one thing that they have wanted to do but have not yet been able to do. Distribute the handout and have them write their goal in response to the first question. They can then answer all of the questions on the page with that goal in mind.

Invite the group members to share what doing this exercise was like for them and any insights they may have gained.

AFFIRMATIONS

PURPOSE

Affirmations are healing, positive statements that one says to oneself. They are also a way to counter negative self-talk. (Refer to SELF-TALK, page 83.)

ACTIVITY

Discuss the concept of affirmations and the power of saying positive statements to ourselves. Ask participants if they use affirmations, and if so, are they willing to share them. Explain that affirmations are most powerful when we can say them aloud to ourselves in a positive, confident way. Usually they are statements that, on some level, we *know* are true, but we often do not pay attention and sometimes do not believe. This is a way to shift our focus. Ask participants to think of affirmations that they could use.

Distribute the handout and discuss the value of these affirmations. Go around the room asking each person to choose an affirmation printed on the page or one they have written in the blank box, and read it aloud with conviction! Tell the participants to cut them apart and place the affirmations on their bathroom mirror or dresser, dashboard of the car, desk, closet, bedroom or refrigerator door, wallet, books used at home or school, or by the computer. Suggest that they look at them and repeat them throughout the day.

Books for Teens on Grief and Loss

FOR THE TEENS

Death is Hard to Live With: Teenagers Talk about How to Cope with Loss

by Janet Bode, Stan Mack, Illustrator – Laurel Leaf – 1994

I just graduated from high school and feel we had a curse on my class. Six people died. The worst was Shannon, my best friend. She was free-spirited, the last person you'd expect to die. One day she's great. The next day she's dead. I wasn't prepared for it.

Facing Change – Coming Together and Falling Apart in the Teen Years

by Donna B. O'Toole – Compassion Books – 2004

A book about loss, change and possibilities, *Facing Change* is founded on the belief that young adults can make effective choices to transform pain into resiliency by understanding loss and discovering coping strategies. All kinds of losses experienced by them are recognized and validated. The author speaks to these in a straightforward, respectful and understanding way.

Healing Your Grieving Heart: 100 Practical Ideas for Teens

by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. – Companion Press – 2001

Grade 7 and up book that is written in clear, user-friendly prose. Each page presents a different idea designed to help teens recognize mourning as a natural process connected with loss, reassuring them that they should not be afraid of deep, sometimes uncontrollable emotions, and showing them how to release grief in healthy, positive ways.

When will I Stop Hurting? Teens, Loss and Grief, It Happened to Me (The Ultimate Teen Guide)

by Edward Myers – Scarecrow Press – 2004

A self-help guide for teenagers who are struggling with bereavement and the emotional difficulties it presents. This book provides an overview of grief as a painful but normal process, and it offers insights from bereavement experts, as well as practical suggestions for coping with loss, including personal accounts from teens.

FOR THE PARENTS

Teen Grief Relief

by Heidi Horsley, Psy.D., LMSW, MS – Rainbow Books, Inc. – 2007

Help your teen grieve in a healthy way. Teenager grief is hard, lonely and painful. Parents want to know, "How can I help?" This book provides both parents and teens the help they need. Shared here are teen stories, feelings, techniques, references and resources for use in not only surviving, but thriving, after the loss of a family member or close personal friend.

FOR THE PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

Bereaved Children and Teens: A Support Guide for Parents and Professionals

by Earl A. Grollman (Editor) – Beacon Press – 1996

A fairly comprehensive guide to helping children and adolescents cope with the emotional, religious, social and physical aspects of a loved one's death. Topics range from how adolescents grieve differently from adults to concrete ways to help children cope.

FOR THE PROFESSIONALS

GriefWork for Teens – Whole Person Associates – 2012

by Ester A. Leutenberg and Fran Zamore, MSW, ACSW. Illustrator, Amy L. Brodsky, LISW-S

GriefWork for Teens

Healing from Loss

About the Authors

Ester R. A. Leutenberg has worked in the mental health field for many years as a publisher, author and advocate for those suffering from loss. She personally experienced a devastating loss when her son Mitchell, after struggling with a mental illness for eight years, died by suicide in 1986. Soon after, as a way of both healing and helping others, Ester co-founded Wellness Reproductions & Publishing with her daughter Kathy Khalsa and began developing therapeutic products that help facilitators help their clients. Ester is the co-author of the *SEALS* series for teen-agers, *Life Management Skills* series for adults and *Meaningful Life Skills* for older adults, as well as a variety of other therapeutic card games, board games and posters. Ester has co-written *Creating a Healthy Balanced Life*, the *Mental Health & Life Skills Workbook Series*, the *Teen Mental Health & Life Skills Workbook Series*, the *Coping Workbook Series*, *Motivation*, *GriefWork ~ Healing from Loss*, book, card and poster, *The GriefWork Companion*, and this book, *GriefWork for Teens*, all published by Whole Person Associates.

Fran Zamore, MSW, ACSW, is a clinical social worker, marriage and family therapist, Reiki Master and student of energy healing. She has extensive experience working with individuals, couples and groups as well as leading workshops. Her private practice focuses on life transitions, personal and spiritual growth, and loss, grief and healing. She creatively integrates physical, mental, spiritual and emotional awareness in her work.

As with most people, Fran's life experience informs her work. The depth of her knowledge and understanding has been enhanced from her own healing journey after the eight-year illness and subsequent death of her husband in 2005. Synthesizing her own life experiences with her professional knowledge coupled with insights from participants in the many bereavement groups that she has facilitated and individuals she has counseled, led Fran to co-author *GriefWork ~ Healing from Loss*, *The GriefWork Companion ~ Activities for Healing* and *GriefWork for Teens* with Ester Leutenberg.

Fran continues to focus her professional energy toward helping people navigate the journey from loss to a **NEW NORMAL** through her work in hospice and her private practice.

About the Illustrator

Amy L. Brodsky, LISW-S, has worked assisting children and adults in psychiatric crisis. She is well known for her creative illustrations of the Emotions product line, over 35 therapeutic books, including the *Life Management Skills* and *SEALS* series, *Crossing the Bridge*, *GriefWork ~ Healing from Loss*, *The GriefWork Companion*, *Creating a Healthy Balanced Life*, the Liptak/Leutenberg Workbook series, *Motivation*, and this book, *GriefWork for Teens*.



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