

Help with grieving

When someone dies, it's nice to reflect on your memories of them and celebrate their life. Use this activity to help you.

You might be feeling sad, angry, confused or maybe quite normal and okay if someone you know has died. It's okay to feel however you're feeling right now. Everyone feels differently after someone has died. Your feelings might also change and that's normal. What you're going through is called grief and it's a normal thing. We can't tell you how long it will last but people want to help you with it.

Memory Box

If someone you know has died, it can be really helpful to think about all the amazing memories you have with that person. To help with grief you can fill a box full of drawings, writings or anything that reminds you of them. If you're making it with other people, you can talk to each other about what each of your memories are if you want to. If you don't want to share, that's okay.

Draw your favourite memory or thing you really liked about them below.

Could you make one of these things into a craft or piece of writing. For example, if you had a great time when you went to the zoo together, you could draw a picture of the zoo or make an elephant out of craft materials. Tell someone else about what you've done. It's nice to share all the good times with each other. After you've finished your memory, place it safely in your box. You can fill the box with as many memories as you want.



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Think about what you could do with your memory box. Is there someone you could share it with?

What else could you do to celebrate their life. Maybe you could fundraise for a charity they cared about or do something in their memory. For example, if they liked the park, could you get a memorial bench for them or hold a walk around their favourite park?

Jot down your ideas below and then ask your leader or parent/carer to help you do it.

Grounding technique

After thinking about someone who has died you might feel sad or down. That's totally normal, try out the following to see if it makes you feel better.

Take a big breath in and hold it. Stomp your left foot. Now your right foot. And blow out all the air. Repeat a few times.

Feeling a little better? Remember it's okay if you don't feel okay. If you're not feeling okay, talk to a trusted adult about how you're feeling.

Support

You can find further support from: Childline (0800 1111), your doctor, your teachers or your leaders.

Girlguiding has created this in partnership with Child Bereavement UK. For more support search Child Bereavement UK at girlguiding.org.uk





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Note to leader

This topper has been designed to help in situations when someone has died and it's appropriate to do something within your unit or to send home with the girl for the family to do together. This can be someone close to the unit or a national figure. As a trusted adult and volunteer, you can be there for the girls if and when they want to talk. As an adult it's not easy to talk to girls about death, so make time to look after yourself too and use the [support services](#) if needed. Below are some tips that might help you. You can also check out the [Supporting young people with bereavement pages](#) on our website.

- Remember that when someone's sharing, you should be actively listening to let them know you're there. This could be by making affirmative noises (for example, 'uhuh, mhm' or summarising or paraphrasing to check you've understood).
- Create a breakout space within the session for girls to use if they want to step away from the activity for a bit. You could include other things for them to do over there such as some drawing materials or books.
- Remember everyone grieves differently, and depending on who died some girls might not be grieving or show that they're grieving and someone's grief may seem less impactful on them than on others.
- Create a space at the end of the session for anyone to approach you to ask for further support or the opportunity to talk more.
- Inform parents and carers prior to the meeting of the session's content and why it's important that you're allowing girls to have this space to explore their grief. Also supply parents and carers with contact information of support services. Be sensitive on your approach if you're aware of a recent bereavement in the family.
- Talking about a recent death can bring up past experiences of death - grieving isn't a linear experience. Allow everyone the space to talk.
- The other sections all have a similar activity, if suitable you could combine sections to work together.
- If you're passing the memory box onto the person's family or friends, check there's nothing in the box that might be disrespectful, harmful or hurtful to them.