

Living with Loss

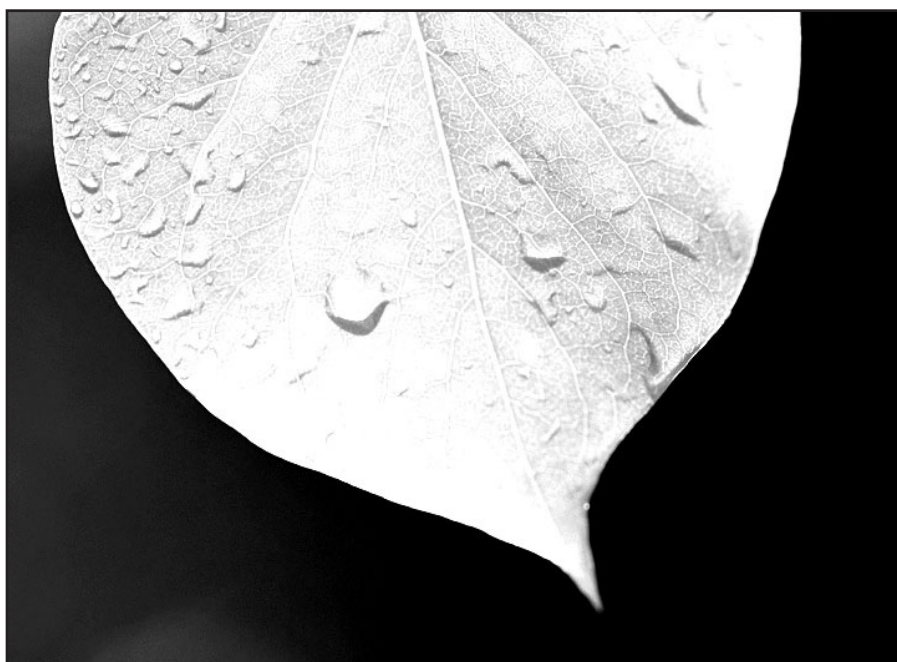
by Pat Postlewaite



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by Pat Postlewaite



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About the Author

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Preface	v
Curriculum Content Sheet	vii
Philosophy and Purpose	ix
Course Objectives	xi
Course Overview	xiii
Teaching Tips	xv

TEACHER'S FOUNDATION INFORMATION

Definitions	1
About Grief	3
Grief and Loss Theories	5
The "Movement" of Grief	7
Normal Grief Reactions	11
Youth's Understanding of Death	12
Influences on Grief	13
Factors That Inhibit Grief in Children and Adolescents	14
Childhood and Adolescent Grief	15
Complicated Grief	18

UNIT ONE: ACCEPTING GRIEF AS NORMAL

Teacher Tips	20
Unit Directions	21
Personal Loss Inventory	22
Accepting Grief as Normal	23
The Truth About Grief	24
Grief Is Normal Poem	26

UNIT TWO: REMEMBERING PAST LOSSES

Teacher Tips	28
Unit Activities	29
"About" Exercise	31
About Broken Friendships, About Death, About Death of A Pet, About Divorce, About Moving, About Not Being Chosen	

Unit Two - continued

"About" Summary Sheet	43
Memory Balloons	45
Rock Pile of Regrets.	47
Cultural Messages to Females that Influence Grief	49
Cultural Messages to Males that Influence Grief.	51

UNIT THREE: WORKING WITH THE FEELINGS OF GRIEF

Teacher Tips	54
Unit Activities	55
Grief and the Way I Feel.	56
My Family and Feelings.	58
Divorce and Explosive Emotions	60

UNIT FOUR: ACTIVATING COPING SKILLS

Teacher Tips	62
Unit Activities	63
Working With Your Grief	64
Self-care During Grief	66
Grief Scenarios.	68
Coping - Summary Sheet	69
The Painful Valley.	79

UNIT FIVE: FINDING SUPPORT

Teacher Tips	82
Unit Activities	83
Seeking Safe Listeners.	84
My Supports	86
Unrecognized Losses.	88

GRIEF TEST	90
-----------------------------	----

KEY	92
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Living With Loss

Preface

Grief is not a new phenomenon. People have faced change, loss and death since the beginning of human history. What is new is the rapid acceleration and the complexity of losses facing today's youth.

Death, divorce, absent parent, moving, classmate suicide, failure, not being chosen for the team/activity/honor, teen pregnancy, abortion and adoption, broken friendships ... Many of the losses that teens experience are relatively new to our society, considering the many years of human existence. As a diverse and ever-changing culture, we have failed to develop consistent and effective ways of achieving closure of such complex losses.

This curriculum is built on the understanding that all humans naturally experience grief in response to loss, that all humans have some ungrieved losses, and that ungrieved significant loss can detract from the quality of people's lives, robbing them of energy.

The program is designed to teach students that grief is a normal human reaction and that people need not be victims of their losses.



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Living With Loss is a curriculum designed to be used with students in grades 7 through 12. The curriculum package includes these materials:

Teacher's Guide

This curriculum provides complete instructions for its use. They are found in the introduction and beginning of each unit.

Information Sheets

These information sheets provide foundational information on loss and grief and their impact on youth.

Student Handouts

These handouts are for student use during classroom sessions. Each handout may be used as either
1) a guide for cooperative learning experiences
or 2) an individual worksheet.

Overhead and/or Bulletin Board Masters

These optional overheads may be used to stimulate discussion. Alternatively, they may be reproduced for bulletin board display.

Unit Test

This unit test contains 14 true-false, 4 multiple choice, 2 fill in the blank and one short-essay questions.



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Philosophy and Purpose

Living With Loss is a basic classroom curriculum designed to:

- *normalize the experience of loss*
- *foster self-examination, understanding and sharing related to current and past loss and grief*

Philosophy

Young people often have not had the opportunity to develop attitudes, competencies and control that come from having made one's way through life's "painful valleys." Without information or good models for grief resolution, young people experiencing change, loss and grief are at risk for complicated grieving.

Our culture fails to support grief, giving strong messages that grief should be overcome or ignored. Also, society assumes, incorrectly, that children don't feel grief as acutely as adults. Buried losses may be out of sight or mind, but they are not gone. They continue to rob young people of the understanding, peace and energy needed for development and growth.

Youth can:

- *learn from past loss and its pain*
- *be empowered to find goodness and strength even in difficult losses*
- *learn to manage and cope with loss and grief while they integrate their loss experiences into healthy living*

"Two of the best kept secrets of the 20th century are that everyone suffers ...
and that suffering can be used for growth."
~ Lawrence LeShan



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Purpose

Messages to “let go,” “move on,” and “get on with living” have been mistakenly understood to mean “ignore and forget”. No one should ever be asked to forget someone or something they cherished. The challenge is to find a new way to be in relationship with that which was lost.

Living With Loss is designed to help students

- remember past and present losses
- gain understanding and meaning from their losses
- “go through” their grief not “get over” it.

The curriculum encourages students to choose lasting, empowering memories of what was lost. It strives to clear up misunderstandings about grief common in our society today. In addition to helping students find meaning in their losses, *Living With Loss* can help empower students to manage their own grief and help one another.

Loss and Life

Loss and grief are key parts of life. When we encounter children and teens in grief, you and I may wish we had a magic wand to make that grief disappear. However, our purpose is not to reduce our students' pain as much as it is to help them learn to work actively with their grief and its resolution, so additional burdens don't complicate their future.

Classroom Attitude

During the various exercises and discussions, it is important that students not advise or judge one another's past or present losses, their reactions, or their ways of coping. Rather, they should be encouraged to provide a caring and respectful setting in which to learn about the many faces of grief. Loss is ongoing. Learning to accept ongoing loss is part of establishing a sound basis for mental health.

“Life has never been problem free.
There has always been, and there will continue to be, pain and joy.”
~ Louis LaGrand



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Course Objectives

These objectives are based on the lesson plans presented in this guide, and on the foundational material presented for teacher enrichment. You may create other objectives for this course.

Upon completion of Living With Loss, students should be able to understand that:

- All people experience loss in their lives.
- Grief is a natural response to loss.
- Grief is a process, not an event.
- To resolve grief a person must be willing and able to express feelings.
- To be healthy, people must “work through” their grief rather than avoid or be protected from it.
- There is a wide range of normal reactions that come with significant loss.
- We are very individual in the way we grieve.
- No one needs to be a victim of his or her loss experiences.



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Course Overview

This curriculum is designed to be delivered in five 40-minute sessions. You can, however, adapt it to fit your particular schedule. To be most effective, the sessions should be presented in the order shown here. Enough time should be left for student discussion or individual reflection on each topic. Recommendation for fewer than 5-day presentations is located after this course overview. This overview describes each session and the topics covered in each session.

Session 1. Accepting Grief as Normal

This session establishes that all people experience loss, and that grief is a natural human response to loss of many kinds, not just loss through death. A Personal Loss Inventory helps students recognize the diversity of their own losses. Grief is presented as a process, rather than a series of stages, which encompasses a wide range of normal reactions: thoughts, feelings, emotions, and behaviors.

Session 2. Remembering Past Losses

This session presents the “tasks of mourning” needed to help resolve grief. In learning groups, students examine and discuss one of six losses they have experienced (or expect to experience). Additional (optional) exercises are offered concerning: regret, happy memories, and cultural messages to males and females that influence grief.



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Session 3. Working With the Feelings of Grief

This session helps teens identify and validate their own and others' grief feelings resulting from loss. It addresses the "purpose" of anger and sadness, and decisions one must make when expressing feelings.

Session 4. Activating Coping Skills

This session affirms that no one need be a victim of one's losses. It is designed to empower students to do the "work" necessary for successful grieving and to use effective coping skills while grieving.

Session 5. Finding Support

This session introduces students to the concept of "safe listeners." It asks them to consider their own informal supports, and the questions to ask of someone who might be a resource for ongoing support during grief.

For Shortened Course Presentation

If course is shortened, adjust objectives and test.

2 Sessions:

- 1) Loss Inventory and Normal Responses to Loss
- 2) Working With Grief/Coping With Grief

3 Sessions:

- 1) Loss Inventory and Normal Responses to Loss
- 2) Remembering Past Losses Discussion
- 3) Working With Grief/Coping With Grief



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Teaching Tips

While teaching about issues of loss and grief, you have the following responsibilities:

- Read all teacher information before presenting *Living With Loss*.
- Be aware of your own strengths, weaknesses, fears and biases concerning loss, death, and grief.
- Model appropriate sensitivity to the wide range of experiences, customs, and attitudes related to loss and grief.
- Create a tone of gentle acceptance for students who are struggling with past loss experiences.
- Encourage students to share as much as they are willing about their losses.
- Realize that adolescents, in particular, are reluctant to experience and express grief.

Living With Loss is not intended to be taught as "grief therapy" - but accurate information about grief and loss is always therapeutic.



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DEFINITIONS

There are many sources that can provide more detailed and extensive definitions for the words pertaining to loss and grief. However, I have found that most people appreciate these simple, straightforward meanings.

LOSS: being without something that is valued

GRIEF: response to loss; the personal experience of loss

MOURNING: the process of grief

BEREAVEMENT: the period of mourning

DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF: response to a loss that is not socially supported

"Mourning is the necessary process of returning back to life after we have been jolted from its road. It involves leaving behind what needs to be left behind, bringing along what needs to be brought along, and learning to distinguish between the two."

~ Jim Froehlich



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About Loss

Anytime we invest time, money, affection or attention in someone or something, we feel pain when we lose it. That pain has to do with the internal meaning we give to the object. That is highly individual. We can feel pain losing something we had or something we thought we'd have.

Grief

Grief involves the complex reactions to loss felt in our thoughts, our emotions, our body, our spirituality, and our social relationships.

Mourning

While this can include the inner workings of grief I think of it more commonly as "grief gone public." Most people use the words grief and mourning interchangeably to mean both.

Disenfranchised Grief

Our society fails to recognize or validate many losses. The grief following: the death of pets, death by AIDS or suicide, death of coworkers, abortion, miscarriage, adoption, divorce, youth and breaking up, and other losses is often not recognized or is minimized. Disenfranchised grief is harder to express and bring to resolution.

"Grief is a time to consider the giving up of what
we were for what we may become."



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ABOUT GRIEF

A Universal Experience: the ways of the human heart

All people experience loss, and grief is the natural response to loss. As humans, we get attached to people, objects and dreams for the future. Most of our attachment is positive. We get attached by love. Need also causes attachments; so can fear.

Without really trying, we become comfortable with certain ways of thinking and acting. Anytime we have to leave behind one of these attachments or habits, we feel discomfort and often grief.

What You and I Learned

Many of us grew up not understanding the losses we experienced in our childhood. Some losses are not remembered. We may have “stuffed” other losses, with their painful questions and feelings, because:

- No one was available to help us grieve.
- We (and they) didn't understand or know how to grieve.
- We lacked the knowledge and resources to cope effectively.
- Our family's pattern of dealing with loss encouraged denial and repression.
- Our culture “rewarded” happiness and encouraged us to ignore pain.

However it happened, many of us did not have the chance to understand and grow from our losses. This is also true for our students.

Teens and Loss

Helping teens face and work with current and past losses presents both an opportunity and a challenge. Adolescence is filled with its own rapid change and many losses - changing bodies, conflicting values, fragile friendships, growth toward independence with its associated losses.



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Teens often need help recognizing and validating these losses. Unprocessed or unintegrated grief from past loss makes current losses more stressful on a person's mental, emotional, physical and spiritual well-being.

Alone With Grief

Because adolescents are in the process of learning to separate from parents and families, they often won't turn to them for help with feelings that surround their loss. Past losses that surface to be "regrieved" and current losses that catch teens by surprise add to their feeling of being out of control and not knowing why.

Not everyone has the tools to grow from grief. In addition, our culture holds myths about how young people are supposed to deal with loss:

- Pain is not supposed to be associated with youth.
- Young people are to be perpetually happy.
- Young people are to live life to its fullest.

These myths ignore the reality that teens are frequently unhappy and searching for someone who will help them make life more manageable. The dilemma of being a grieving young adult is considerable and generally results in adolescents being hidden grievers.

Sharing Experiences

Adolescents may shun advice, but they are hungry to hear how others have managed similar experiences. Studies of adolescents experiencing current or past loss conclude that grief resolution is best served when they, as a group or as individuals, have been able to interact, telling their stories about loss. Adolescents have gained lasting benefit by sharing their growth-enhancing and growth-diminishing experiences related to loss and grief.



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Grief and Loss Theories

There are a number of models to describe the experience of loss and grief. Many of us are probably most familiar with the works of Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross who identified the stages of death and dying in her book *On Death and Dying* in 1969. She identified the reactions of terminally ill people to their impending death as being:

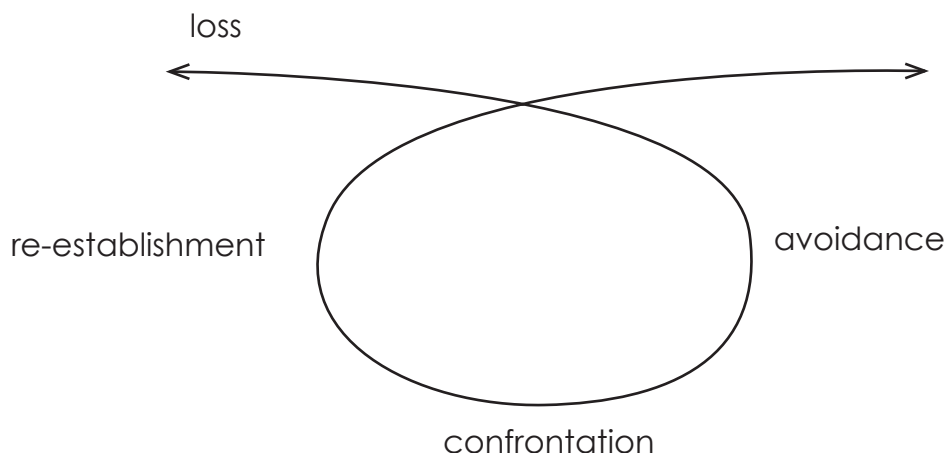
1) denial 2) anger 3) bargaining 4) depression 5) acceptance.

Her work created a major breakthrough in understanding grief *before* death. However, with time, people began to think *everyone* experiencing grief had to go through these five stages in order, as if one were walking through a house, room by room, closing the door behind them as each stage was completed. We know now that grief is much less predictable and structured. Also, the “stages of death and dying” are not an accurate description of the process of grief *following* significant loss.

Grief is a Process, not an Event

J. Bowlby in 1980 described grief as a process having a four-fold progression: 1) early shock (numbing) and protest 2) yearning and searching 3) disorganization and despair and 4) gradual reconstruction and reorganization.

In *Grief, Dying and Death*, Therese A. Rando presents an even more simplified way of conceptualizing grief. She speaks of the three phases of grief as: avoidance, confrontation, and re-establishment.





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Avoidance

Shock and Numbness

During this phase, people feel shaken and overwhelmed. Inwardly they are “in shock,” much like a body goes into shock after serious trauma. This is a normal reaction.

Denial

As reality of the loss begins to sink in, denial takes over as a buffer. It protects people so they can absorb the reality of the loss a little at a time. Denial during the initial phase of grief should not be a concern. It is a normal, protective reaction. People believe a little and deny a little while they begin to understand everything that has changed as a result of their loss. Sometimes their denial is not about the loss itself, but rather a denial of the emotions that follow significant loss.

Confrontation (with the reality of the loss, and with its impact)

During this phase, grief is intense. Some denial or disbelief may still exist, but extremes of emotion are the norm. People feel an “angry sadness,” or other feelings they may not want to express or don’t know how to express. Some losses bring relief and even joy, which may cause grievers to feel guilty or ashamed.

It is unsettling to feel and behave differently than usual, and people commonly feel confusion and fear about these changes brought on by grief. People may have difficulty concentrating or doing tasks that seemed simple before the loss. People naturally feel angry because loss deprives them of something they valued. They feel cheated. Feelings of guilt, separation, longing, yearning, and anguish are also common during this phase. The jumble of emotions often causes people to feel depressed, “crazy,” or changed.

Reestablishment (reentry into the everyday world)

During this phase there is a gradual decline in grief and a beginning of emotional and social reentry into the everyday world. People have not forgotten their loss, but ideally have been able to put it in perspective, a “special place” that frees them to go on with other or new attachments. Sometimes people feel guilty during their beginning efforts to reestablish, feeling they should not be enjoying life, especially if their loss was extreme. This guilt is a natural but unpleasant feeling to be worked through.



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The “Movement” of Grief

Never “All or Nothing”

None of the phases of grief are “all or nothing” and there is much “movement” back and forth among the phases. The diagram of loss on page 5 has arrows at both ends of the circular line, signifying that grief is not a static process. People can wake up feeling confident and in control of their grief, and two hours later be back in pain because a song, a smell, or a memory put them “right back where they started from.”

“After I broke up with my girlfriend, it really hurt for awhile. Then I started doing other stuff and it seemed okay. One day I was renting a movie and a girl walked by wearing the same perfume as my old girlfriend. All of a sudden I was in major pain again. I thought I was going to cry.”

~Chris, senior

Even though there is much movement back and forth among the phases of grief, over time and with work, most people experience a general progression with their grief. People move through their numbness. Their acute pain lessens. They begin to discover they have more control over their emotions. They are caught less off-guard by waves of feeling that come at unexpected times. The time between pain lengthens. They naturally begin thinking about other things and doing other things.

Regrieving

People commonly have times of “regrieving” - a return of painful feelings after they seemed to be over them. Part of that may be the movement back and forth through the phases of grief. However, anniversaries of special days or of the day of loss, or new understandings of the significance of the loss can cause regrieving. Generally, regrieving is not as acutely painful as the actual time of loss, but may be. Youth who experienced a significant loss at an early age may be faced with regrieving (or grieving for the first time) as they enter a new developmental stage or understanding of their loss.



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The Death of Dreams and Expectations

With major loss (and each individual determines what is “major”) there is also the loss of things we expected in the future, even if we were unaware of those expectations. Any broken relationship held hopes and promises for the future. School and job hopes, dreams of making the team or winning the scholarship, plans for a healthy life and for independence, plans for marriage and children - all have a life greater than the lost object. Those dreams of “what would have been” are real and need to be grieved also.

The Amount of Change

All change creates stress, even change that is welcomed. When grief seems to last too long or be more intense than expected, it's helpful to ask how many changes have occurred as a result of the loss. As each change is recognized and looked at, people can gain a more realistic understanding of the scope of loss and grief based on the number and types of changes being experienced.

The Entire Person Grieves

We grieve as whole people - physically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually, and socially. Each of these “parts” of us has its own timetable of grief, adding to the sense of “craziness” or being out of control. Physically, we may long to see, smell, hold, touch, hear the voice or the laugh of someone we loved who is no longer in our life. We may ache to play with our dog again, stroke our cat. We may long to be back in our familiar place, doing familiar things. Our bodies feel grief. Our bodies also experience biochemical changes caused by the stress of grief, changing how our bodies work and feel.

Emotionally, we experience a rush of feelings as information of our loss makes its journey from our head to our heart. Anger, sadness, longing, regret ... The process leads some people from emotional fog to pain and finally to a sense of resolution.

Intellectually, we face all the questions, often at a subconscious level, that surround loss. “Why me? Why now? What if? If only. What's the meaning of life? Of death? Of anything?”



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Spiritually, we face the deeper mysteries of life and love and our place in the universe. Regardless of whether or not we're formally connected to a religion, grief calls into question our beliefs about the deepest human connections. For most people, spirituality includes a sense of being connected to a "higher power." We wonder "Am I being punished? Didn't I have enough faith? What do I believe about life after death? Where is my loved one? Will we be together again? What is the meaning of suffering?" At the same time, many people find their spirituality a source of great comfort and stability during grief.

Socially, we face the change of roles that were familiar. Suddenly we are "uncoupled," "unparented," "unconnected," "unfamiliar." Grief causes us to withdraw, to lose interest in the outside world. Our loss of control changes our level of comfort with others. We are faced with creating a "new me." Often we act "as if everything is fine," so worried about other people's feelings that we neglect our own.

The Work of Grief

Just as children and adolescents face necessary developmental tasks as they grow and mature, grief presents certain tasks for successful resolution of loss. William Worden, a psychotherapist and author of *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy*, offers **four tasks of mourning**:

1. To Accept the Reality of the Loss
2. To Experience the Pain of Grief
3. To Adjust to an Environment in Which the Deceased [Lost Object/Relationship] is Missing
4. To Withdraw Emotional Energy and Reinvest It in Another Relationship

Sandra Fox, PhD, ACSW, writing in the field of children and loss, offers another way of conceptualizing the fact that "work" must be done in order to successfully move beyond one's grief. She describes four **tasks of grief for children**:

1. Understanding
2. Grieving
3. Commemorating
4. Moving On



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Grief is like:

- Two steps forward and one step back
- A roller coaster
- Having the rug pulled out from under you
- A feather being tossed on a wind

How Long Will I Hurt?

Grief's timetable and intensity is very individual. We know that under certain circumstances, appropriate grief may be felt merely as a mild sadness and simple longing that does not disrupt a person's life. However, most people feel grief more intensely. Society minimizes the impact of grief. People commonly expect grief to be gone within months, and certainly within a year. Yet many studies now confirm that normal, healthy people often carry grief, in some form, for years.

Secondary Losses

Whenever there is a significant loss, we mourn for more than the "thing" that was lost. Secondary losses - everything that was part of the lost relationship or object - also must be grieved. For example, if children lose a parent, they may lose a companion, a friend, a teacher, a provider, a disciplinarian, a coach, a confidante, a cheerleader, a chauffeur ... Even when the parent/child relationship is less than ideal, children lose all the ways in which their lives overlapped with the life of their parent. Loss creates the feeling of chunks being missing. Things no longer flow smoothly. In ways, everything changes. Children who are separated from a parent through death, divorce, or abandonment must grieve the loss of an intact family as well as the loss of a parent, and all the other accompanying losses.



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Normal Grief Reactions

Feelings:

sadness	panic	hope	yearning
anger	discouragement	trust	despair
helplessness	relief	faith	guilt
shock	emptiness	fear	love
anxiety	fatigue	disbelief	gratitude
loneliness	self-reproach	numbness	self-pity
rage	purposelessness	phobias	
irritability	adventure	confusion	

The complex mix of feelings are for a purpose and make sense, but can cause grieving people to feel terribly out of control.

THOUGHTS:

preoccupation with loss/death	"What's going to happen to me?"
being aware of possibility of own death	"I think I'm going crazy"
feeling the presence of dead person	"I can't handle things"
thinking about suicide, feeling suicidal	"I can't concentrate"
"It's not real"	"Am I always going to feel like this?"
"I'm losing it"	"Why?" (every variety imaginable)
"I should have done more"	"I'm going to make the best of this"
"I wish it would have been me"	"I'll be a better person because of this"

Thoughts race through peoples' minds as they process their grief. Being preoccupied makes it hard to concentrate and adds to people feeling overwhelmed.

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS:

headaches	menstruation changes	shaking
bowel changes	stomach pain	restlessness
shortness of breath	exhaustion	lack of air
weight gain/loss	dry mouth	blurred vision, dizziness
sweating	frequent urinating	
empty arms (child loss)	body pain	

Weight gain or loss and other body changes add to the griever's sense of loss. People in grief often feel reduced self-esteem. Because grief suppresses the body's immune system, grievers commonly have more frequent colds, flu, etc.

BEHAVIORS:

changes in eating habits & appetite	blaming others/oneself
treasuring objects	sleep changes (more/less)
crying	alcohol and/or chemical use
loss of interest in world/social events	dreams of lost object
social withdrawal/acting out	recklessness
change in spending habits	loss of interest in work/hobbies
avoidance	difficulty concentrating
criticizing others	forgetfulness
visiting cemetery	quick disposal of possessions/"reminders"



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Youths' Understanding of Grief

The scope of this curriculum does not include detailed developmental stages of children or adolescents. But it is helpful to have a general idea of how children view death (and to a lesser extent, divorce) at various ages. John Schneider, Ph.D presents the following developmental levels of children's understanding of death.

Developmental Understandings of Death

Children ages **one to three** years expect reappearance to follow disappearance. Disappearance and loss are seen as the same as death, but death is not recognized as being permanent. Death is thought to be reversible. Death does not apply to them. Loss is the result of having been bad.

Children ages **three to five** years see loss and death as accidental and not something that is inevitable. They understand death as the absence of light or movement. They believe death is reversible, like sleep. Death is caused by thoughts, feelings, or actions. This "magical thinking" causes children this age to mistakenly feel very responsible and guilty for "bad things" that happen because of their thoughts, feelings, or actions.

Children ages **six to ten** years see death as real, but as something distant and external. They see it as an outside agent - a boogey man or invader from space. Death and loss are seen to have causes and consequences.

Pre-adolescents ages **ten to thirteen** years view loss and death as playful, abstract, gruesome or disgusting. They see death as separate issues for the mind (soul) and body. They are limited in their ability to see death as something that relates to them. They can see the positives and negatives of loss and death and recognize its long-term consequences.

Adolescents ages **thirteen to seventeen** years recognize that death is permanent and irreversible. However, they see it as limited ... something that happens, but not to them, their family, or friends.



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Influences on Grief

Therese Rando, PhD, clinical psychologist, has also identified a number of factors that influence the *intensity* and *length* of a person's grief.

1. Individual qualities of the relationship lost.
2. Role of the deceased in the griever's family or social system.
3. Griever's age, maturity, intelligence, previous experience with loss and death.
4. Griever's coping behavior, temperament, personality, and mental health.
5. Griever's social, cultural, ethnic, and religious/philosophical background.
6. Griever's sex-role conditioning.
7. Characteristics of the deceased.
8. Amount and degree of unfinished business between griever and deceased.
9. Griever's perception of deceased's fulfillment in life.
10. Immediate circumstances of the death.
11. Timeliness of the death.
12. Griever's perception of preventability.
13. Length of illness prior to death.
14. Anticipatory grief and involvement with the dying person.
15. Number, type, and quality of secondary losses.
16. Presence of concurrent stresses or crisis.

While some factors refer specifically to the loss of death, a number of characteristics apply equally to loss through divorce. Others have a bearing on all losses, especially losses considered significant to the mourner.



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Factors That Inhibit Grief in Children and Adolescents

Clinical psychologist Therese A. Rando, PhD, author of *Parental Loss of a Child: Clinical and Research Considerations*, cites several factors that contribute to a child or teen burying or delaying their grief until more favorable circumstances allow them to acknowledge their pain.

1. The surviving parent's inability to mourn.
2. The surviving parent's inability to tolerate the pain of the child, and to allow the child to mourn.
3. Fear about the vulnerability of the surviving parent and the security of one's self.
4. The lack of a secure and a caring environment.
5. The lack of a caring adult who can stimulate and support the mourning process.
6. Confusion about the death and his or her part in it.
7. Ambivalence towards the deceased parent.
8. Unchallenged magical thinking.
9. An inability to accept the finality and irreversibility of the death.
10. Issues of adolescence that exacerbate normal conflicts in mourning.
11. Cognitive inability to accept the finality and irreversibility of the death.
12. Lack of opportunities to share longing, feelings, and also memories.
13. Instability of family life after the loss.
14. Reassignment of an inappropriate role and responsibility.

These same factors may be applied to grief from loss of a parent through divorce, and to a lesser extent, to other significant losses.



Living With Loss

Childhood Grief

Many people try to shield children from experiencing sadness, especially the sadness caused from death. But distancing them from the reality of death, or other loss, and its sad feelings does not promote healing. It is important to understand the impact of loss on young children because it is often in childhood that the “untreated wounds” of grief occur. As difficult as it is for adults to understand and express grief, it’s even more difficult for children. They lack the vocabulary and understanding to express their pain. Their ability to be in pain for long periods of time is less than that of older youth or adults. Children hurt a little then play a little: the “work” of childhood. Oftentimes they will act out their grief through disruptive behavior.

If parents are grieving, they often are unable to support their children. Other people who comfort and support grieving adults often overlook grieving children. Children then become “hidden mourners” or “forgotten grievers.” Inside, part of them remains hurt and confused, reactions that follow them into adolescence and adulthood.

Adolescent Grief

Adolescence is typically intense and confusing. Grief magnifies it. The process of grieving can be very consuming and introverted, making it an added burden during adolescence.

Feeling Different...Feeling Normal

Adolescents feel “different”, *especially adolescents who grieve*. They feel “changed” because of the many changes that may have occurred with their loss. It is helpful for them to learn that feeling “different” is a normal grief reaction that passes with time, work, and resolution.

We all have a need to *feel* and *appear* normal. In adolescence, that need is much greater. Teens, especially, don’t want to be pressured into saying or doing anything they’re not ready for. Grief brings a whole array of thoughts, feelings, and bodily reactions over which they have little initial control. Grief also brings many outside expectations. Especially if the cause of grief is on-going, teens tend to pretend they are doing fine in order to feel normal again. They want “it” (anger, guilt, frustration, sadness, etc.) out of their lives.



Living With Loss

Being Alone...Being With Others

Adolescence magnifies a young person's need to be alone and to be with others. So does grief. Grieving teens often feel that tug-of-war most acutely while at school. They don't want to be in school but they feel isolated and lonely if they remain home. They want to be in school and yet they're afraid of breaking down in front of others. During grief, when they feel least in control of their lives, it feels as if everything they do is in full sight of everyone.

Reaction of Others

Frequently, grieving teens will experience a lack of reaction from others. On the one hand, while the lack of reaction from others helps grieving teens feel less visible, they also wrestle with thoughts of "Don't they know?", "Don't they care?". They may feel hurt by not enough reaction from close friends or too much reaction from casual acquaintances. Especially during grief, teens learn that their friendships are both powerful and fragile. During extreme grief following the death of a parent, sibling, boyfriend or girlfriend, or the divorce of parents, friendships can be a source of strong support or an additional casualty.

Teens and Mourning

Death changes things; so does other significant loss. Life can no longer be taken as lightly. Even so, teens naturally (developmentally) rebel against mourning. Barry Garfinkley describes adolescents as highly self-absorbed and often lacking in empathy, particularly to about age 15. From ages 15 to 17 a partial identification with the experiences of others emerges. During ages 17 to 21, young people tend to be exclusively philosophical and intellectual about death and need some help in coming back to their feelings.

The normal turmoil of adolescence and the added burden of grief **make it common for teens to take longer to begin to mourn**. This is not a conscious decision as much as it is nature's way of protecting the developmental work teens need to do to achieve successful independence.

Teens seek security while they learn to separate from family, establish their own identity, and find their place in the world. Acute loss robs them of security. Consequently, it is common for teens to enter active mourning from eight months to a year following the death of someone deeply significant.



Living With Loss

Working Through Grief

Because most teens wish to not feel different, visible, or out-of-control, the “work” of grief becomes an additional challenge. They are tempted to approach grief as *head work*. Heart work, an essential part of resolving grief, leaves them feeling far more vulnerable. They may be unable or unwilling to do active heart work, especially in the classroom.

Even so, no one need be a victim of their losses. As much as teens may want to avoid the work of grief, they can be encouraged and empowered to do it. Locating necessary information about either the loss they experienced or about grief, talking or writing about their loss, feeling and expressing their emotions, balancing time alone with time with others, setting some time aside to remember, choosing lasting memories and mementos, and establishing ways to externalize the meaning of their loss all help complete the work of grief.

“Acting Out” During Grief

Fear is the basis for most unsettled feelings and frequently causes teens to be reactive. In addition, grief causes regression, feelings of wanting to be protected and cared for, to have someone “make the pain go away.” Acting-out behavior – defiance of authority, arguments, and temper tantrums, is often an unconscious and misguided attempt to gain more interaction. The ultimate goal is for nurturing.

“My parents took our dog and had it put to sleep while I was staying overnight at my friends. They said they were afraid I couldn’t take it. I hated them for weeks. After I found out, I smashed my bowling trophies.”
~ Grant, ninth grade



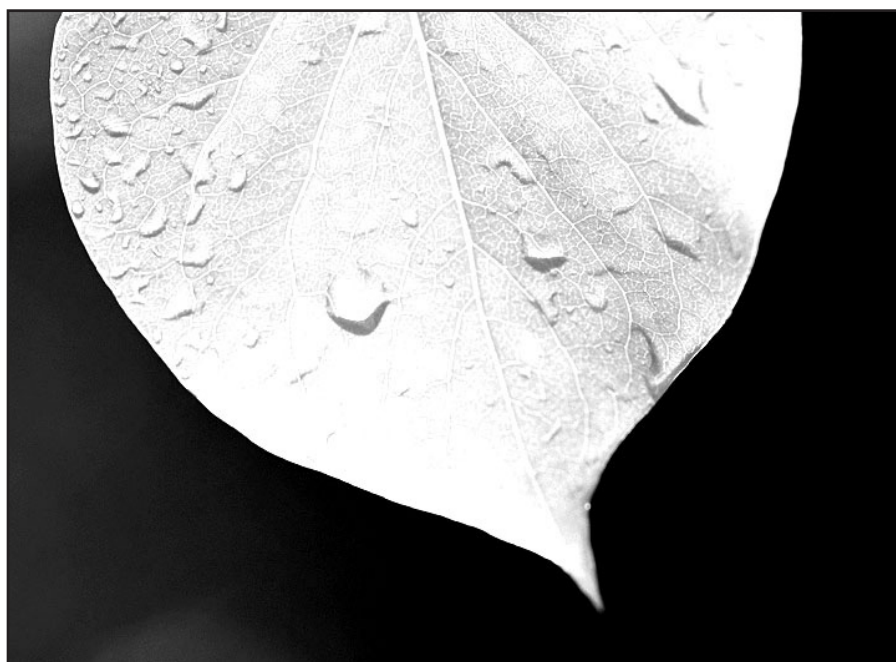
Living With Loss

Complicated Grief

While it is beyond the scope of this curriculum to deal with grief that requires professional intervention, it is useful to know what isn't considered within the norm of usual grief. J. William Worden, Ph.D, author of *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy*, identifies four characteristics of grief that has become complicated.

- Chronic grief reactions:
very prolonged, with the person feeling they are never getting on with life
- Delayed grief reactions (inhibited, suppressed, or postponed):
including emotional reaction at the time of loss not sufficient to the loss
- Exaggerated grief reactions:
excessive, disabling exasperations of normal grief responses and/or development of phobias or irrational despair
- Masked grief reactions:
grief being displaced into physical symptoms, exaggerated acting out, or maladaptive behavior

Because of adolescents' natural reluctance to grieve, it is important not to jump to conclusion about youth and complicated mourning. We can be of most help by providing youth safe, caring settings and solid information to empower them to work through their losses.



Living With Loss

UNIT ONE

ACCEPTING GRIEF AS NORMAL



Living With Loss

ACCEPTING GRIEF AS NORMAL

Teacher Tips

When students have completed this session they should be able to:

- Understand that all people experience loss and that grief is a natural response to loss
- Explain how grief is a process, not an event
- Recognize that there is a wide range of normal grief reactions

Explain to the students:

1. Grief is a natural reaction to having to be without something that is important to us. It comes, not just from death, but from the loss of anything we value.
2. Grief isn't just experienced by adults. Young children and even mentally impaired people can experience grief because grief has to do with our ability to become attached to something rather than our ability to understand the concept of death or loss.
3. When we experience grief, we feel it in our bodies, our emotions, our thoughts, our behavior, and our relationships.
4. Grief is experienced as a **process**. It begins with feelings of shock and disbelief, moves into a period of time filled with strong emotion (especially anger and sadness), and gradually moves to a time when people feel like "getting on with their lives again."
5. People are as individual in the way they grieve as they are in the way they dress.



Living With Loss

Accepting Grief As Normal

Unit Activities

1 class period

1. Personal Loss Inventory **time**-less than 10 minutes
 - Have each student complete at the beginning of class.
 - There is no discussion planned following this inventory.
2. Normal Grief Reactions **time** 15+ minutes
 - Provide each student with a copy of the Normal Grief Reactions sheet. Comment that grief is felt in many areas of our life, ie. feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and physical reaction.

DIRECT THEM TO:

1. Think of a loss they've experienced that they believe was a significant or painful loss.
2. Using that as an example, have them:
 - circle all the things they experienced after the loss
 - check the words that describe feelings and reactions they still have.
3. Break them into groups of 7 or 8 to discuss the things they have circled and checked in each box.
4. Direct each student to share 2 things from each box in their cooperative learning group, keeping track of the similarities and differences in people's reactions to loss.

Optional: The Truth About Grief; Grief is Normal Poem-sheet. (individual activities)



Living With Loss

PERSONAL LOSS INVENTORY

Childhood and Adolescent Losses

Put a check mark in front of each loss you have experienced

POSSESSIONS

- ☐ pets
- ☐ having to move
- ☐ money
- ☐ wrecked car, motorcycle, bike
- ☐ objects stolen or vandalized
- ☐ lost, ruined clothing
- ☐ meaningful jewelry
- ☐ things that have special memories
- ☐ pictures
- ☐ computer, iPod, cell phone
- ☐ things damaged by fire, natural disaster
- ☐ List others:

LOSS OF SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

- ☐ childhood friend moves away
- ☐ death of parent, grandparent
- ☐ sibling death
- ☐ death of friend
- ☐ death of classmate
- ☐ brother, sister leaves home
- ☐ favorite teacher leaves
- ☐ breakup of love relationship
- ☐ loss of heroes/heroines (sports, movie, national, religious)
- ☐ family breakup
- ☐ friend moves
- ☐ friendships end
- ☐ "unavailable" parent
- ☐ death of pet
- ☐ List others:

POSSESSIONS

PARTS OF ONE'S SELF

- ☐ hair, teeth, other body parts
- ☐ vision, hearing changes
- ☐ loss of athletic ability, role
- ☐ diagnosis of illness, disability
- ☐ religious beliefs
- ☐ job
- ☐ role in family
- ☐ sexual innocence
- ☐ hopes, goals for the future
- ☐ failed grade
- ☐ self-esteem from "put downs"
- ☐ pregnancy, abortion, adoption
- ☐ public embarrassment
- ☐ sense of safety
- ☐ list others:

DEVELOPMENTAL LOSSES

- ☐ giving up favorite toy, blanket
- ☐ no longer only child in family
- ☐ giving up childhood habits, fun, family routine changes
- ☐ giving up alcohol, cigarettes, food
- ☐ loss of childhood beliefs (Santa Claus, etc.)
- ☐ moving out of parents' home
- ☐ having to support oneself
- ☐ List others:



Living With Loss

ACCEPTING GRIEF AS NORMAL

FEELINGS

sadness	anger	emptiness	confusion
panic	guilt	fatigue	helplessness
rage	relief	loneliness	numbness
despair	fear	self-pity	yearning
anxiety	love	disbelief	irritability
hope	trust	phobias	self-reproach
shock	regret	gratitude	discouragement

THOUGHTS

"It's not real"	"I'm losing it"
"It's my fault"	"I think I'm going crazy"
"I can't concentrate"	"I can't handle things"
"Will this ever be over?"	"I should've done more"
"Why" (all varieties)	"I'll never be happy again"
"What's going to happen to me?"	"If only ..."

preoccupation with loss/death... one's own death
thinking about suicide/feeling suicidal

PHYSICAL REACTIONS

headaches	weakness
stomach aches	appetite changes
shaking	restlessness
shortness of breath	lack of air
exhaustion	oversensitivity to noise
lethargy	dry mouth
bowel changes	sweating
chills	aches and pains
blurred vision/dizziness	menstruation changes

BEHAVIORS

blaming others, self	crying
sleep disturbances	chemical use
eating more/less	forgetfulness
dreams of lost objects	social withdrawal
recklessness	change in spending habits
criticizing others	avoidance
loss of interest: world events, social events	

choose a significant loss of yours

the hardest thing for me at first

about the same loss

the hardest thing for me now



Living With Loss

THE TRUTH ABOUT GRIEF

From the book: IT MUST HURT A LOT:
A child's book about death by Doris Sanford

When I love lots I hurt lots.

My friends want to help.
They just don't know how.

Every body handles feelings
in their own way.

If you love somebody,
tell them now.

I can help my friends when
they hurt.

Good memories always stay.



Name_____ Hour_____

Living With Loss

Choose one of the statements below about grief, taken from *It Must Hurt A Lot*. Write about it, based on your own experience of a painful loss.

[illegible]

from: IT MUST HURT A LOT;
A child's book about death

When I love lots I hurt lots

My friends want to help, they just don't know how.

Everybody handles feelings in their own way.

If you love somebody,
tell them now.

I can help my friends
when they hurt.

Good memories always stay.



Student _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

“GRIEF IS NORMAL” POEM

Write a poem or a verse building on the letters below.

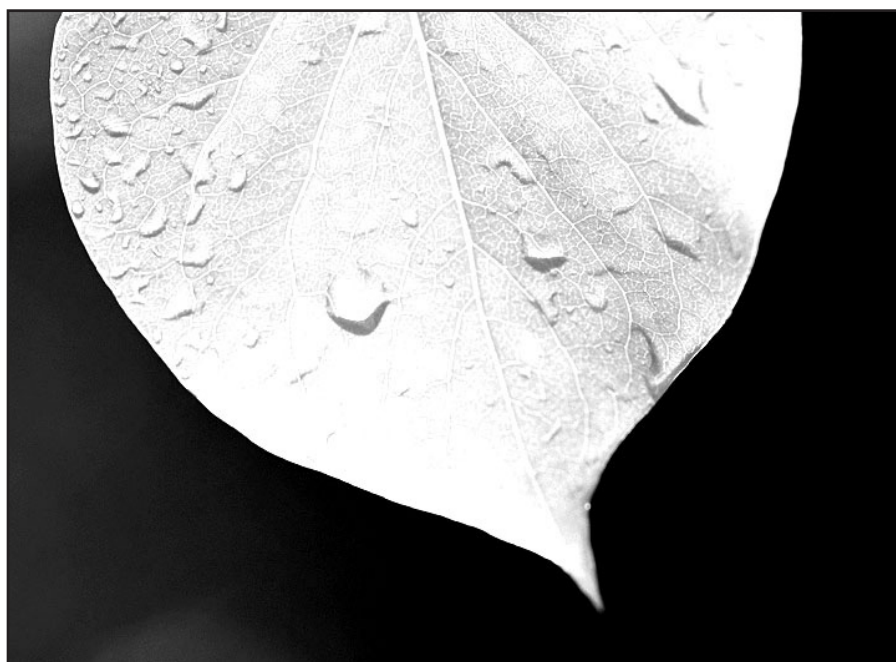
example: Honestly, I learned from this loss -
 Open yourself to more people and love.
 Precisely when I thought I knew it all,
 Everything came crashing to the ground.

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Living With Loss

UNIT TWO

REMEMBERING PAST LOSSES



Living With Loss

REMEMBERING PAST LOSSES

Teacher Tips

When students have completed this session they should be able to:

- Explain the meaning of “grief work”
- Describe the four tasks of mourning
- Understand that people need more than “time” for effective readjustment following loss

Explain to the students:

1. People who study human behavior have learned that healthy grieving requires: facing the fact the loss has happened, experiencing the feelings that go with the loss, and gradually getting back into life's activities.
2. There are four “tasks” to mourning (Worden) - “jobs” that need to be done:
 - **Accept the reality of the loss**
by talking about it; “saying goodbye” (funerals, letters, last visits, etc.); going through mementos
 - **Experience the pain of grief**
by experiencing and expressing the large number of feelings common to grief
 - **Adjust to an environment in which the person (lost object) is absent**
by learning to do things alone; learning new roles or behaviors; getting used to doing things with different people
 - **To withdraw emotional energy and invest it in another relationship**
by beginning to do more things with more people



Living With Loss

REMEMBERING PAST LOSSES

Unit Activities

1 class period

1. "About..." Exercise cooperative learning experience

- Have students choose one of 6 losses they have, or are likely to experience (death, death of a pet; divorce; broken friendships; moving; not being chosen)
- Instruct students to complete the worksheet individually or in their groups and to use it as the basis of group discussion about the losses
- Each group should report back to the entire class the positive things they learned about themselves as a result of the loss
- There is an optional handout for students that briefly summarizes the losses experienced in each of the "abouts ..."

Optional Exercises

1. Memory Balloons
2. Rock Pile of Regrets
3. Cultural Messages to Females that Influence Grief
4. Cultural Messages to Males that Influence Grief



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

ABOUT BROKEN FRIENDSHIPS

I used to be friends with _____

The last time we did things together was _____

These are things we used to like to do together:

-
-
-

How I felt when our friendship ended:

When you lose a good friend, you lose:

- someone to do things with
- someone to feel "special" with
- someone to confide in
- someone who would be honest with you
- someone to talk to
- someone to count on
- someone to "be yourself with"
- someone to do things for



Living With Loss

ABOUT BROKEN FRIENDSHIPS

How I feel now about the broken friendship: _____

What I did to help myself deal with the broken friendship:

Did you learn to do anything differently because of the broken friendship?

Describe 2 positive things you learned about yourself because of the broken friendship:



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

ABOUT DEATH

The important person in my life who died was: _____

His/her relationship to me was: _____

How long ago did he/she die? _____

How I felt after he/she died:

Other changes in my life because of their death



Living With Loss

ABOUT DEATH

Other people who were sad because of the death:

A favorite memory I have of the person who died:

Two positive things I learned about myself because of the death

1.

2.



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

ABOUT THE DEATH OF A PET

What was your pet's name? _____

What kind of animal was it? _____

How long ago did your pet die? _____

My pet died because:

How I felt then: _____

How I feel now: _____

Pets are things we can:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| • play with | • be gentle with |
| • take care of | • love |
| • feel safe with | • be proud of |
| • tell our troubles to | • "roughhouse" with |
| • spend time with | • teach things to |
| • touch and hold | • be responsible for |



Living With Loss

DEATH OF A PET

How I said good-bye to my pet:

Have you gotten another pet? Why or why not? _____

What is a favorite memory you have of your pet? _____

Two positive things I learned about myself because of the death of my pet:

1. _____

2. _____



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

ABOUT DIVORCE

When my parents divorced I was _____ years old.

The reasons I think they got a divorce are: _____

How I felt when they told me they were getting a divorce: _____

Changes that have happened because of the divorce:

Questions I still have about the divorce: _____

When families divorce, there may be many changes:

- where you live
- the amount of money you have
- how holidays are spent
- how much time is spent on you and your needs
- whom you live with
- approval of others
- who makes the decisions

Divorce is Never a Kid's Fault



Living With Loss

ABOUT DIVORCE

How I feel now about my parents' divorce:

Some things that are better since my parents' divorce: _____

Describe 2 positive things you learned about yourself because of your parents' divorce:

1. _____

2. _____



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

ABOUT MOVING

Where did you used to live? _____

How long ago did you move? _____

What did you like better about where you lived before? _____

Who told you that you were going to be moving? _____

What did they say? _____

What did you feel about having to move? _____

- a house/apartment/other
- a street/road
- a block/area
- a neighborhood
- a certain way to act
- friends

- familiar faces
- places to hang out
- a church
- people who knew your name/family
- school/teachers



Living With Loss

ABOUT HAVING TO MOVE

Things I like better where I'm living now:

How you feel about the move now?

Describe two positive things you learned about yourself from having to move:

1.

2.



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

ABOUT NOT BEING CHOSEN

The thing I wanted to be chosen for: _____
(example: a team, an award, a scholarship, an activity...)

Why it was important to me: _____

How I felt when I wasn't chosen: _____

Not being chosen can result in:

- embarrassment
- jealousy
- disappointment
- shame
- loss of self-esteem
- feelings of failure
- not being a part of something fun
- feeling cheated
- confusion
- having to change plans
- feeling like everyone knows
- having to reassess abilities/fairness



Living With Loss

ABOUT NOT BEING CHOSEN

What I did to deal with not being chosen:

Has not being chosen had an effect on your trying for other things?

Two positive things I learned about myself by not being chosen:

1.

2.



Living With Loss

SUMMARY OF “ABOUT” LOSSES

About Divorce

1 out of 3 children in the United States experiences the divorce of their parents. Kids often feel responsible, misinterpreting their parents' feelings and taking them as blame. Some children feel relieved when their parents divorce. If there was a lot of conflict, it may feel better to be rid of it. The feelings of children after divorce seem to be related to how well the parents are coping with the divorce.

About Death

All living things die. It is natural. But for the people left behind when someone they love dies, death means the loss of many things. People lose all the ways their lives were connected to the person who died. Did the persons take care of you? Provide for you? Teach you things? Encourage you? Listen to you? Were they a friend? Someone you did things with? A role model? Someone who looked up to you? Someone you looked up to? All those things are felt as losses when they are gone.

Death can also change many things in a person's day-to-day living. Death can take away the feeling that the world is a safe place or that life is fair. With death, many things are lost, not just the person who died. Part of the impact of death comes from the number of changes that come with it, and the meaning that person had in our life.

About Broken Friendships

During adolescence, friendships can be fragile. Interests change quickly. Friendships may form for reasons that aren't very lasting. Kids vary in how well they can make lasting friendships. In whatever way a friendship ends, it usually causes pain. Sometimes it's less painful if you were the one who ended the friendship. But that's not necessarily true.



Living With Loss

About Not Being Chosen

All of us set our hearts on certain things. Not being chosen for something we wanted or worked hard for - an honor, an award, a scholarship, a team, an event, a recognition, a friendship - can be very painful.

How you feel after not being chosen has a lot to do with what you tell yourself concerning the importance of what you didn't get, and about the reasons you weren't chosen.

About Death of a Pet

For many of us, the death of a pet is our first lesson in learning that all living things eventually die. Pets often become "friends." Even though we know pets aren't human, we often think of our pets as having human understandings and emotions. It's important to say good-bye, even to a pet. And it's best to wait awhile before getting another pet, especially the same kind of animal. Buying another pet too soon makes death seem like a trivial thing. Refusing to think about getting another pet may mean you're not willing to trust again.

About Having to Move

By the time many children reach sixth grade they have moved at least once. People move for different reasons. Even moves that are happy ones mean leaving behind familiar things. That can hurt. Some people feel excited, energized, happy, and hopeful about moving. Some feel angry, sad, disappointed, or frightened. The feelings seem to be related to how much choice a person had about moving.

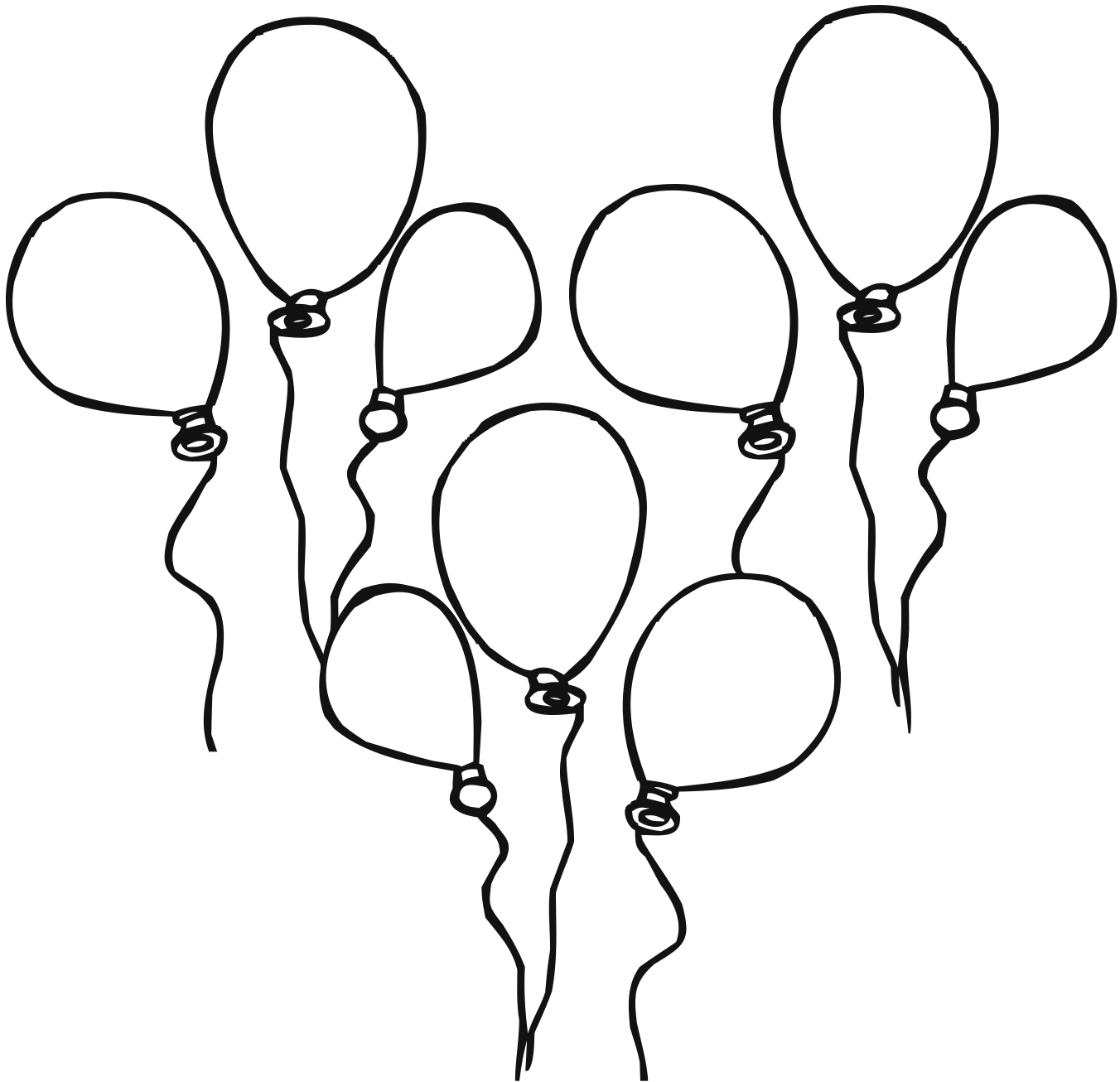


Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

MEMORY BALLOONS

In each balloon, write about a special memory you have about the person you loved.





Name_____ Hour_____

Living With Loss

LASTING MEMORIES

I am separated from _____ because of _____.

(a person, animal, object) (death, divorce, broken friendship, moving, etc.)

Some of my favorite memories about _____ are:

I know they were special for him/ her/ them too because ...

I can keep those memories fresh in mind by:



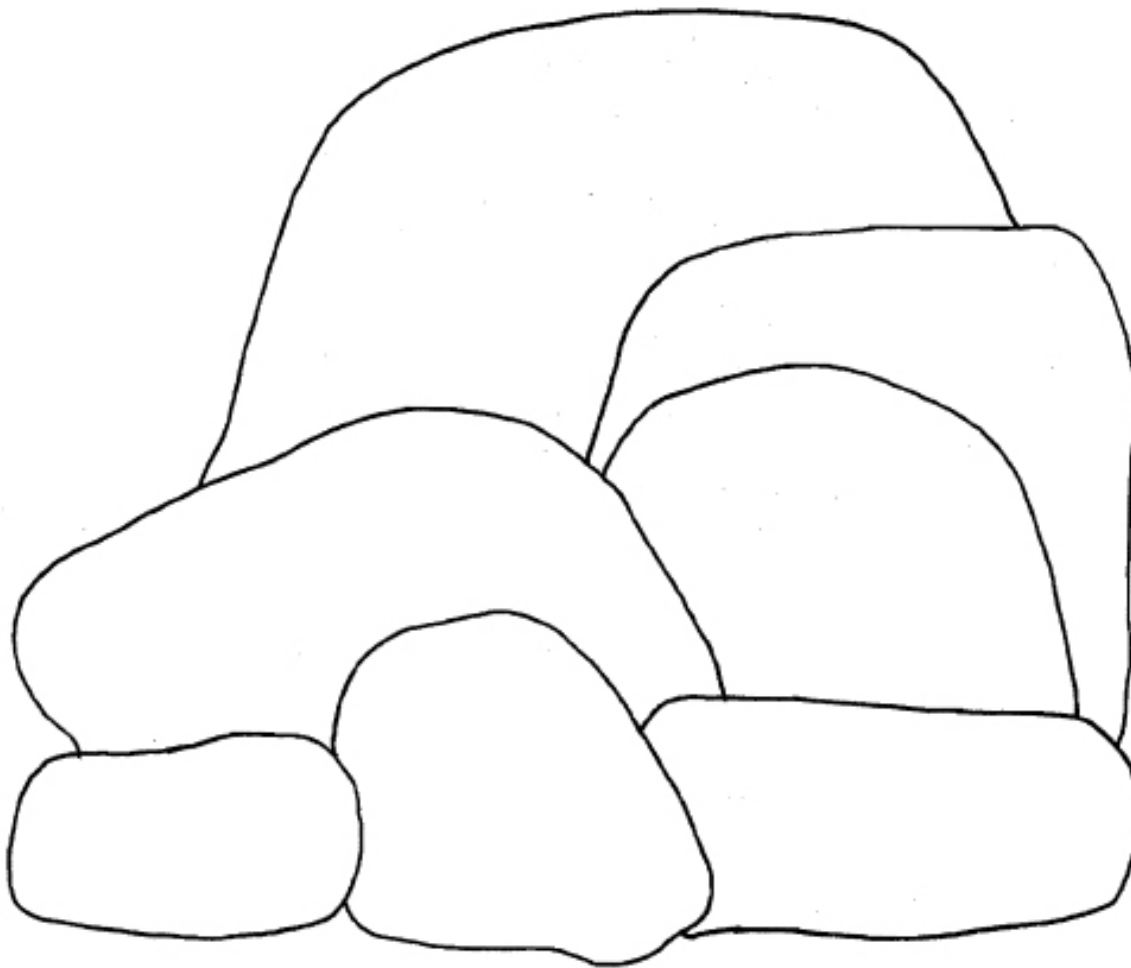
Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

ROCK PILE OF REGRETS

At some point during grief, everyone feels regret.

1. Choose a loss you have had.
2. On the rock pile below, write things you wish had been different





Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

REMEMBER! REGRETS ARE NORMAL

Have you talked with anyone about your regrets?

Are there any regrets that no longer bother you?

Which ones? _____

How did they go away? _____

Do you know of some ways to handle regrets?



Living With Loss

MESSAGES TO FEMALES THAT INFLUENCE GRIEF

*Society creates messages that make it difficult to effectively deal with loss.
These messages get mixed into our "griefcases" along with past losses
we didn't know how to handle*



A PARTIAL LIST OF LOSSES

- divorce of parents or people close to you
- death of a person or pet you loved
- losing a job
- not being chosen for something you worked hard to accomplish
- moving away
- breaking up with a boyfriend or girlfriend
- loss of financial stability in your family
- making a fool of yourself
- loss, theft, or destruction of something that was important to you



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

FEMALE GRIEFCASE MESSAGES

The “griefcase” on the front of this worksheet lists 10 messages from society that make it difficult to effectively deal with loss.

Which 3 of the Griefcase comments bother you the most?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Why do they bother you? (example: Not true? Unfair? Impossible?)

Why would these comments make it difficult to effectively deal with loss?

Give an argument against each one of the three.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Living With Loss

MESSAGE TO MALES THAT INFLUENCE GRIEF

Society creates messages that make it difficult to effectively deal with loss. These messages get mixed into our "griefcases" along with past losses we didn't know how to handle.



A PARTIAL LIST OF LOSSES

- divorce of parents or people close to you
- death of a person or pet you loved
- losing a job
- not being chosen for something you worked hard to accomplish
- moving away
- breaking up with a boyfriend or girlfriend
- loss of financial stability in your family
- making a fool of yourself
- loss, theft, or destruction of something that was important to you



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

MALE GRIEFCASE MESSAGES

The "griefcase" on the front of this worksheet lists 10 messages from society that make it difficult to effectively deal with loss.

Which 3 of the Griefcase comments bother you the most?

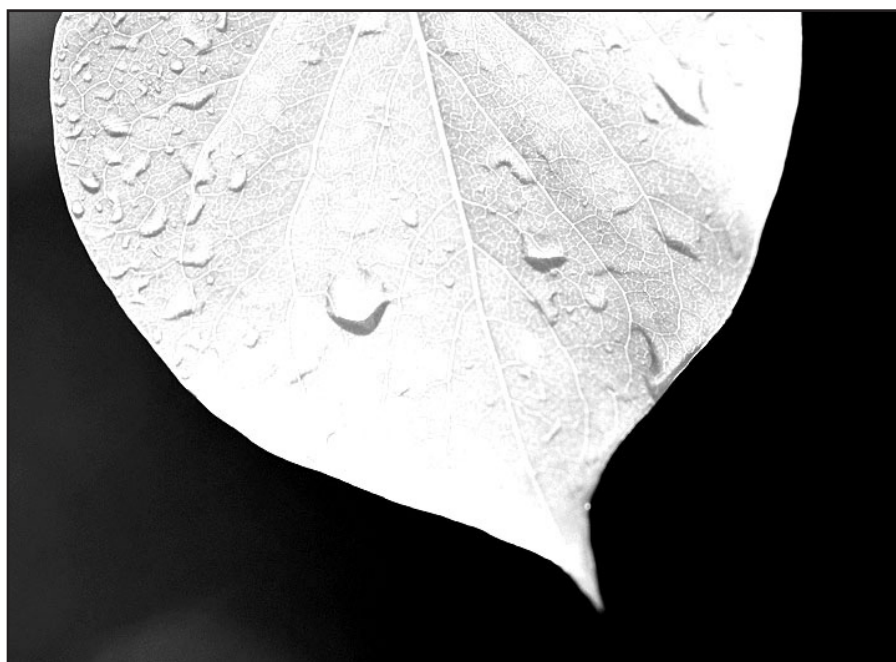
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Why do they bother you? (example: Not true? Unfair? Impossible?)

Why would these comments make it difficult to effectively deal with loss?

Give an argument against each one of the three.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Living With Loss

UNIT THREE

WORKING WITH THE FEELINGS
OF GRIEF



Living With Loss

WORKING WITH THE FEELINGS OF GRIEF

Teacher Tips

When students have completed this session they should be able to understand that to resolve grief a person must be willing and able to express feelings.

Explain to the students:

1. Feelings are real.
2. Feelings are okay; they aren't right or wrong. The way we express them may be right or wrong.
3. Feelings are information about something we want, need, or expect.
4. All feelings that come with loss are legitimate, even feelings of relief and joy.
5. Feelings that are buried are "buried alive." They come out in physical illness, or in sideways expressions such as hostile behavior, alcohol/drug use, or depression.
6. We are very individual in the ways we express our feelings.
7. We can choose to feel, talk, or act on our feelings.

Tell the students:

If you go to the hospital for an operation, the doctor can keep you comfortable with pain medication because your body doesn't need to feel the pain of the incision in order to heal. But over the years, people who study human behavior have learned that with loss and grief, feeling the pain is a necessary part of the healing process

Remind the student:

Expressing the feelings of grief is the second "task of mourning" that they learned in the unit Remembering Past Losses



Living With Loss

WORKING WITH THE FEELING OF GRIEF

Unit Activities

one class period

Needed

1. Grief and the Way I Feel student worksheet
2. Anger and Sadness Scenarios

- Instruct students to complete “Grief and the Way I Feel” **10 min.**
- Divide class into learning groups.
- Give each group an Anger and Sadness Scenarios sheet.
- Instruct each group to discuss the scenarios and answer the questions on the sheet.
- Have each group share its answers with the full class.

OPTIONAL EXERCISES

1. My Family and Feelings
2. Divorce and Explosive Emotions



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

GRIEF AND THE WAY I FEEL

The seven basic feelings are:

anger, fear, guilt, happiness, hurt, loneliness, sadness

My significant loss was _____

When did it happen? _____

How old were you? _____

Circle the feelings you had, or still have, after your loss:

anger fear guilt happiness hurt loneliness sadness

For each feeling you circled, **describe 1 way** you expressed those feelings.

What feelings give you the most trouble?

When is it hard for you to express the feelings you circled?

Name two people you are comfortable expressing your feelings with.

Why? _____



Living With Loss

ANGER AND SADNESS SCENARIOS

ANGER is a secondary emotion, often caused by FEAR or HURT. It also is a signal that something is wrong and it needs to stop. It is full of energy.

SADNESS is a “slow down” emotion that helps you think about and feel what you have lost.

Karl is a sophomore. His dog, Lucky, that he'd had since he was a little boy, was getting old and sick a lot. One weekend, Karl came home from staying overnight with a friend and couldn't find Lucky. Finally Karl's parents told him they'd had Lucky euthanized (“put to sleep”) by the veterinarian. Karl went and sat in the garage and cried. Later that night, he was so angry he smashed two of his soccer trophies.

1. Give at least four reasons why Karl is angry.
2. What fears could his anger have been hiding? Find as many as you can.
3. What hurts could his anger have been hiding? Find as many as you can.
4. How could he have expressed his anger in a better way?
5. Why is he sad?

Tracey is 14. She has an older brother, Adam, who is 17 and a little brother, Ben, who is 10. Last year, their mom died suddenly. Since then, Tracey has had to come home right after school each day to take care of Ben. She also does most of the laundry, cooking, and cleaning. Her father and brothers don't help out much. One morning, at breakfast, Adam complains that there is never anything good to eat in the house. “You're always watching TV,” he shouts. “Why don't you do some grocery shopping once in awhile?” Tracey is furious. She turns to her dad and screams, “How come I have to do all the work around here? The rest of you don't do anything. Adam gets to do whatever he wants after school and I have to be here. I hate it. It's not fair.” Tracey's dad says nothing, leaves the table, and goes to work. As he leaves, he tells her he's out of clean socks and that she needs to do the wash today. Tracey cries and misses her mom.

1. Give at least four reasons why Tracey is angry.
2. What fears could her anger have been hiding? Find as many as you can.
3. What hurts could her anger have been hiding? Find as many as you can.
4. How could she have expressed her anger in a better way?
5. Why is she sad?



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

MY FAMILY AND FEELINGS

- we learn to express feelings by the way our families express them
- families have "rules" about expressing feelings

Circle EACH of the feelings that answer the following questions.

1. In my family it's okay *to talk about* feeling:

angry afraid guilty happy hurt lonely sad

2. In my family it's okay to act:

angry afraid guilty happy hurt lonely sad

3. In my family it's okay for the **females** to act:

angry afraid guilty happy hurt lonely sad

4. In my family it's okay for the **males** to act:

angry afraid guilty happy hurt lonely sad

5. In my family it's okay for the **adults** to act:

angry afraid guilty happy hurt lonely sad

6. In my family it's okay for the **children** to act:

angry afraid guilty happy hurt lonely sad



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

My Family and Feelings

List 3 **“family rules”** about feelings you learned from doing the *My Family and Feelings* sheet.

-
-
-

Which rules helped you with your **grief feelings** after your loss?

Which family rules made it hard for you to express your grief feelings after your loss?

Which rules would you change?

What happens when someone expresses a feeling that your family rules say should not be expressed?



Living With Loss

DIVORCE AND EXPLOSIVE EMOTIONS

1 in every 3 children in the U.S. experiences parental divorce.

Explosive emotions of anger, hatred, jealousy, resentment, and terror are usually masks for hurt, helplessness, pain, fear, and frustration. They are very common feelings for children and teens experiencing divorce who then may “act out” those feelings in unhealthy or unproductive ways. Grieving adolescents sometimes act out to:

Express feelings of insecurity.

When a family loses one or more of its members because of divorce, it can feel unstable. Fighting with peers and temper outbursts can be ways of trying to gain control.

Express feelings of abandonment.

Children often feel abandoned and unloved during and after divorce. They act out and then interpret the discipline that follows as further proof that no one loves them.

Get themselves punished.

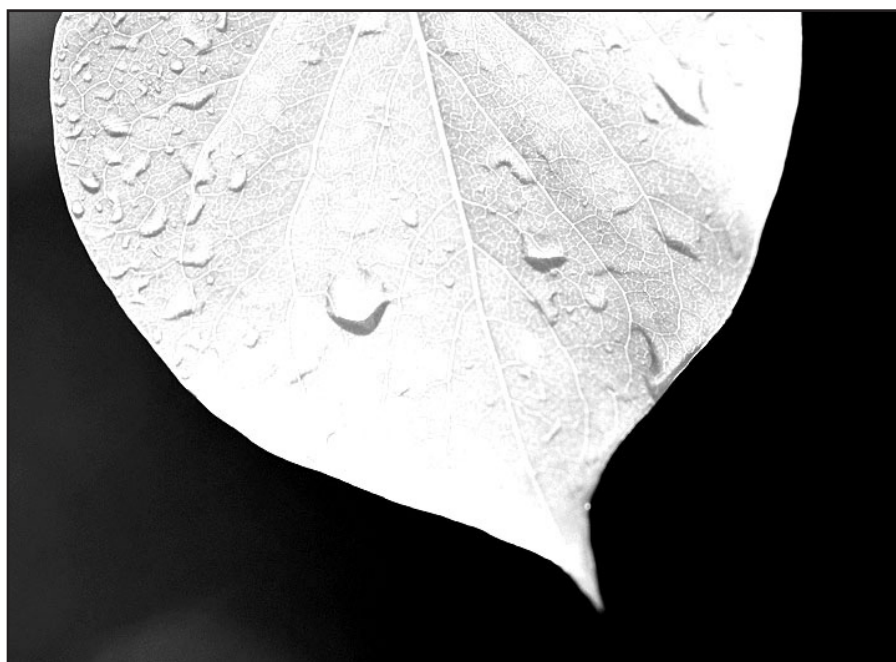
Some grieving teens may believe they were the cause of their parents' divorce and deserve to be punished. Or, if the person who left the family was the main disciplinarian, the acting out may be a way to get that parent to “come back.”

Protect themselves from future losses.

Some teens will act out to keep people at a distance, believing they can prevent future feelings of abandonment by not letting anyone get close.

Externalize their internal feelings of grief.

Thoughts and feelings that aren't talked out or expressed constructively can build to an “exploding point.” Acting-out teens often have not learned how to, have not been able to, or haven't taken the risk to grieve effectively.



Living With Loss

UNIT FOUR

ACTIVATING COPING SKILLS



Living With Loss

ACTIVATING COPING SKILLS

Teacher Tips

When students have completed this session they should be able to:

- Identify ways to work with their grief.
- Describe ways to cope with the stress of grief.
- Understand that no one needs be a victim of their loss experience.

Explain to the students:

1. Many things that happen in life are beyond our control.
2. Loss and grief place stress on the entire person (their body, mind, emotions, thoughts, interactions, and spirituality).
3. Even though loss and grief are often painful, we can choose how we will *respond* to loss events.
4. People who take good care of themselves stay healthier during the time that they grieve.
5. Our thoughts have much influence on how we feel during grief.



Living With Loss

ACTIVATING COPING SKILLS

Unit Activities

one class period

1. Working With Grief

- a two-sided summary sheet presenting 8 activities a person can use to help them work with their grief

2. Self-Care During Grief

- a two-sided summary sheet presenting 9 coping behaviors a person can use to care for themselves during grief

3. Grief Scenarios

- four scenarios of teens experiencing grief
- Divide the class in two. Subdivide as needed. Give half the class Working With Grief, and half the class Self-care During Grief
- Give each group a sheet of the grief scenarios
- Instruct each group to discuss the scenarios, answering the questions based on their Working With... or Self- Care... aspects of coping
- Have each group share its answers with the class

OPTIONAL WORKSHEETS

1. Set Up A Schedule
2. Improve Diet and Exercise
3. Learn New Behaviors
4. Think New Thoughts
5. Decide on the Meaning of Life
6. Let Others Know When You Need Their Help
7. Reach Out To Help Others
8. Fight Against Silence
9. Find Outside Resources For Help
10. Coping Composite
11. "Painful Valley" Overhead



Living With Loss

WORKING WITH YOUR GRIEF

Gather Information

- **Get information about grief.** Understanding what's normal helps reduce the feeling of "craziness." Read books, look online, and watch videos about grief. Talk with others about how they handled their grief.
- **Get information about your particular loss.** Are there things you need to know more about? Don't understand? Want more information about? You have a right to ask questions. Information **provides options** and a **sense of control**.

Talk About Your Loss

- Talk to others about your loss. Talk to yourself! When you talk, you hear what's on your mind and heart. It helps you figure out what you want to do, or how you feel. It helps you get at your inner wisdom.
- Talking lets you **help yourself**. It lets **others help you**. It helps you **locate your supports**.

Write

- Once thoughts are down on paper they're not as scary. They can be looked at more objectively.
- Even if a person is dead or will never actually read your letter, write "good-byes," "I never told you ...," "I needed ...," "Thank you for ...," "I'm sorry that ...," "This is the reason that ..." or keep a journal about your feelings or about coping.

Feel and Express

Be around people who will let you be open about your thoughts and feelings. Find sad books, music, and videos if you need help releasing your feelings. Remind yourself that feelings aren't right or wrong; they're **information** about your wants, needs, or expectations. Don't be afraid of your anger. Let yourself feel it. You don't have to act on it. You can decide if you just want to just feel your feelings, if you want to talk about them, or if you want to act on them.



Living With Loss

BALANCE BEING ALONE AND BEING WITH OTHERS

- It's important to spend time alone in grief – **to think, remember, and feel**. It's also important to be with others to get support.
- Deciding to spend some time alone with your thoughts and feelings is not the same as "hiding."

Set Aside Some "Letting Go" Time Each Day

Life goes on, even when you're in grief. You won't be able to show your feelings all the time. You don't have to grieve 24 hours a day, but it's important to have a time to release some of the emotions of grief.

- Set some time aside to cry, write, feel, talk, go through pictures, and relive happy or sad memories.

Choose Some Lasting Mementos

- To grow from grief, you have to form a new relationship with what you lost. You now will be connected by memory rather than by actual presence. Choose to keep one or more good reminders of what you lost. If your loss has been from theft or destruction, try to find a picture of what you lost, or decide on a lasting memory.

Establish Meaningful Rituals

- Especially if your loss has been through death, it is important to find ways to remember the person who has died. Visits to the cemetery? A tree planted in their memory? A candle lit during special holidays or "anniversary" days?
- You honor the life and memory of those you loved when you decide on special ways of remembering.



Living With Loss

SELF-CARE DURING GRIEF

Set Up a Schedule

Grief takes away your sense of control. It's hard to concentrate and carry on. With a general schedule to follow, you can do some things on "auto pilot" while your mind tries to deal with the loss.

- As much as possible, eliminate the unnecessary things from your schedule for awhile. You'll have less energy and may want to save it for the most necessary things.

Improve Your Diet and Exercise

- **Reduce caffeine and sugar.** Increase your water intake. Loss causes change. Your body feels it as stress. During grief your body is on an emotional and biochemical roller coaster. Caffeine, sugar, and most junk foods add to your body's biochemical overload leaving you feeling tired and over-stimulated at the same time.

- **Exercise** increases circulation and helps your body get rid of toxins more quickly. A fast walk or jog with a friend is also an excellent way to carry on conversations that might otherwise be difficult.

- Vigorous exercise is especially helpful in releasing the energy associated with anger. **Avoid alcohol.** It puts grief "on hold" making it hard to do grief work.

Learn New Behaviors and Roles...Including Relaxation

- If you've lost a parent to death or divorce, you may need to **learn new skills.** Cooking, grocery shopping, laundry, yard or car maintenance ... While it's important for families to function smoothly, **you should not be expected to take on the roll of the person** who is gone,

- Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation can go a long way in helping reduce some of the stress surrounding grief. Your local library should have a large selection of books, CDs, and videos about relaxation.



Living With Loss

Reframe Your Thoughts

- How you cope has a lot to do with the kinds of things you tell yourself. Questions like “Why did this happen?” or “Why did this happen to me?” often have no answer. Eventually, successful coping comes down to “What am I going to do about this loss? How can I best respond to it?”
- **Stop thoughts** that make you feel bad about yourself or your situation. Change them to thoughts that are empowering.

Decide on the Meaning of Life

- **What's really important in life?** Sometimes major loss shakes you to the core. It demands that you take a closer look at your values - sometimes separate from your friend's, family's, or society's values. What do I want to get in my lifetime? What do I want to give?

Let Others Know When You Need Their Help

- People in grief often have a hard time asking for help. Especially as a young person, you may have to **make the first move**. People aren't going to want to mention your loss; they want you to be “happy.” They don't realize your mind is on your loss, anyway. Saying something as simple as “It helps when I talk about it” to a few trusted people, will let them know it's okay to talk with you about your loss.

Reach Out to Help Others

- You can generally feel better by doing something good for someone else. Even though grief occupies your mind and heart, some things are able to be done as if on “auto pilot”. Every community can use volunteers.

Fight Against a “Conspiracy Of Silence”

- Don't pretend everything's fine. Don't get into the game of “I'm hurting, and you know I'm hurting, and I know you know I'm hurting ... but as long as you don't talk about it, I won't talk about it.” **Talking about loss** is one of the best ways of coping with it.

Locate Outside Resources For Help

- **Ask around.** Find out who does a good job of listening to the kind of loss you've experienced. Who's gone through something similar? Could they help? It helps to hear how other teens have coped. Your school support staff -nurses, psychologists, social workers, or counselors should all be able to listen. Find out who's good.



Living With Loss

GRIEF SCENARIOS

Angela is fourteen. Her grandma died of colon cancer about 6 months ago. Angela has a hard time concentrating in school because she's afraid something bad might happen to her mother. Angela is also having stomach aches and is worried that she might have colon cancer, too. What are some ways that Angela can deal with her fears?

Scott is in seventh grade. His dad had a job transfer and the family just moved from a large city in California to a small town in Minnesota. All Scott can think about are the kids back home. He used to go surfing a lot and says there's nothing to do where he lives now. Scott feels frustrated and disappointed. What are some things Scott can do to deal with his frustration and disappointment?

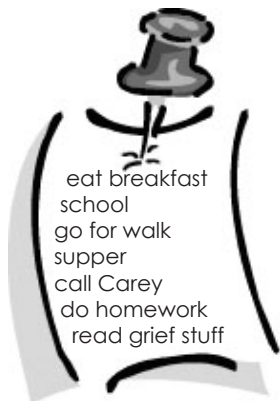
Kristen is a senior. Her parents are divorced. Kristen's dog is old and is beginning to go blind and deaf. The dog stays with Kristen's dad during the week because he has a yard. Kristen has had the dog for ten years; he's like a good friend. Kristen is sad, and she's afraid that her dad might decide to have Smokey "put to sleep" without letting her know beforehand. What are some things Kristen can do to help herself feel better?

Kevin is a sophomore. His best friend, Paul, was killed in a car accident 3 months ago. Kevin feels angry most of the time, except when he goes to the cemetery to be by Paul's grave. Then he feels sad. Kevin and Paul were neighbors and after school every day, they used to play basketball in Kevin's driveway. Now Kevin doesn't even want to look out the window at the driveway. He stopped "shooting hoops" with anyone but his little brother. What are some things Kevin can do to feel better?



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss



SET UP A SCHEDULE

- establish a daily routine
- cut back on your activity
- do at least one thing that's grief work

Write down your usual daily routine.

What could you cut out for awhile?

What "grief work" will you do?

Grief makes it hard to concentrate and carry on. A structured day makes grieving people feel more secure.



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

IMPROVE YOUR DIET AND EXERCISE

- cut down on caffeine and sugar
- increase your exercise
- drink more water
- avoid alcohol

How many caffeinated beverages do you drink each day? _____

What sweets do you typically eat? _____

What do you do for exercise? _____

Does it make a difference in how you feel? _____

What do you like to do for exercise? _____

Choose **3 ways** you could improve your diet and exercise

- _____
- _____
- _____

- Caffeine and sugar add to the stress on your body, leaving it feeling tired but over-stimulated.
- Vigorous exercise increases your circulation. It helps the body get rid of toxins more quickly.
So does drinking more water.
- Exercise also helps reduce the energy of anger.
- Alcohol puts grief "on hold" making it hard to do grief work.



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

LEARN NEW BEHAVIORS

- add to your skills
- learn to relax

Who is gone because of death, divorce, broken friendship or moving?

How were you related?

Are there some things they used to do that you're responsible for now?

What do you need to learn?

Who can teach you? _____ Who will help you? _____

How do you relax?

Do you know about deep breathing exercises, visualization, or progressive muscle relaxation?



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

THINK NEW THOUGHTS

- Replace “WHY?” with “What am I going to do about this loss?”
- Use “thought changing” whenever your thoughts make you feel bad about yourself or your situation

What was your loss? _____

List 3 thoughts about it that still bother you.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Thought changing: When your thoughts are getting you down you can use thought-changing.

Example: “I hate this new town. I won’t ever make friends. I’m a nobody.”

Instead, tell yourself “It’s normal to feel sad about moving. It takes time and work to make friends. People will meet me and like me.”

WRITE 2 MORE EXAMPLES:

- _____
- _____

How you cope has a lot to do with what you tell yourself.



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

DECIDE ON THE MEANING OF LIFE

- what is important to me?
- what difference does my life make?

List three things that are important to you.

- _____
- _____
- _____

How much time do you spend on them? _____

If you died tonight, what would you like people to say about you and the kind of person you were? _____

List three things that were important about someone you knew who has died.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Our values help us decide how to use our time, our money, our talents, and our affection.



Name_____ Hour_____

Living With Loss

REACH OUT TO HELP OTHERS

- support others who are going through a loss you have experienced
- do some form of volunteer work

Listening is one of the best ways of giving support to someone in grief.

HOW GOOD A LISTENER AM I? Put a circle around the answer that fits.

1. Do I keep the things I hear to myself? (confidentiality) Yes No
2. Do I let people have as much time as they need to talk about their loss? Yes No
3. Do I keep from judging the things they say by my standards ? Yes No
4. Do I laugh at them, make fun of them, put them down, or use sarcasm? Yes No
5. Do I let them talk, without changing the subject back to me? Yes No
6. Do I keep from telling them what they should do? Yes No
7. Do I talk about my experiences and what helped me with a similar loss? Yes No

SHOULD I VOLUNTEER?

What do you like to do?

Do you know anyone or any organization who could use your help?

Do you know anyone who is doing volunteer work that sounds interesting to you?

You can generally feel better by doing something good for someone else.



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

LET OTHERS KNOW WHEN YOU NEED THEIR HELP

- learn to talk about your loss
- learn to say "It helps when I talk about it"
- learn to ask for help

What was your loss? _____

When did it happen? _____

What did you tell people? _____

Was it hard to talk about it? _____

Did it help? _____

Did anyone help you out with things after your loss? _____

What did they do? _____

How did they know you wanted or needed help? _____

If you tell a few friends "It helps when I talk about it" they'll know it's okay to talk with you about your loss.



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

FIGHT AGAINST SILENCE

- don't pretend everything is okay if it isn't
- don't decide "if they don't talk about it I won't talk about it."

What was your loss? _____

When was it? _____

What did people say to you? _____

Answers to: **How are you doing? How are you feeling?**

- I'm feeling sad today. I've been thinking about my mom moving away.
- I'm angry, I wanted some of my grandpa's stuff after he died, but the relatives gave it to the older people.
- Okay (to someone you think doesn't really care and is just saying it)

Add three more answers to: **How are you doing? How are you feeling?**

-
-
-

Talking about loss is one of the best ways of coping with it



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

FIND OUTSIDE RESOURCES FOR HELP

Ask other people:

- Who are some good listeners?
- Who's gone through a similar loss?
- How did they cope?

Circle four people you would consider talking to if you wanted support with your loss.

school nurse school psychologist school counselor school social worker
 school chemical dependency counselor school peer resource person clergy person
 teacher you trusted neighbor friend of your family parents of a friend
 mental health professionals community crisis telephone line a friend support group

On the lines below, write the names and phone numbers of the four people you circled.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Everyone can use a good listener. Many professionals have training in grief. Some don't.
Be sure to ask.



Living With Loss

Establish a daily routine

Improve your diet and exercise

Learn new behaviors and roles

Decide on the meaning of life

Let others know when you need their help

Reach out to help others

Fight against a “conspiracy of silence”

Locate outside resources for help

Draw on spirituality

Gather information

Talk about your loss

Write

Feel and express

Balance being alone with being with others

Set aside some “letting go” time each day

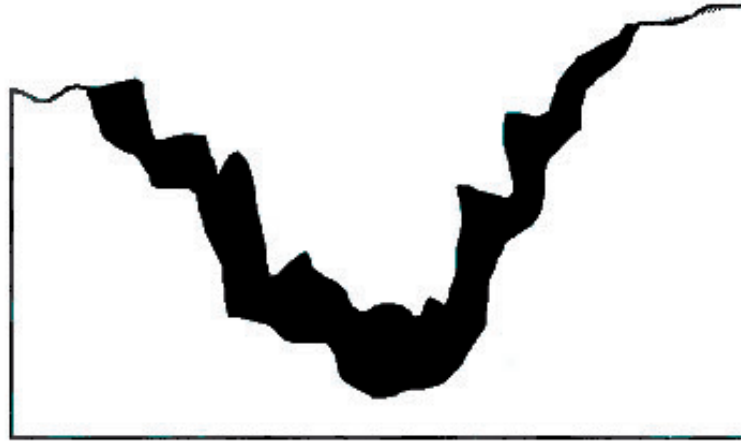
Choose lasting mementos

Establish meaningful rituals



Living With Loss

GOING DOWN INTO AND COMING BACK OUT OF THE PAINFUL VALLEY



To move from reality of the loss to getting over the loss
One must go into the painful valley

THE GOOD NEWS

time, work, and trust in our ability to heal
provides power and strength for "the
journey"

there is potential to come out stronger,
more real, more compassionate

good memories always stay

you can find your own healthy way to
grieve

your friends will want to help

THE BAD NEWS

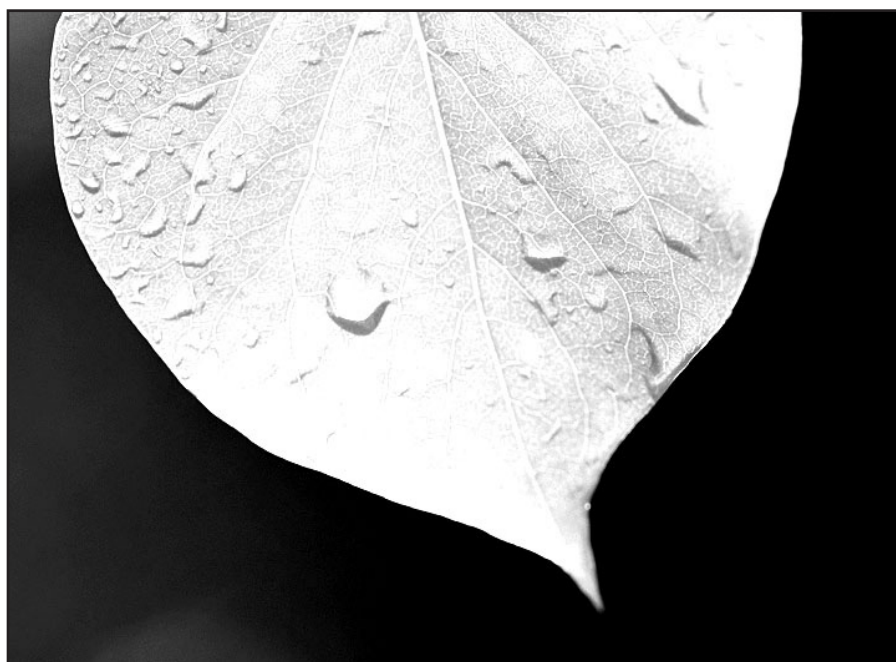
it can feel like total chaos

it feels unfamiliar because you don't go
down and back out the same path

for awhile, remembering them may be
painful...something you won't remember
for awhile

you may feel "visible" for awhile

they may not know how



Living With Loss

UNIT FIVE

FINDING SUPPORT



Living With Loss

FINDING SUPPORT

Teacher Tips

When students have completed this session they should be able to:

- Understand that people need the support of others while they grieve.
- Identify professional and non-professional people they could talk with if they wished to.
- Describe the characteristics of a safe listener.

Explain to the students:

We humans are all born into some sort of family. We need one another to survive. Talking about one's loss is one of the best ways to help work through it. We need other people to help with that.

Some people are better listeners than others. We can learn to recognize good listeners, and ask them for help when we need it. We can also learn to be good listeners, and to help others when they need help.

It helps to have thought through ahead of time which people you would feel safe talking with about losses that may happen or have already happened in your life.



Living With Loss

FINDING SUPPORT

Unit Activities

1. Safe Listeners Overhead
2. Safe Listeners Description Sheet
3. My Supports / Support Plan

- Show Safe Listeners Overhead

Ask students for examples in each of the categories:

- a situation where someone was **not** a safe listener
- a situation where someone **was** a safe listener

- Hand out "My Supports"

Instruct the students to complete the worksheets individually

- End with class sharing:
 - times when they need support (from worksheet)
 - ways they can ask for support (from worksheet)

OPTIONAL

1. Unrecognized Losses Overhead

Discuss that people facing losses unrecognized by society are in greater need of support. Explore reasons why. Have students complete and discuss My Support worksheet.



Name_____ Hour_____

Living With Loss

SEEKING SAFE LISTENERS

THEY'LL KEEP IT TO THEMSELVES

THEY'LL LET YOU TAKE THE TIME YOU NEED

THEY'LL BE NON-JUDGMENTAL

THEY WON'T "PUT YOU DOWN"

THEY WON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT

THEY WON'T GIVE ADVICE...



Living With Loss

SAFE LISTENERS

They'll Keep it to Themselves

Safe listeners can keep things confidential unless they're concerned about your safety or the safety of someone else. You don't have to worry that you'll hear other people talking about what you told them.

They'll Let You Take the Time You Need

Safe listeners will make time to listen to whatever you have to say. If they don't have the time right away, they'll agree on a time when it would be possible. They won't rush you by suggesting you need to be "over this by now".

They'll Be Non-Judgmental

Safe listeners will let you say what's on your mind. They'll keep from imposing their values and opinions on what you have to say. They'll state their own opinions as opinions.

They Won't "Put You Down"

Safe listeners don't ridicule you or get sarcastic. They won't call you names or make you feel foolish.

They Won't Change the Subject

Safe listeners will let you be in charge of the conversation. They'll keep the focus on you.

They Won't Give Advice...

Safe listeners know that most people don't take advice, so they won't tell you what you should do. But if they have some knowledge or experience that could apply to your problem, they'll offer it to you.



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

MY SUPPORTS

Supportive people help us get through our grief. **Fill in the circles below.**

Someone I can tell how I feel:

Someone I have fun with:

Someone I can always count on:

Someone who can help me fix things:

Someone who can answer questions for me:

Someone I can talk to about the person or thing I've lost:

Someone who makes me feel good about myself:

An adult I can talk to other than my parent:



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

MY SUPPORT PLAN

When are times I feel I need support? Describe 3:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Who can I call? **3 names:**

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

What can I say? (example: "I need to get out and have some fun. Can you go to a movie with me?" "I'm feeling really sad about my parents' divorce. Can we talk?")

Add 3 more sentences of asking for support

- _____
- _____
- _____

In addition to friends, there are people who are trained to help.

Fill in the names of people you would consider talking to:

SCHOOL RESOURCES

Nurse: _____

Psychologist: _____

Counselor: _____

Social Worker: _____

Chemical Dependency: _____

Peer Resource: _____

Trusted Teacher: _____



Name_____ Hour_____

Living With Loss

**Most losses not related to
death are not recognized
by our society as something
to be grieved.**

*Dear Mark,
I tried to talk to you after the game last night
but you took off with your friends.
What's going on? You keep telling me
you love me but you sure don't act that way.*



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

LIVING WITH LOSS TEST

TRUE AND FALSE

DIRECTIONS: Circle a T in front of the statement that is true and an F in front of the statement that is false.

- T F 1. It's best to get very busy to keep your mind off your loss.
- T F 2. Most people should be over their grief in about a year.
- T F 3. Grief makes it hard to concentrate.
- T F 4. Unless someone has died, people who feel sad about losses are just feeling sorry for themselves.
- T F 5. Grief has some common characteristics, but how a person grieves is very individual.
- T F 6. It's best to make decisions for people in grief. They're confused and need to be taken care of.
- T F 7. Grief has to do with the meaning given to the loss by the person who experienced it.
- T F 8. When painful ideas come into your head, it's best to push them aside.
- T F 9. Most people have worked through their past losses.
- T F 10. Young children don't understand loss so they don't grieve.
- T F 11. Grief has clearly defined stages and it's easy to tell which stage someone is in.
- T F 12. Many people feel unsure of what to say to someone who is grieving.
- T F 13. Grief is mostly experienced in the emotions.
- T F 14. It's a good idea to avoid the pain of grief and get on with your life.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

DIRECTIONS: Circle the best response to each multiple choice question.

15. Why is adolescence a difficult time to deal with grief?
- a. most teens haven't experienced loss yet
 - b. most teens are too busy to grieve
 - c. grief pulls teens back into the family at a time when they are learning to separate
 - d. all of the above



Name _____ Hour _____

Living With Loss

16. What are the feelings most common to grief?
- a. anger, sadness, regret
 - b. guilt, longing, fear
 - c. anxiety, disbelief, loneliness
 - d. all of the above
 - e. none of the above
17. Which phrase is not a good description of grief?
- a. grief is love, not wanting to say good bye
 - b. grief is like walking through a house, room by room
 - c. grief is like having the rug pulled out from under you
 - d. grief is like taking two steps forward and one step back
18. Why is grief so complex?
- a. because it is felt in one's body, mind, emotions, spirituality, and social connections
 - b. because it involves the loss itself as well as many secondary losses
 - c. because it is a process not an "event"
 - d. all of the above
 - e. none of the above

FILL IN THE BLANK

19. In comparing loss and grief to that of a physical wound, loss is the _____ and grief is the _____.
20. Four tasks of mourning are:
- accept the _____ of the loss
 - experience the pain of grief
 - adjust to an _____ in which the person (or thing) is missing
 - withdraw emotional energy and invest it in another relationship
21. What would you say to a first-grade child whose parents just got a divorce?
-



Living With Loss

GRIEF TEST KEY LIVING WITH LOSS

1. F
2. F
3. T
4. F
5. T
6. F
7. T
8. F
9. F
10. F
11. F
12. T
13. F
14. F
15. c
16. d
17. b
18. d
19. wound; healing
20. pain; environment
21. *To the teacher:* accept any statement that shows the student has learned something about grief. It could be: a statement of comfort; something about the process; about it being highly individual; about coping techniques, etc.