

COMPASSION IN ACTION

Activities for Finding Hope in Grief

Introduction & Contents





INTRODUCTION

Compassion in Action, our Volunteer Activity Manual, is designed to enhance your group experience by guiding you in selecting activities that align with the Primary Tasks (or “Reconciliation Needs”) and characteristics of your group members.

Each activity offers a unique way for children and family members to share their grief stories. Volunteers can use this manual to understand how these activities enrich the group experience and provide diverse avenues for storytelling.

We encourage volunteer teams to collaborate when selecting activities, as this strengthens teamwork and ultimately improves the experience for group members.

Note: Ongoing Group Considerations

Ongoing Groups at the Caring Place serve as a continuation for families who have completed an Introductory Group. The transition is designed to be fluid, enabling children and adults who have a foundational understanding of the program to sustain their grief support journey, while benefiting from additional grief support.

To maintain dynamic engagement, Caring Place activities are structured to be adaptable for all participants. While the repetition of activities from Introductory Sessions to Ongoing Sessions is acceptable, a new section following each activity entitled “For Ongoing Groups” helps reduce redundancy for participants and volunteers alike. Please review these valuable insights on adapting activities.

Remember, all activities possess the capacity for adaptation for an Ongoing Session—staff and/or your Volunteer Services Coordinator are always available to support you in planning and implementing activities.

SUCCESSFUL GROUP PLANNING

This section equips you with tools to create **safe, supportive, and effective group nights**. Our goal is to help participants comfortably explore their grief.

To achieve this, you'll learn how to:

- Build initial connections with others
- Manage group interactions and dynamics
- Handle challenging behaviors empathetically
- Adapt activities to individual needs of your group

This framework ensures every group night is purposeful, flexible, and responsive to each person's unique grief journey.

OUR TEAM-BASED APPROACH

- Before your first night, you'll receive group details and contact information for those in your group, including the Team Lead (or Team Coordinator)
- The Lead or Team Coordinator is *not* expected to plan and prepare alone. Instead, they act as a central point for communication and coordination within the team and with staff.
- The Highmark Caring Place uses a **team-based approach**—empowering all volunteers to contribute actively to group planning and management, ensuring a richer, more diverse set of ideas and approaches for meeting the varied needs of participants. The success of each group night hinges on the collective efforts and ideas of all volunteers within the assigned team.

UNDERSTANDING THE GROUP TIMELINE

- While specific timeframes for various stages of group work (Group Building, Exploring Feelings, Sharing Memories, etc.) are provided below, it is essential to view this "Group Timeline" as a **general guideline** rather than a rigid schedule.
- The key aspect of facilitating successful group planning is to **remain attuned to your group's unique needs and progression**.
- Rushing participants into deeper, more personal topics before they have established a foundational sense of safety, comfort, and connection can be counterproductive. These early stages are where trust is built, allowing participants to feel truly heard, understood, and supported as they begin to explore more complex aspects of their grief journey at their own pace.

Introductory Group Timeline

- Weeks 1–2: Group building
- Weeks 3–4: Exploring feelings
- Weeks 5–6: Memories
- Weeks 7–8: Continued support/coping skills, prepare for quilt making night & closing
- Weeks 9–10: Closing a group

Ongoing Group Timeline

- Weeks 1–2: Group building
- Weeks 2–5: Flexibility is key, generally following a similar progression as for Intro Groups but adjusting for the room's makeup (e.g., less time on feelings, more on memories or coping)
- Weeks 6–7: Continued support/coping skills, prepare for closing
- Weeks 7–8: Closing a group

Note: *In some Ongoing Groups, special Family Nights are incorporated.*

Special Thoughts about Planning for Group Night 1

- **Group Building** is crucial for the first night. To foster a safe and comfortable environment, participants need to get to know each other before exploring deep emotions or memories.
- Facilitating connections among group members lays the groundwork for a supportive group setting. It's important to acknowledge and normalize that everyone in the group has experienced the death of someone significant in their lives, and to provide an opportunity for them to share who that person was.

PLANNING APPROACH

- While it can seem appealing to plan out an entire Session of Group Activities in advance, this approach can limit your effectiveness and responsiveness. Instead, adopting a **week-to-week planning strategy** is crucial for success.
- This flexibility allows you to adapt to the evolving needs, moods, and dynamics of your Group as they can change each week. Participants' comfort levels and areas of focus will naturally shift, and planning week-by-week ensures you can meet them precisely where they are, making the support truly relevant and impactful.
- While having a few backup ideas ready is always smart, remember that fluid, adaptive planning fosters deeper connection rather than a rigid pre-determined schedule.

ACTIVITIES PLANNING TIPS

- **Always do a check-in activity at the beginning** of each group session (*“Thumbs Up/Down”*—*“Roses/Buds/Thorns”*—*“How-Wow-Pow-Chow”*—etc.). These brief, structured openings are incredibly valuable for volunteers to quickly gauge the overall mood, energy, and emotional readiness of each participant and the group as a whole.
 - Understanding where individuals are emotionally at the start of the night allows facilitators to adapt their approach and activities accordingly. It creates a space for participants to acknowledge how they’re feeling before diving into other activities. *Remember—the **I PASS RULE** is always an option—even for the check-ins!*
- **Group nights** should have a clear beginning, middle and end.
 - The **Beginning** should be a check-in, to open the night and welcome group members in (*see blue box on previous page*).
 - The **Middle** will be your activities planned—where sharing, discussion and support occur. Remember to clearly introduce the activity (see the *“Framing and Activity Setup”* of each activity) as well as take time to appropriately wrap up the activity (see the *“Processing and Activity Wrap-Up”* of each activity). If sharing and connection is occurring—do not rush to wrap up an activity just to get to the next step on your plans!
 - Finally, the group night should include a **Closing** to signify the end of the night—this can be a closing ritual like *“Last Word”*, *“Pass the Squeeze”*, or saying the *“Pledge”* as a group.
- **Remain flexible** in planning and **listen** to Group needs. Continuously observing and listening to the verbal and non-verbal cues from participants allows you to adjust your planned activities as needed. If the Group is particularly quiet one night, it might be an opportunity to use an activity with a book, or a craft. If they are energetic, a more interactive discussion or active game might be suitable. Your plans should serve the group, not the other way around. **Remember**—the activities are a tool to help conversations get started. Don’t stop group members from sharing to complete or move on to the next activity.
- **Consider the Group Timeline** when planning. Understanding the general progression of a group (from Group Building to Exploring Feelings, Memories, Coping Strategies, and ultimately Closure) provides a valuable framework. This *“Group Timeline”* helps ensure that activities are appropriate for the stage of the group.

- **Always have backup plans**—An activity might finish faster than expected or maybe the activity planned doesn't resonate with the group. Having one or two alternative activities or discussion prompts ready to go ensures a smooth transition and maintains engagement. These backups could be games, easy activities, or discussion questions that align with the group's stage. Don't be afraid to allow free time too—sometimes just being with others who “get it” can be helpful.
- **Communicate with the volunteer team and don't hesitate to ask staff for suggestions**—Discussing ideas with your fellow volunteer team members can lead to richer activities, leverage diverse strengths, and foster a shared sense of responsibility. Staff are a resource as well—we have seen countless activities in action, and can offer suggestions, modifications, or troubleshoot potential challenges.
- **Use your resources!** Review the information in your Volunteer Manual, *“The Gift of your Presence”*; this Activities Manual (hard copy and online version—making it easy to search at your fingertips); as well as various resources available by site.
- **Outside activities**—We encourage volunteers to bring their creativity, but new activities must be **reviewed and approved by staff prior to group night**. Staff will assess the activity's suitability, ensuring it is relevant to the context of grief support and upholds the values and safety protocols of the Highmark Caring Place.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

While we can't include every individual situation, there are some that often come up in groups that we can highlight to consider when planning. When possible, staff will share relevant information about group members that may impact planning or dynamics to ensure the best possible group experience.

- **Use inclusive language**—Use language like “*caring adult*” vs. “*parent*”; “*person who died*” vs. “*your loved one*”. Avoid euphemisms like “*passed away*” or “*lost*” and use concrete language like “*your person who died*”.
- **Physical limitation/abilities:** Be aware if anyone in the group has physical limitations. Ensure all activities are accessible. Avoid situations that could cause physical discomfort or make someone feel excluded due to a physical challenge.
- **Cognitive abilities/developmental age:** Consider if the activity is truly appropriate for the cognitive and developmental levels of *all* participants in your group. This includes accounting for different processing styles (for example,

neurodivergent individuals, like those with autism or ADHD) AND the range of ages within a single group. For younger children, they may need assistance with reading or writing. It can be helpful to be clear with instructions and demonstrate or show examples. Consider if overly abstract concepts or metaphors can be confusing or frustrating, and if needed, give choices or alternatives.

- **Sensory needs**—Be mindful of activities that are loud or include physical touch. Some participants might be highly sensitive to certain sensory input. For example, an activity like *“Pass the Squeeze”* might be uncomfortable due to physical touch. A very loud activity could be overwhelming.
 - *Offer choices*: work in smaller, quieter groups, or ensure there's a “quiet zone” available. Give permission to opt out (*“You can pass, or just squeeze your own hand if you prefer not to touch others”*). Provide the option to allow them to step out of the space with a volunteer for a quiet walk or alternative activity.
- **Complicated relationship with the person who died**—Some participants may have had a very difficult or complicated relationship with the person who died. Their feelings might include anger, confusion, guilt, or even relief, alongside sadness. Activities focusing purely on positive memories can feel invalidating or distressing if their experience was negative. Affirm their feelings, whatever they are. Emphasize the **I PASS RULE**. If you observe this, quietly keep it in mind for future planning and talk with staff who can help you consider alternative activities or supports so this individual doesn't feel more isolated in their unique grief.
- **Limited or no memories of the person who died**—Some participants may have lost someone before they were born or when they were too young to have their own memories. Modify activities: instead of *personal* memories, suggest thinking about: memories *others* have shared with them about the person; qualities or traits others talked about; things they *wish* they could have done with the person. Always ensure these participants feel included and their form of “remembering” is validated. Again, talk with staff for assistance and creative adaptations.

UNDERSTANDING GROUP DYNAMICS & YOUR ROLE AS A FACILITATOR

Group dynamics are simply the “*vibe*” or way people interact within the group. The vibe isn’t fixed; it changes from week to week based on many things affecting participants. Many things influence group dynamics—personality, cultural backgrounds, how safe or trusted people feel, and how they communicate. When the dynamics are good, everyone feels supported, respected, and understood—creating a safe space for sharing. Your job as a volunteer is to observe, understand, and gently guide these interactions to keep that atmosphere comfortable.

Group facilitators can positively impact dynamics by using these proactive strategies:

- **Set clear group agreements**—Remind everyone about *Ground Rules* like Safety, Confidentiality and the **I PASS RULE**, or respecting different opinions. This sets expectations and builds a safe space. You can revisit them and add on as needed to help manage any concerns that might arise.
- **Regularly “Read” the group**—Pay close attention and listen. Are participants engaged, or seem distant? Stressed or comfortable? Adjust activities or discussions based on what you observe to meet their needs.
- **Encourage discussion and invite participation**—Actively create chances for quieter members to share their thoughts if they want to, maybe through open-ended questions or small-group work.
- **Be flexible and open to feedback**—Your willingness to adapt plans and openly receive input from the Group helps build trust and strengthens positive dynamics.

RE-ENGAGING A DISCONNECTED GROUP

If your group seems to be losing interest or connection over several weeks, it’s a sign that you need to try a new approach. As a facilitator, you have the power to help turn things around.

Here are strategies to get your group re-engaged:

- **Go back to basics (*Icebreakers/Group Building*)**—Don’t be afraid to reuse simple activities that help people find common ground, share lighthearted moments, and build connection. If there are frequent absences in a Group, you may need to return to Group Building, or recap the weeks that were missed for the group member to help them feel like a part of the group.

- **Don't rush deep conversations**—If the group isn't connecting, trying to force talks about deep emotions or memories will likely push them further away. First, focus on making everyone feel safe and comfortable with each other. Deeper sharing can come later, once trust is restored.
- **Change it up!**—Sometimes, a fresh look or feel can spark new interest. Consider changing your setting, setup, or try new types of activities. Move to a different part of the room or building, move the desks/furniture to a different set up, or sit on the floor. Remember—kids often sit ALL DAY at school—we don't want it to be like that! Try new activities with different materials they haven't used before, try an activity that involves movement, or add background music—small changes can make a big impact.
- **Ask the group directly how they are doing**—Open a gentle conversation about the Group's *"vibe."* For example: *"I've noticed we're a bit quieter lately. Does anyone feel that way too, or have ideas on what might help us feel more connected?"* Or point out what is going unsaid—*"Does anybody not want to be here tonight? We get those feelings..."* and invite the conversation. This can normalize reluctant feelings, uncover underlying thoughts and help the Group work together to solve it.
- **Give them more control & choices:** When groups feel disconnected, sometimes it's because they feel they have no say. Offer real choices—*"Would you rather do Activity A or Activity B today?"* or *"Should we work alone or together on this?"* Even small choices can make participants feel more invested. You can even ask: *"What does the Group need or want to do today?"*
- **Try collaborative activities**—A large art project where everyone adds something, or a team challenge that requires working together, can encourage interaction without demanding personal sharing. The focus shifts to a shared goal, which can be less intimidating and build subtle connections. Ask staff for activity suggestions where they work on something altogether.

MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

In grief support, you'll see a wide range of emotions and actions. What might look like "difficult" behavior on the surface is actually an important message, especially when someone is grieving. Your key is to respond with empathy and understanding.

- ***"All behavior is a form of communication"***—Be curious! Instead of judging a behavior as difficult, see actions (like defiance, being irritated, or "misbehaving") as the child *trying to tell you something*. They might have an

unmet need, be overwhelmed by feelings, or struggling with using coping skills. Instead of “*attention-seeking*,” think “*connection-seeking*.”

- **Look through a grief lens**—Remember that grieving kids and teens are dealing with big emotions.
 - **“Difficult” behaviors** (like being quiet/disengaged, loud, seemingly “disrespectful,” or “disruptive”) are often outward signs of the intense sadness, confusion, and unmet needs that come with grief.
 - **“Manipulative” behaviors** can be a child trying to assert control when their life feels out of control after a death.
 - **“Disruptive/Restless” behaviors** might be a sign that they are struggling to handle overwhelming emotions due to grief, or nervous energy or anxiety.
- *When you understand why they might be acting this way, you can respond with empathy and address their true needs, rather than just trying to stop the behavior itself.*

WHEN SOMEONE DOESN'T WANT TO PARTICIPATE

It's common for grieving children and teens to not want to join in an activity. If a child says no, **it's absolutely OK for them to do something else.**

Key Point—They should never be left alone (unless they ask for space!) A volunteer should join them, or at least check in frequently and reassuringly. We don't want anyone in isolation—our goal is always connection.

- **Offer alternatives, but join them**—Don't just let them sit out. Actively ask, “What would you like to do instead?” Even if they prefer a quiet activity like drawing, sit nearby and join in, or gently ask about what they're doing. This shows you respect their choice, value them as a group member, and keeps them connected.
 - Sometimes, these quiet moments can shed a lot of light on what they're going through. Companioning them when they don't want to do what the Group is doing is a powerful statement to let them know that they are accepted here, no matter what.

WORKING WITH DIFFERENT PERSONALITY STYLES

In any group, you'll meet participants with different ways of interacting. Here's how to work with common personality types to ensure everyone feels valued and the group feels safe and welcoming for everyone. Remember—if these are happening in your group, please make staff aware so we can support you as needed.

The “Expert” or Challenger—Loves to share lots of info, correct others, or question things. They mean well but can sometimes overshadow others.

- **Strategy:** Thank them for their input. Then, invite others to share or direct questions to specific group members to broaden participation. If they keep dominating the conversation, gently remind the group that “all opinions are valued” to create space for every voice.

The Quiet or Reserved Participant—Might seem shy, anxious, uninterested, or just prefers to observe. Their mind can still be very active.

- **Strategy:** Offer ways for them to contribute without needing to share deeply (for example, helping set up, hand things out, writing ideas). It can also be helpful to call them in, while allowing for the **I PASS RULE**.
 - *“I’d like to hear from others who have been more quiet tonight, but remember, you can pass if you like.... (allow silence).”*
 - *“I wonder what all the silence is about tonight... (allow silence).”*
 - **Remember**—allowing silence can be a way to provide space for those are quiet to join the conversation.

The Attention-Seeker or Frequent Interrupter—Wants to be noticed, talks often, or interrupts others. This might be due to high energy, needing validation, or not realizing they’re cutting others off.

- **Strategy:** Use eye contact or a calm, polite verbal redirect: *“Thanks for that idea! Let’s hear from [another person’s name] now, and I’ll come back to you.”* You can also give them a supportive “job” (like distributing materials) to channel their energy positively, or offer a fidget toy to help them focus quietly.

The Critical or Strong Opinion Holder—May offer feedback that sounds critical or dismissive. This can come from wanting accuracy, sharing bad past experiences, or trying to control things.

- **Strategy:** Acknowledge their thoughts respectfully. To make them feel included, ask for their view early on. If their comments put down others’ feelings, gently remind everyone that *“all feelings are valid and each person’s grief journey is their own.”*

The Side-Talker or Off-Topic Conversationalist—Chats with others or wanders off-topic.

- **Strategy:** Use a kind but firm call-in—*“Hey everyone, it sounds like some great conversations are happening, but so everyone can hear, can we have one person speaking at a time?”* Reinforce Group Rules about listening. If it keeps happening, you could split the group into smaller groups for some activities, which can meet their need for more personal talk; or use a Talking Stick.

Sporadic Attendance—In Groups, sometimes participants can’t attend each Session due to scheduling conflicts or difficulty committing to a Group.

- **Strategy:** Let Group members know who is out that night. When they attend, welcome them back and let them know that they were missed when absent. Focus on engaging them in the current discussion and making them feel part of this Session—ask other Group members to summarize what they missed in the last Session. If a Group member is out, set aside materials for them so they also do the activity the next time they attend if they like.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: ASK STAFF FOR HELP!

- Volunteers do not discipline or use any type of consequences like not being able to sit with others, time-outs, etc.
- Volunteers are not expected to handle behavior that becomes unsafe (Overt Aggression—Physical Altercations—Throwing Objects—Extreme Emotional Distress that puts the participant or others at risk).
- Your primary role is to ensure safety and quickly involve staff who can manage the situation or involve caregivers as needed.

FINAL THOUGHTS ON SUCCESSFUL GROUP PLANNING

As a Highmark Caring Place volunteer, your consistent presence, dedication, empathy, and willingness to companion individuals in their grief are your most powerful tools.

Your regular attendance provides the vital stability and predictability that grieving individuals, especially children and teens, need to feel safe and connected. This consistent presence allows for the building of trust and sustained relationships, which are fundamental to effective grief support.

The above guidelines, notes, and suggestions offer a framework—emphasizing teamwork, flexible planning, a grief-informed perspective, and ways to navigate group dynamics—to empower you.

Remember, your role in being present with group members as they navigate their grief journey is invaluable. Listen to your group, lean on your team, and never hesitate to ask staff for help. By using these principles, you create a safe and nurturing place where grieving children, teens, and families can find comfort, build connections, and find hope in grief."

UNDERSTANDING THE ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

This manual provides many Activities to support children on their grief journey. The write-up for every Activity description follows the same pattern, made up of the following sections to help you lead them effectively:

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

- Suggested Age Groups
- Purpose
- Task/Need
- Materials
- Framing and Activity Set-Up
- Activity Description
- Processing and Activity Wrap-Up
- Notes
- For Ongoing Groups

Details of each of these categories are provided below:

- **Suggested Age Groups**—These suggestions help you pick an activity suitable for your Group's age. You might be able to adjust an Activity for other Age Groups, but please ask staff for guidance first.
- **Purpose**—This describes the main reason or objective for the Activity. What is it designed to help the group members achieve or explore?
- **Task/Need**—This explains how the Activity supports the group dynamic, how it can help group members with different aspects of their grief, and address different aspects of the “Grief Spiral” (*feelings or tasks related to grieving*). Aim to include activities throughout your 8 or 10 sessions that address various tasks or needs, following the general group timelines. Remember, an Activity can often help with more than one “Task/Need.”
- **Materials**—This section lists all the supplies you'll need for the Activity. Please check that these materials are available *before* you plan your Activity. If special materials are required, discuss this with a staff member at your previous meeting so there's enough time to ensure they're available for your Group night.
- **Framing and Activity Set-Up**—Please review this section in detail before doing an activity and **don't skip this step!** Preparing group members for an Activity is key. This section offers ideas to introduce the Activity, help group members understand its connections with their feelings or grief journey, and may help to boost engagement—when they can understand the “why,” they are more likely to participate. A good set-up helps them understand what they're doing and why it matters to them, encouraging participation in a safe space.

- **Activity Description**—This is the “how-to” guide for leading the Activity. It gives you a clear overview of the steps. For arts and crafts, we highly recommend trying the Activity yourself beforehand—it can be helpful to have an example to show group members. This also helps you anticipate challenges and allows you to focus on the group members’ experience during the group.
- **Activity Wrap-Up**—Just like setting up, wrapping up an Activity is important so **don’t rush through this!** Here is why this part is essential:
 - **Allows for processing:** Provides time for children to reflect on their feelings, thoughts, and what they experienced during the Activity.
 - **Validates emotions:** Offers volunteers a chance to acknowledge and validate children’s feelings, reinforcing that their emotions are normal and accepted.
 - **Builds connection:** Sharing reflections during wrap-up helps children realize they are not alone in their grief.
 - **Provides closure:** Brings the Activity to a thoughtful end, preventing unresolved feelings and offering a sense of completion.
- **Notes**—This section contains extra information such as variations on the activity, safety considerations, tips for adapting it for different age groups or needs, or general important ideas for smooth facilitation.
- **For Ongoing Groups**—Activities suitable for Ongoing Groups include ideas of how to do the Activity in a new way, or reflect on previous times the group members have done the Activity.

TABLES OF CONTENTS

To help you find activities that can help you best meet the needs of your group, you will find two **Tables of Contents** starting on the next page, organized in two different ways:

- By **PRIMARY TASK**, or “**RECONCILIATION NEED**”—the main grief processing need they address
- By **ACTIVITY TYPE**—their format or style (*Games, or Question-Related, or Group Building, etc.*)

This dual approach allows you to quickly narrow down options, whether you’re addressing a specific emotional need or prefer a particular type of interaction.

The **AGE GROUP** (or groups) which each Activity is most suitable for are shown in both Tables of Contents, as well as in the Activities themselves.

Following the two Tables of Contents, all activities in the full manual are presented alphabetically by their individual names for easy reference.



ACTIVITIES BY PRIMARY TASK/NEED

The activities in this first list are categorized by the primary task or “reconciliation need” they address in the grief process. The “Nights” indicated are general guidelines for when these activities are typically most relevant within a group’s progression. However, as we know that **grief is unique and non-linear**, so we encourage you to choose activities based on your group’s current energy, themes, and expressed needs. Staff members are always available for guidance.

GROUP BUILDING (*Nights 1–2*)

Activities that focus on group building are appropriate for Nights 1–2, when your group is still working on getting to know one another and building connections. Additionally, you might choose a group building activity to help build stronger connections, or to help re-engage a disconnected group.

ART GRAB

M—T—A

BRACELET CIRCLE

P—Y—M

CARING PLACE SCAVENGER HUNT

Y—M—T

CARING PLACE WORD SEARCH

Y—M—T

CREATIVE COLORING

P—Y—M—T—A

CRITTERS

P—Y—M—T

DECORATING NAME TAGS

P—Y—M—T—A

FOUR CORNERS

Y—M—T

GETTING TO KNOW YOU PUZZLE

Y—M—T

GRIEF DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE

P—Y

GRIEF MUSICAL CHAIRS

Y—M

GROUP JUGGLE

M—T

GROUP PAINTINGS/DRAWINGS

M—T

HEART PUZZLE

Y—M—T

OBJECT GRAB

Y—M—T—A

OUR GROUP IDENTITY/WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON

Y—M—T

PARACHUTE FUN—“WAVING GOODBYE, WAVING HELLO”

P—Y

PASS THE BALL

Y—M—T

SNEAK-A-PEEK

Y—M—T

SNOWBALL FIGHT

Y—M—T—A

SPOONS

M—T—A

STACKING CUPS

Y—M—T

THE SUN SHINES ON

Y—M—T

THIS OR THAT WHEEL

Y—M—T—A

THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

P—Y—M—T—A

TOWER OF TOGETHERNESS (*SPAGHETTI & MARSHMALLOWS*)

Y—M—T

TRADING CARD ACTIVITY

Y—M—T

TELLING THEIR STORIES (*Nights 2–4*)

Activities in this category provide a structured opportunity for group members to share aspects of their loss story, including details about the person who died, and whatever they would like to share about the death, including their reactions to the death. These activities help affirm the reality of the death.

BALLOON POP

Y—M

BODY DRAWINGS

P—Y—M

BUTTERFLY “JEOPARDY” QUIZ SHOW

Y—M—T

CARING PLACE REPORTER

Y—M—T

CLOTHESPIN HEART ACTIVITY

P—Y

CREATING A SAFE SPACE

P—Y—M—T

DRAWINGS ON IPAD

Y—M—T

GIANT CHAIN

Y—M—T

GRIEF JOURNEY IN BLOCKS

M—T

GROUP WORD CLOUD

Y—M—T—A

HOT POTATO (CARING PLACE STYLE)

P—Y—M

MORSE CODE BRACELETS

Y—M—T—A

MY GRIEF IS....

T—A

PUTTING THE PIECES BACK TOGETHER

Y—M—T

QUESTIONS BASKET OR BOX

M—T—A

YARN WEB SHARING

Y—M—T

IDENTIFYING & EXPRESSING FEELINGS (*Nights 3–4*)

These activities are designed to help individuals recognize, name, and safely express the wide range of emotions associated with grief (*sadness, anger, confusion, guilt, relief, anxiety, etc.*). The aim is to validate these feelings, teach emotional literacy, and provide creative outlets for healthy emotional processing.

EMOTIONS BINGO

Y—M—T

EMOTIONS DICE

Y—M—T

EMOTIONS PHOTOS

P—Y

EVOLVING EMOTIONS OF GRIEF: AN ART JOURNAL

Y—M—T

FEELINGS BACKPACK

M—T—A

FEELINGS BALL

Y—M—T

FEELINGS BAROMETER

Y—M—T

FEELINGS BEAN BAG TOSS

Y—M—T—A

FEELINGS BUILDING

P—Y—M

FEELINGS CHARADES

Y—M—T

FEELINGS DANCE

Y—M—T

FEELINGS EXPRESS

P—Y

FEELINGS FACE PAPER PLATE

P—Y

FEELINGS FISHING

P—Y

FEELINGS GO FISH

Y—M

FEELINGS MEMORY GAME

P—Y

**FEELINGS PAINTING: ABSTRACT
EXPRESSIONISM OPEN ART STUDIO**

Y—M—T—A

FEELINGS PIZZA

Y—M

FEELINGS QUICK DRAW

Y—M—T

FEELINGS RELEASE

T—A

FEELINGS SPINNERS

Y—M

FEELING SQUARES

M—T—A

FEELINGS WALL

Y—M—T

HOW DOES YOUR HEART FEEL TODAY?

P—Y

INSIDE/OUTSIDE FEELINGS MASKS

Y—M—T—A

KALEIDOSCOPE OF FEELINGS

Y—M—T—A

MY FEELINGS, MY ART

Y—M—T

NIGHTMARE ART

Y—M—T

ROCK HEAVY FEELINGS

T—A

SCREAM BOX

P—Y—M

SHARING MEMORIES & CONTINUING BONDS WITH THE PERSON WHO DIED (*Nights 5–6*)

Activities here focus on honoring the life of the person who died, sharing cherished memories, and exploring healthy ways to maintain a meaningful connection or “continuing bond” with them. These help integrate the memory of the person into the griever’s ongoing life, acknowledging that love continues beyond physical presence.

AIRPLANE MESSAGES

Y—M—T

ANAGRAMS/ACROSTIC POEMS

P—Y—M—T—A

FAMILY MEMORY “RECIPE” BOX

Y—M—T—A

FEELINGS AND MEMORY TILES

M—T—A

GIFTS FROM THE PERSON WHO DIED

Y—M—T—A

GREETING CARD TO OR FROM THE PERSON WHO DIED

Y—M—T—A

IF I COULD TELL YOU LETTERS

M—T—A

INDIVIDUAL QUILT SQUARE OR PILLOW

P—Y—M—T—A

MEMORIAL CANDLE

Y—M—T—A

MEMORIAL STONE JAR

Y—M—T—A

MEMORY & CELEBRATION TABLE

P—Y—M

MEMORY BEADS

Y—M—T—A

MEMORY BOXES

P—Y—M—T—A

MEMORY CAPSULES

Y—M—T

MEMORY CARDS

Y—M—T—A

MEMORY LANE

Y—M—T

MEMORY LUMINARIES

T—A

MEMORY MAGNETS/ALL ABOUT MY PERSON MAGNETS

P—Y—M—T—A

MEMORY MASH UP

P—Y—M—T—A

MEMORY TREE

P—Y—M—T—A

ONE LAST BANQUET

P—Y—M

PHOTO COASTERS

Y—M—T—A

QUILT SCAVENGER HUNT

Y—M—T

QUILT WALK & REVIEW

Y—M—T—A

HELPING THEM UNDERSTAND WHO THEY ARE AFTER THEIR LOSS (*Nights 7–8*)

This category includes activities that encourage self-reflection on how grief has impacted their identity, roles, and view of themselves. It supports individuals in acknowledging changes within themselves, recognizing their evolving self, and finding new aspects of their identity as they move forward.

BLACKOUT POETRY

Y—M—T—A

BUILDING OUR SUPPORT SPACE

Y—M

COLLAGES

Y—M—T—A

DISCUSSION POSTERS

M—T—A

FUTURE PHOTO ALBUM

M—T

GRIEF QUOTES

T—A

HELPFUL/HURTFUL MESSAGES

M—T—A

LETTERS TO CARING OTHERS

M—T—A

LETTERS TO THE FUTURE YOU

M—T—A

LIFE CERTIFICATE—HONORING THEIR LEGACY

M—T—A

MY GRIEF CALENDAR

Y—M—T—A

PAST PRESENT FUTURE BEANBAG TOSS

Y—M—T

PERSONAL LOGOS

M—T—A

REUNION BUILDING

P—Y—M

SHREDDING ACTIVITY

M—T—A

SPOTIFY PLAYLIST

Y—M—T—A

WHAT DOES YOUR GRIEF LOOK LIKE?

M—T—A

MAKING MEANING OF THE LOSS (*Nights 7–8*)

Activities in this area guide individuals in exploring how the loss has influenced their values, beliefs, and understanding of life. The goal is to help them find personal significance, growth, or purpose that can emerge from their grief experience, even amidst the pain.

A PERFECTLY MESSED UP ACTIVITY

P—Y—M

BADGER’S PARTING GIFTS

P—Y—M

BUTTERFLIES OF HOPE

P—Y—M

CELEBRITIES WITH A LOSS STORY

M—T

CLAY POT

M—T—A

“DEAR GRIEF” LETTERS

T—A

FAMILY PORTRAIT

P—Y—M

GRIEF REFLECTION GAME

T—A

IMPACT OF LOSS SNOWFLAKES

Y—M—T

MY STORY CANVAS

M—T—A

SAND JAR STORY: EXPLORING FEELINGS & MEMORIES

Y—M—T—A

SPECIAL KEEPSAKES

Y—M—T

SUPPORT THAT REMAINS (*PAPIER-MÂCHÉ BALLOONS*)

Y—M—T

TOUGH FEELING & REGRET CREATURES

M—T

DEVELOPING COPING SKILLS AND SUPPORTS (*Nights 7–8*)

These activities focus on practical strategies and resources individuals can use to navigate their grief. This includes identifying and practicing healthy coping mechanisms, recognizing their internal strengths, and understanding the external support systems available to them.

BUBBLE BREATHING

P—Y—M—T—A

CALMING BOTTLES

Y—M—T—A

COMFORT KIT

Y—M—T—A

COPING KITS

Y—M—T

COPING SKILLS GAME

M—T

COPING SKILLS PAPER CHATTERBOX

Y—M

DREAM CATCHERS

Y—M—T—A

GRIEF SUPPORT BRIDGES

M—T

HELPING HANDS

P—Y—M

HOPE MOBILE

P—Y—M—T

LIGHTHOUSE

M—T

MIND-BODY-SPIRIT SELF-CARE PLAN

M—T—A

MINI-ME ANIMAL

Y—M—T

MY SUPPORTS

BRACELET/NECKLACE/LANYARD

Y—M—T

STRESS AWARENESS AND SELF-CARE

T—A

WHO HELPS YOU CATERPILLAR

P—Y

WORRY DOLLS

Y—M—T—A

ZEN GARDEN

Y—M—T—A

LIVING ON THE GRIEF SPIRAL (*Nights 7–10*)

Activities in this category help individuals understand that grief is not a linear process with a clear beginning and end, but rather a cyclical experience where feelings and challenges can reappear. These activities foster acceptance of the ongoing nature of grief, help identify things that activate intense grief feelings again, and build resilience for future emotional fluctuations.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY TIMELINES

M—T

DISSOLVING PAPER MESSAGES

M—T—A

FLASHLIGHT TALK

Y—M—T—A

GRIEF BALL TOSS

Y—M—T—A

GRIEF ISLAND: WHAT WOULD YOU BRING?

T—A

GRIEF JOURNEY GAME SHOW

M—T—A

GRIEF SPIRAL

M—T—A

LIFE BEFORE AND AFTER

M—T—A

MEMORIAL MARKERS

Y—M—T—A

MY STORY

Y—M—T

NOTES TO ADULTS

Y—M—T—A

PUPPET SHOWS

P—Y

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE

M—T—A

SUPPORT ON THE JOURNEY (*WALKING STICKS*)

T—A

TREE OF GROWTH

P—Y—M—T—A

WOODEN TOWER (“JENGA”) CHANGE GAME

T—A

GROUP CLOSURE (*Nights 9–10*)

These activities are designed to provide a meaningful conclusion to the group’s journey together. They focus on acknowledging progress, reinforcing connections made, and preparing individuals for continued grief navigation beyond the group setting. Group closure activities help consolidate learnings, celebrate shared experiences, and provide a sense of completion while affirming ongoing support systems.

FLOWER OF MEMORIES

P—Y—M—T—A

GOODBYE BANNER

P—Y—M—T—A

HEARTS

P—Y—M—T—A

IMPRINTS ON OUR HEARTS

P—Y—M—T

KINDNESS ROCKS

P—Y—M—T—A

LAST WORD

Y—M—T—A

MESSAGES TO NEW KIDS/ADULTS COMING TO THE CARING PLACE

P—Y—M—T—A

PASS THE SQUEEZE

P—Y—M—T—A

STONES OF LIFE

M—T—A

SUN-CATCHING FOR HOPE

P—Y—M—T

WEAVING RIBBONS

P—Y—M—T—A

WISH BOX/BUBBLE

Y—M—T—A

WISH WANDS

P—Y—M

ACTIVITIES BY TYPE

This section of the Table of Contents organizes activities by their primary format or modality (*for example, discussion, art, writing*). This helps you choose activities that match your group’s current energy, preferences, or available materials and space. Activities can be listed in more than one category.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS: CREATIVE OUTLETS FOR GRIEF

Activities that primarily involve visual creation, such as drawing, painting, sculpting, or collage. These often provide a non-verbal outlet for expression and can be particularly helpful for communicating complex emotions or memories.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY TIMELINES

M—T

BLACKOUT POETRY

Y—M—T—A

BODY DRAWINGS

P—Y—M

BRACELET CIRCLE

P—Y—M

BUTTERFLIES OF HOPE

P—Y—M

CALMING BOTTLES

Y—M—T—A

CLAY POT

M—T—A

CLOTHESPIN HEART ACTIVITY

P—Y

COLLAGES

Y—M—T—A

COPING KITS

Y—M—T

COPING SKILLS PAPER CHATTERBOX

Y—M

CREATIVE COLORING

P—Y—M—T—A

CRITTERS

P—Y—M—T

DECORATING NAME TAGS

P—Y—M—T—A

DRAWINGS ON IPAD

Y—M—T

DREAM CATCHERS

Y—M—T—A

EVOLVING EMOTIONS OF GRIEF: AN ART JOURNAL

Y—M—T

FAMILY MEMORY “RECIPE” BOX

Y—M—T—A

FAMILY PORTRAIT

P—Y—M

FEELINGS AND MEMORY TILES

M—T—A

FEELINGS BAROMETER

Y—M—T

FEELINGS EXPRESS

P—Y

FEELINGS FACE PAPER PLATE

P—Y

FEELINGS PAINTING: ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM OPEN ART STUDIO

Y—M—T—A

FEELINGS PIZZA

Y—M

FEELINGS RELEASE

T—A

FEELINGS SPINNERS

Y—M

FEELING SQUARES

M—T—A

FEELINGS WALL

Y—M—T

FUTURE PHOTO ALBUM

M—T

GIANT CHAIN

Y—M—T

GIFTS FROM THE PERSON WHO DIED

Y—M—T—A

GREETING CARD TO OR FROM THE PERSON WHO DIED

Y—M—T—A

GRIEF SPIRAL

M—T—A

GRIEF SUPPORT BRIDGES

M—T

GROUP PAINTINGS/DRAWINGS

M—T

HEART PUZZLE

Y—M—T

HELPFUL/HURTFUL MESSAGES

M—T—A

HELPING HANDS

P—Y—M

HOPE MOBILE

P—Y—M—T

HOW DOES YOUR HEART FEEL TODAY?

P—Y

IMPACT OF LOSS SNOWFLAKES

Y—M—T

INDIVIDUAL QUILT SQUARE OR PILLOW

P—Y—M—T—A

INSIDE/OUTSIDE FEELINGS MASKS

Y—M—T—A

KALEIDOSCOPE OF FEELINGS

Y—M—T—A

KINDNESS ROCKS

P—Y—M—T—A

LIGHTHOUSE

M—T

MEMORIAL CANDLE

Y—M—T—A

MEMORIAL MARKERS

Y—M—T—A

MEMORIAL STONE JAR

Y—M—T—A

MEMORY & CELEBRATION TABLE

P—Y—M

MEMORY BEADS

Y—M—T—A

MEMORY BOXES

P—Y—M—T—A

MEMORY CAPSULES

Y—M—T

MEMORY CARDS

Y—M—T—A

MEMORY LANE

Y—M—T

MEMORY LUMINARIES

T—A

MEMORY MAGNETS/ALL ABOUT MY PERSON MAGNETS

P—Y—M—T—A

MEMORY MASH UP

P—Y—M—T—A

MINI-ME ANIMAL

Y—M—T

MORSE CODE BRACELETS

Y—M—T—A

MY FEELINGS, MY ART

Y—M—T

MY GRIEF CALENDAR

Y—M—T—A

MY STORY

Y—M—T

MY STORY CANVAS

M—T—A

MY SUPPORTS
BRACELET/NECKLACE/LANYARD
Y—M—T

NIGHTMARE ART
Y—M—T

PERSONAL LOGOS
M—T—A

PHOTO COASTERS
Y—M—T—A

PUTTING THE PIECES BACK TOGETHER
Y—M—T

ROCK HEAVY FEELINGS
T—A

SAND JAR STORY: EXPLORING FEELINGS & MEMORIES
Y—M—T—A

SCREAM BOX
P—Y—M

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE
M—T—A

SPECIAL KEEPSAKES
Y—M—T

SPOTIFY PLAYLIST
Y—M—T—A

SUPPORT ON THE JOURNEY (*WALKING STICKS*)
T—A

SUPPORT THAT REMAINS (*PAPIER-MÂCHÉ BALLOONS*)
Y—M—T

TOUGH FEELING & REGRET CREATURES
M—T

TRADING CARD ACTIVITY
Y—M—T

TREE OF GROWTH
P—Y—M—T—A

WHAT DOES YOUR GRIEF LOOK LIKE?
M—T—A

WHO HELPS YOU CATERPILLAR
P—Y

WISH WANDS
P—Y—M

WORRY DOLLS
Y—M—T—A

ZEN GARDEN
Y—M—T—A

FACILITATING CONNECTION: GUIDING GROUP DISCUSSION & QUESTION-FOCUSED ACTIVITIES

Activities focused on spoken interaction, sharing stories, experiences, and thoughts aloud with the group. These are designed to foster communication, connection, and mutual support through verbal processing.

ART GRAB
M—T—A

BALLOON POP
Y—M

CARING PLACE REPORTER
Y—M—T

CELEBRITIES WITH A LOSS STORY
M—T

COMFORT KIT
Y—M—T—A

“DEAR GRIEF” LETTERS
T—A

DISCUSSION POSTERS
M—T—A

EMOTIONS DICE
Y—M—T

EMOTIONS PHOTOS

P—Y

FAMILY MEMORY “RECIPE” BOX

Y—M—T—A

FEELINGS BACKPACK

M—T—A

FEELINGS EXPRESS

P—Y

FEELINGS GO FISH

Y—M

FEELINGS WALL

Y—M—T

FLASHLIGHT TALK

Y—M—T—A

FOUR CORNERS

Y—M—T

FUTURE PHOTO ALBUM

M—T

GETTING TO KNOW YOU PUZZLE

Y—M—T

GRIEF ISLAND: WHAT WOULD YOU BRING?

T—A

GRIEF JOURNEY GAME SHOW

M—T—A

GRIEF QUOTES

T—A

GROUP RULES OR AGREEMENTS

P—Y—M—T—A

GROUP WORD CLOUD

Y—M—T—A

HELPFUL/HURTFUL MESSAGES

M—T—A

HOT POTATO (CARING PLACE STYLE)

P—Y—M

LIFE BEFORE AND AFTER

M—T—A

MIND-BODY-SPIRIT SELF-CARE PLAN

M—T—A

MINI-ME ANIMAL

Y—M—T

MY GRIEF IS....

T—A

NOTES TO ADULTS

Y—M—T—A

OBJECT GRAB

Y—M—T—A

OUR GROUP IDENTITY/WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON

Y—M—T

PAST PRESENT FUTURE BEANBAG TOSS

Y—M—T

QUESTIONS BASKET OR BOX

M—T—A

QUILT WALK & REVIEW

Y—M—T—A

ROCK HEAVY FEELINGS

T—A

SNOWBALL FIGHT

Y—M—T—A

SPOONS

M—T—A

STRESS AWARENESS AND SELF-CARE

T—A

THE SUN SHINES ON

Y—M—T

THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

P—Y—M—T—A

WOODEN TOWER (“JENGA”) CHANGE GAME

T—A

YARN WEB SHARING

Y—M—T

WRITTEN REFLECTION: WRITING ACTIVITIES AS A TOOL FOR GRIEF SUPPORT

Activities that encourage individual reflection and expression through written words, such as prompts for journaling, letter writing, or poetic forms. These provide a private and contemplative space for processing grief.

AIRPLANE MESSAGES

Y—M—T

ANAGRAMS/ACROSTIC POEMS

P—Y—M—T—A

“DEAR GRIEF” LETTERS

T—A

DISSOLVING PAPER MESSAGES

M—T—A

FEELING SQUARES

M—T—A

GRIEF ISLAND: WHAT WOULD YOU BRING?

T—A

IF I COULD TELL YOU LETTERS

M—T—A

LETTERS TO CARING OTHERS

M—T—A

LETTERS TO THE FUTURE YOU

M—T—A

LIFE CERTIFICATE—HONORING THEIR LEGACY

M—T—A

MEMORY CAPSULES

Y—M—T

MEMORY CARDS

Y—M—T—A

MEMORY LANE

Y—M—T

MEMORY TREE

P—Y—M—T—A

MESSAGES TO NEW KIDS/ADULTS COMING TO THE CARING PLACE

P—Y—M—T—A

MIND-BODY-SPIRIT SELF-CARE PLAN

M—T—A

MY GRIEF IS....

T—A

MY STORY

Y—M—T

NOTES TO ADULTS

Y—M—T—A

SHREDDING ACTIVITY

M—T—A

STRESS AWARENESS AND SELF-CARE

T—A

MOVING THROUGH GRIEF: MOVEMENT & ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Activities that incorporate physical movement or active/sensory engagement to help process emotions, release tension, or connect with bodily sensations related to grief.

AIRPLANE MESSAGES

Y—M—T

BALLOON POP

Y—M

BODY DRAWINGS

P—Y—M

BUBBLE BREATHING

P—Y—M—T—A

BUILDING OUR SUPPORT SPACE

Y—M

CARING PLACE REPORTER

Y—M—T

CARING PLACE SCAVENGER HUNT

Y—M—T

CLAY POT

M—T—A

EMOTIONS DICE

Y—M—T

FEELINGS BEAN BAG TOSS

Y—M—T—A

FEELINGS BUILDING

P—Y—M

FEELINGS CHARADES

Y—M—T

FEELINGS DANCE

Y—M—T

FEELINGS RELEASE

T—A

FOUR CORNERS

Y—M—T

GETTING TO KNOW YOU PUZZLE

Y—M—T

GRIEF BALL TOSS

Y—M—T—A

GRIEF JOURNEY IN BLOCKS

M—T

GRIEF MUSICAL CHAIRS

Y—M

GROUP JUGGLE

M—T

HOT POTATO (CARING PLACE STYLE)

P—Y—M

MEMORY & CELEBRATION TABLE

P—Y—M

OBJECT GRAB

Y—M—T—A

ONE LAST BANQUET

P—Y—M

PARACHUTE FUN

P—Y

PASS THE BALL

Y—M—T

PAST PRESENT FUTURE BEANBAG TOSS

Y—M—T

PUPPET SHOWS

P—Y

QUILT SCAVENGER HUNT

Y—M—T

QUILT WALK & REVIEW

Y—M—T—A

REUNION BUILDING

P—Y—M

SCREAM BOX

P—Y—M

SNEAK-A-PEEK

Y—M—T

SNOWBALL FIGHT

Y—M—T—A

STACKING CUPS

Y—M—T

THE SUN SHINES ON

Y—M—T

THIS OR THAT WHEEL

Y—M—T—A

YARN WEB SHARING

Y—M—T

CONNECTING THROUGH PLAY: GAMES & PUZZLE ACTIVITIES

These activities utilize games, puzzles, and light-hearted engagement to build connections, reduce tension, and create a sense of normalcy and fun within the group. Play can be a gentle way to foster interaction and lower inhibitions.

BUTTERFLY “JEOPARDY” QUIZ SHOW

Y—M—T

CARING PLACE SCAVENGER HUNT

Y—M—T

CARING PLACE WORD SEARCH

Y—M—T

COPING SKILLS GAME

M—T

COPING SKILLS PAPER CHATTERBOX

Y—M

CREATING A SAFE SPACE

P—Y—M—T

EMOTIONS BINGO

Y—M—T

EMOTIONS DICE

Y—M—T

FEELINGS BALL

Y—M—T

FEELINGS BEAN BAG TOSS

Y—M—T—A

FEELINGS CHARADES

Y—M—T

FEELINGS GO FISH

Y—M

FEELINGS MEMORY GAME

P—Y

FEELINGS QUICK DRAW

Y—M—T

GETTING TO KNOW YOU PUZZLE

Y—M—T

GRIEF DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE

P—Y

GRIEF JOURNEY GAME SHOW

M—T—A

GRIEF REFLECTION GAME

T—A

HEART PUZZLE

Y—M—T

HOT POTATO (CARING PLACE STYLE)

P—Y—M

MEMORY & CELEBRATION TABLE

P—Y—M

MEMORY LANE

Y—M—T

PARACHUTE FUN—“WAVING GOODBYE, WAVING HELLO”

P—Y

PASS THE BALL

Y—M—T

PAST PRESENT FUTURE BEANBAG TOSS

Y—M—T

PUPPET SHOWS

P—Y

QUILT SCAVENGER HUNT

Y—M—T

SNEAK-A-PEEK

Y—M—T

SPOONS

M—T—A

THIS OR THAT WHEEL

Y—M—T—A

TOWER OF TOGETHERNESS (SPAGHETTI & MARSHMALLOWS)

Y—M—T

TRADING CARD ACTIVITY

Y—M—T

WOODEN TOWER (“JENGA”) CHANGE GAME

T—A

NARRATIVE JOURNEY: BOOK-PAIRED ACTIVITIES

These activities use stories, poems, or books about grief as a starting point. By reading and talking about them, group members can often see their own experiences reflected or find their feelings understood and validated through the characters or events in the story. It creates a shared way to explore tough feelings and find new insights together.

A PERFECTLY MESSED UP ACTIVITY

P—Y—M

BADGER’S PARTING GIFTS

P—Y—M

FEELINGS FISHING

P—Y

MEMORY BOXES

P—Y—M—T—A

WHO HELPS YOU CATERPILLAR

P—Y

OPENING & CLOSING TOGETHER: BEGINNING & ENDING RITUALS

These are structured routines or traditions used to formally start and conclude each group session. They help create a sense of predictability, safety, and provide a clear transition into and out of the shared group experience.

BRACELET CIRCLE

P—Y—M

COMFORT KIT

Y—M—T—A

DECORATING NAME TAGS

P—Y—M—T—A

DISSOLVING PAPER MESSAGES

M—T—A

FAMILY PORTRAIT

P—Y—M

FLASHLIGHT TALK

Y—M—T—A

FLOWER OF MEMORIES

P—Y—M—T—A

GIFTS FROM THE PERSON WHO DIED

Y—M—T—A

GOODBYE BANNER

P—Y—M—T—A

GROUP RULES OR AGREEMENTS

P—Y—M—T—A

HEARTS

P—Y—M—T—A

IMPRINTS ON OUR HEARTS

P—Y—M—T

KINDNESS ROCKS

P—Y—M—T—A

LAST WORD

Y—M—T—A

MEMORIAL CANDLE

Y—M—T—A

MEMORIAL STONE JAR

Y—M—T—A

MEMORY BEADS

Y—M—T—A

MEMORY TREE

P—Y—M—T—A

**MESSAGES TO NEW KIDS/ADULTS COMING
TO THE CARING PLACE**

P—Y—M—T—A

PASS THE SQUEEZE

P—Y—M—T—A

**SAND JAR STORY: EXPLORING FEELINGS &
MEMORIES**

Y—M—T—A

STONES OF LIFE

M—T—A

SUN-CATCHING FOR HOPE

P—Y—M—T

THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

P—Y—M—T—A

TREE OF GROWTH

P—Y—M—T—A

WEAVING RIBBONS

P—Y—M—T—A

WISH BOX/BUBBLE

Y—M—T—A

WISH WANDS

P—Y—M

HIGHMARK.

CARING PLACE 

finding hope in grief

COMPASSION IN ACTION

Activities for Finding Hope in Grief

