

Self Help Guidebooks for the *REMEMBER, IT'S OK* Book Series.



Remember, It's OK – GUIDEBOOK FOUR:
8 Session Program for Grief

(for those in grief and those offering support)

By: Marina L. Reed & Marian Grace Boyd

MarinaLReed.com RememberItIsOk.com

The *Remember, It's OK* book series:

Remember, It's OK: Loss of a Partner
Remember, It's OK: Loss of a Parent

Remember, It's OK: Loss for Teens
Remember, It's OK: Loss of a Sibling or Friend

Remember, It's OK: Loss of a Pet
Remember, It's OK: Loss of a Child

Creating a healing conversation around grief.

About the Remember, It's OK series of books:

The journey of grief speaks to the relationship we have with the loved one who has died whether that be a pet, a child, a parent, another family member or a significant friend. It is the loss of relationship that we struggle with and these Guidebooks along with the Remember books will help you navigate that journey successfully.

Remember, It's OK are experiential books. You will live these books, not just read them.

Whether you are a man or a woman, these books will support and guide you. Whether you have lost a friend or family member, these books will help you. If you don't know how to help someone you know who is in grief, these books will educate you.

Grief does not know religion, gender or sexual orientation. We are all effected by loss in our lives. Everyone is invited to heal.

There are unique elements to the Remember, It's Ok series. In each book you will find colours, prose and poetry, and blank pages. The guidebooks give you greater understanding about these elements.

Throughout each Guidebook, and your Remember, It's OK book, you will learn about the journey of grief, hear the voice of a grieving person, read the responses of a caring support person and journey into a new paradigm for grief.

Together, we will create a healing conversation around grief.

Key Elements

Colours

Colours have universal themes that have resonated throughout history. The colour choices for Moments were instinctual for us from the beginning:

Red – survival, urgency

Orange – beginning to find self, immediacy

Yellow - coming back to self, growing awareness

Green - learning to balance self, learning

Turquoise - what path am I on now, increased awareness and curiosity

Pale blue - clarity of new path, beginning to move forward, increased openness

Prose and Poetry

The *Remember, It's OK* series are books of Moments. These authentic expressions of grief are in the form of prose and sometimes poetry, written like private journal entries. They give the reader a 'moment', a glimpse into the experience of someone grieving, and an opportunity to observe the response of a caring support person or companion.

Each 'Moment' is a collection of many voices from those we interviewed during our creation process. It is not the voice of one person. We collected information and then created unique journal entries that fit into our colour paradigm and themes. It was an arduous challenge. The

result is that each 'Moment' has many voices of those who have felt and suffered and healed, integrated into one.

You are not alone.

Blank Pages

Every Moment in the *Remember, It's Ok* books have blank pages. This is space we gave you to breathe, pause and reflect before going forward to the next Moment. Some blank pages have a suggestion, offering concrete ways to experience and understand your emotions. These blank pages have been included for you to document your own grief journey.

Guidebook Four: 8 Session Program for Grief

This downloadable PDF *Guidebook Four* is designed to train participants towards a greater understanding of the grief journey. It needs to be done with a facilitator.

It is for groups that are wanting more awareness of the supportive process for grief - friends, family members, health care providers, funeral staff, veterinarian staff, clergy staff, educational staff or anyone dealing with someone in grief.

You could even have a group that has both grievors and supporters working together.

The experiential activities below are designed to be done in person. However, if you have created a virtual group, the guidebooks will still work beautifully. Feel free to adapt as needed.

Notes in grey throughout the guidebook are to help the facilitator prepare for each session.

A facilitator should familiarize himself/herself with the entire program before proceeding. A way to record discussions during each session needs to be decided upon; chart paper or a blackboard, Smartboard, laptop, etc. Recording discussion points on a laptop will allow for notes to be emailed to participants after each session, which will be helpful. Often things are missed during a session and the ability to review after in privacy is beneficial. The Facilitator will need to read through this guidebook so they can have the necessary things in place for each session. There will be some preparation involved and supplies will be needed.

Less formal group interactions can be found in *Guidebook Two* and *Guidebook Three*. Guided exercises for an individual can be found in *Guidebook Two* and *Guidebook Three* as well. An individual can benefit from reading and working through some of the activities presented in *Guidebook Four*, but the benefits will be greater in a group setting.

In order to understand how to use the Remember books and benefit from this program, we suggest that you read *Guidebook One* first. *Guidebook One* explains our unique paradigm for grief which allows one to step out of limiting stages and embrace grief through colours and individual expressions. This is a unique journey for everyone, as explained in *Guidebook One*.

The activities and homework in each session are intended to be done during a week, but this can be adapted to fit an immersion weekend, only weekends or a few times a week. You create your time frame. The eight sessions will develop through discussion, activities and interaction. No program will be alike as no two people grieve, support or process the same way.

If working with a group of workplace professionals (health care providers, funeral staff, clergy staff, veterinarian staff, educational staff etc.) that could benefit from learning how to provide better support for those in grief in their workplace, this is an excellent program.

A facilitator not associated with the participants is recommended.

If working with a group of people (community members, family members, friends) who are choosing to become better support people, this program will hone new skills.

A facilitator not associated with the participants is recommended.

If working with a group of people who are on their grief journey, this becomes a very powerful way to understand feelings and find validation and comfort from others.

A facilitator not associated with the participants is recommended.

If working alone, you can move through each activity week by week, day by day, or in a retreat getaway. You may invite a trusted friend for conversations, but journaling can work as well.

Each participant needs to have a copy of one of the *Remember, It's OK* books. It doesn't matter what *Remember* book is used. The group can all be using the same book, or each person can have a different *Remember, It's OK* book in their hands. Any in the series of six is perfect. The paradigm is the same for any loss.

Note:

As a facilitator for this workshop, it is important to understand there will be times you may feel that the direction things are going for the someone is becoming disconcerting. If you become concerned that a state of depression has appeared and is not shifting with anything you offer, it is time to suggest they seek professional help. Prior to the 8-session program, you need to have online addresses for professional help, as well as phone numbers for practitioners that deal with grief in case you need to offer this support to a participant. We cannot know what experiences participants brings with them, or what could be a trigger for them.

It is also important to be aware, as the facilitator, that there are Moments in the *Remember, It's OK* books that deal with feelings of suicide. Support people need to be sensitive to these issues with people in grief and with themselves. Suicide can call up many emotions, as can many ways that people die. Remember, you are not focussing on how someone has passed away, you are focussing on the person left behind and their journey forward. This is critical in making sure the

session stays on track. In extreme cases, support people need to know there may be times they may need to call 911.

The facilitator will need to have chart paper and a marker, a smart board or other pieces of technology for recording key points during conversations in sessions.

Facilitator needs to make sure there is lots of water for people to drink, and/or warm beverages (no alcohol). Hydration is very important. It is also beneficial to have boxes of tissues around the room. You are entering the world of emotions.

Each participant needs to have access to crayons, pencil crayons, markers, magazines for cutting out photos, scissors, glue sticks, and large pieces of paper. These can be brought by each participant or provided by the facilitator. Participants may want to bring a notebook for recording thoughts and ideas presented during sessions as well as homework. We do encourage you to use the Blank Pages in your *Remember, It's OK* book as often as possible. As you refer back to your book, your own words and thoughts are there. It can become your journal of growing in your understanding of the grief journey.

SESSION ONE

Facilitator: for each session, arrive early to the designated location to set up the space: chairs in a circle or around a table not one behind the other, chart board or technology in place, a table for tea and coffee and water. Participants can be asked to bring their own mug or cups can be provided. If a virtual meeting, facilitator needs to make sure each participant has access to water or a warm beverage as well as tissues. Mingling and chatting can still be done virtually before a meeting.

The first day of any program/workshop can often be awkward or uncomfortable. After participants get to know each other and feel trust and safety a softening occurs. So, during the first meeting of participants, make sure everyone is greeted warmly and invited to take a comforting drink to their seat.

Once everyone is seated the Facilitator welcomes everyone and introduces the Program and goes through some housekeeping.

There are important things to discuss before the group begins with the activities, so everyone is on the same page and can begin to feel safe:

- Confidentiality. What is said in the group, stays in the group.

Everyone needs to feel safe. This allows for people to feel confident in sharing and taking risks.

- Respect. People will be sharing things from their heart. No one is wrong or right. Everyone is learning from each other. There should be no comments that belittles another. Silence is okay too.
- Contact person (can be the facilitator). When someone can't come, the contact person will be informed. Discuss with the group if they are okay with recording the session so the missing person can listen and therefore not miss a session. Discuss if everyone would like a contact list of participants in the group at the end of the program.
- Time frames for the program. Decide on the length of the program: 8 weeks? 8 days? Twice a week? A weekend? 8 weekends? Then be clear about the time people will meet and the location. Remember that this is an emotional experience. If your meeting time is too late in the evening and participants are fatigued it will be more difficult to participate. Also, you may find it difficult to sleep that evening. Just something to keep in mind. And make sure the location will be without interruption. If it is in a family home, it is important that only the group members are present during the sessions. There are also rooms at libraries that can be used, recreation centres etc.
- Session length. One and a half hours works well. Too short and there is not enough time, too long and people get fatigued. A visible clock is a good idea. The facilitator will monitor the time of the session and of activities and discussions. If the program is taking place on a weekend, build in 15 minutes breaks between the 1.5-hour sessions.
- Length of sharing. This can be a sensitive area. That is why it is important to discuss this before you get started. Sometimes people can get lost in their emotions and their stories, especially if they haven't said anything about it before. The problem is that a participant can also get lost in time and be unaware of how long they are speaking. The facilitator will need to gently ask if the next person could begin. The amount of time each person can talk will depend on the size of the group. Facilitator needs to be sensitive and aware. This is why it is important to set this up at the beginning and have an independent facilitator. Therefore, when someone is interrupted by the facilitator, they won't take it personally and

will just know they have become lost in thought and time. If they have an important point still to make, ask them to make a note and they will have a chance to share at the end. The facilitator will keep an eye on the clock so the session does not exceed the 1.5-hour mark, unless all agree to extend the session.

Facilitators needs to carefully review the activities in order to get a sense of the length of time each exercise will take in relation to the size of the group.

- **Supplies.** Each participant needs to have their own *Remember, It's OK* book as well as *Guidebook One*. It doesn't matter which book they have as all work with the same elements.

Facilitator: some of this housekeeping can be sent to participants beforehand in an email. Location and time will need to be established before the first session. Other items regarding time and length of sharing are best done in the first session when all participants come together.

Okay, now that the housekeeping is taken care of, let's begin.

Facilitator will go around the group circle and ask each person to say their name, where they are from and their goal for this workshop. Simple. Straightforward. Don't ask for anything more than that at the beginning. Let it unfold naturally at the right time as sessions progress.

Facilitator: If the group includes those who have experienced a loss there may be more tension and emotion. Take small steps. Brevity is important in this situation. Refer to the 'fog' truth, #9, in *Guidebook One*. Maybe even read that truth out loud to the group so they can understand why those in grief can have trouble concentrating. Make it clear they can take a break at any time.

Activity One - Erasing Myths About Grief

Facilitator: you have preparation prior to this session. You will need to prepare 13 small pieces of paper. Each paper will have one of the *truths* written on it from *Guidebook One*. If it is a large group, repeat truths on papers. If it is a small group, some may have two or the facilitator can participate. Each participant will be given a paper with a 'grief truth' written on it.

This activity will focus on dispelling myths and embracing truths around grief so everyone is on the same 'page'. Everyone needs pen or pencil, a pad of paper or notebook, their stylus and ipad.

The facilitator will hand out a small piece of paper to each participant. Each participant will read their paper and then write down thoughts or questions that pop into their mind. If the participant prefers to just sit quietly and reflect on their paper, that is fine as well. The Facilitator will give a few minutes to allow for this to happen. When time is up, someone can offer to begin sharing or just start to the left of the facilitator and go around the circle. The participant begins by reading what was on their paper and then giving their thoughts and experience with that myth. Others are then welcomed to offer their thoughts and impressions. Each person needs to read their paper and then share. Facilitator leads the conversation, and will be aware of timing. The facilitator will record key words and impressions. Anything that records the discussion so it can be visible to participants can be helpful: blackboard, chart paper, smart board, laptop, etc.

For a final discussion for Session One, ask the following question, write it for all to see:

- What surprised you when hearing these *truths* today?

Facilitator then explains that there will be a homework assignment after each session, which will be reviewed at the beginning of the next meeting.

Session One Homework

Choose one or more of the following questions about Guidebook One and write your thoughts and feelings down:

- What were your thoughts about grief before you started session one? ○ What ‘truth’ struck a chord with you and why? ○ Did you feel embarrassed at having held one of the misconceptions? Explain. ○ Have you dealt with someone in grief using a myth? Elaborate.
- Have you ever experienced support from a loss in your life that felt uncomfortable for you? Elaborate. ○ Do you feel that you would do something different now if meeting someone in grief? What would that be.
- Do you know others who hold myths about grief? Explain.

Facilitator thanks everyone for being brave, for working together and invites everyone back for session two.

SESSION TWO

Facilitator needs to arrive early and prepare the setting; beverages, chairs, papers, etc. As well as chart paper, laptop etc.

It would be beneficial to have tea, coffee or water available as participants enter each session, so people can talk casually together before sitting down. This can be an informal way for participants to make important connections with others.

Facilitator will ask people to find a seat in order to begin. Once people are seated the Facilitator will ask participants to share their homework experience. What questions did each participant choose, why and what did they discover.

Facilitator needs to account for the time to share homework with sessions now.

Sharing is an important part of each activity. Often, something will be said that another hadn't thought of and could be a turning point for them. Participants need to be reminded that they are in a safe space and the goal is for learning and healing. Safe sharing, taking risks is how that is best achieved. Participants will find their comfort level with sharing as sessions progress.

Activity Two - Exploring the Feelings of Colours

Facilitator will have to visit a hardware or paint store and pick up a number of paint chips for each member of the group, reflecting the 6 *Remember, It's OK* colours – Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Turquoise, Pale Blue.

The facilitator will go around the circle and hand a colour paint chip to each participant; Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Turquoise, Pale Blue, Red Orange...etc until everyone has a colour. Colours may be repeated, or doubled up depending on size of the group.

The facilitator will now go around the circle and ask each person to hold up their paint chip. The group will then be asked the following questions about this colour:

- What do you feel when you see the paint chip that is held up? No thinking, what do you feel.
- Now think about words, images, events, objects etc. that come to mind when you see that colour.

All answers will be recorded for the group to see. This is important as someone may be thinking and not listening and miss a key point that is shared. If key points are visibly recorded, participants can easily see what they have missed. It can then be emailed to each participant after each session. Participants are also encouraged to take their own notes.

Each participant will now need their *Remember, It's OK* book. Facilitator will ask each participant to find the same colour in the book that reflects their paint chip. They then choose a Moment in that colour. Each participant will read through their moment quietly, preparing to read it out loud to the group.

Next, the facilitator will randomly select a person to begin. They will then read their Moment out loud and a discussion will follow, focussing on the *overall feeling* of the Moment, what it evokes in the reader/listener. The facilitator will establish that participants will not be focussing on content of the Moment here, but feelings and emotions. And make sure the participant reveals whether they are talking about the one in grief, or the support person.

These will be the questions to consider for each Moment:

- How do the words of the one in grief make the participant feel?
- How do the words of the support person make the participant feel?
- The group then comments on each Moment as a whole. It will be interesting to see if people feel the same, or different after each Moment that is read and discussed.

Session Two Homework

Participants will read one Moment from each colour, more if they choose, and write down how that Moment in that colour made them feel.

During the time between session 2 and 3, take time to tune into your feelings with respect to events during your day: a fun day with family, a confrontational situation at work, a disagreement or argument with a family member, a quiet evening with a book or movie, etc. Now put a colour to those feelings: what colour were you in when there was a confrontation, an argument, a quiet moment etc. Jot down your observations in order to share next sessions. You are beginning to use the language of colour for your emotions.

SESSION THREE

Facilitator will welcome participants and offer a drink while mingling and finding a seat.

Once people are seated the Facilitator will ask participants to share their homework experience.

- How did it feel using the colour language to identify your emotions?
- What colour had the most impact on you and why?

Activity Three - Exploring the Words of Colours

This activity has two parts.

Part 1: Focus only on the voice of the one in grief.

Each participant will select one Moment they chose for their homework, one that stimulated a strong response. They will be asked to read it out loud, making sure they indicate the colour they are reading from.

For this activity, the focus is on the words used. Participants are asked to say what words or phrases stood out when the Moment was read. Facilitator will record these words and phrases.

- How did those particular words convey tone and meaning?
- What was that tone and meaning?
- Did this resonate for any participant and why?

Part 2: Focus only on the voice of the support person.

Participants now read the same Moment, but focus on the words and phrases used by the support person.

- What key words were used?
- What tone and meaning was conveyed?
- How did this resonate for you and why?

To pull it all together, as a group, choose 3 important words the one in grief used for a Moment each of the six colours. Choose 1-3 key words the support person uses for a Moment each of the six colours. If time is short, the facilitator can determine which Moment will be used for this exercise in each of the six colours.

Facilitator has the six colours written as headings, with one column for the one in grief and one for the support person underneath each colour. He/she records the words offered by each participant for the Moment in that colour; for the one in grief, and then the support person. Participants need to record these words for each colour for use in homework.

After all words have been offered and recorded observe these lists and ask:

- What does the group notice about the word selection in each colour? For the one in grief and then the support person.
- How is it different or the same in each colour?
- How do the words shift and change with the colours?

Facilitator thanks everyone for their bravery and discovery and asks if anyone would like to bring simple snacks for the next session. Facilitator closes the session after introducing the homework.

Session Three Homework

Add to your word list. Try and create a list of as many words you see as relevant for each of the six colours in the Remember, It's OK books; for the one in grief, and the support person.

They can be words you pick out of a Moment as well as new words you think may fit. Have a reason for each word you choose, for each colour, for each role.

SESSION FOUR

A gentle flow into session four can begin with tea, coffee, water, and conversation.

Facilitator asks everyone to take a seat when all are present.

Facilitator will have all six colours written as headings, either on a board, chart or technological device. Then each participant will write their homework words down under the respective colour. The facilitator will circle all the words that are repeated. A new list will now be written under each colour with all the words. Participants will be asked to notice the commonality for the words in each colour; for each role. What is a common theme or focus the words reveal about each colour; for the one in grief, for the support person.

A recording of key points in this conversation can be emailed later.

Activity Four - The Use of Poetry

The focus for this activity is on the Poetry in the *Remember, It's OK* books.

Depending on the size of the group, this activity can be done in pairs or groups of three.

Participants move into their smaller groups of two or three, preferably chosen at random by the facilitator. Each group now selects a poem from one of their *Remember, It's OK* books. They read it out loud to each other and then create a point form list together to answer these questions:

- Was it effective in that colour? How and why?
- Does a poem carry a different impact to the reader than a passage in prose? Why and how?

The facilitator will walk around the room, guiding, encouraging and helping participants. The facilitator will monitor the time. Give at least 10-15 minutes for this activity, more or less as needed.

Each small group reads their poem out loud and presents their discoveries. Comments, questions and sharing can happen for each poem presented.

Session Four Homework

Randomly choose a colour and then write a poem that suits that colour, in keeping with the theme of your Remember, It's OK book (loss of a partner, loss of a pet, etc). Write a poem for a few different colours if you have time. The poem can be a short haiku, or a long quatrain or a free verse. Whatever blends the best for you, the colour and your theme.

SESSION FIVE

A gentle flow into session five can begin with tea, coffee, water, and conversation.

Facilitator asks everyone to take a seat when all are present.

Begin this session by asking participants to read one of the poems they wrote for homework. Ask each person to share the colour they chose before reading the poem. These poems will be read with only silence after and then on to the next, no discussion for each poem.

After everyone has read their poem, facilitator asks group:

- What did it feel like to write poems about a grief Moment?
- What does Poetry add to the *Remember, it's OK* books?

Facilitator asks if participants would like to share their poems in written form with each other. This can be done via emails or the facilitator can create a small booklet for each group member with all the poems online. Discuss options as a group.

Activity Five - The Use of Prose

Facilitator needs to explain that there is a beginning, middle and end of each colour section. So, the intensity of a Moment in a colour will happen at the beginning of that section and will soften as it nears the end of that colour section. Therefore, Moments may feel like they could overlap with a colour section before or after, and this is where the participants are able to really analyse and dissect Moments in the colours, and shows how intricate our emotions truly are. Some Moments may fit into the end of one colour or the beginning of the next. Be aware of this during the activity. Explore this a bit yourself prior to this session. There may be disagreement here, about how colours can blend into each other, which is great. It lends itself to deeper discovery. How someone feels about a Moment in a colour will be very different depending upon the experience and socialization they bring with them. Be aware of this during

the activity as well. Remember, there is no wrong or right, just experience, perspective and growth.

This activity can be done in pairs or in threes. Facilitator organizes the participants into smaller groups.

This activity allows participants to really analyse emotions presented in the colours and therefore in themselves. It allows participants to begin to see emotions as full and complex, small and large, overwhelming yet manageable. It is not just about happy and sad anymore. It is about the scope and range of what we feel and having the language of colour to discuss this new territory.

Each small group will choose a prose Moment in a colour.

Read the Moment out loud in your small group and then discuss:

- Why was put into that colour?
- Why it *was not* put into a different colour. Use keywords to justify your choice.
- Could it overlap into another colour? How and why?

Next, discuss how reading the prose makes you feel.

- What is it like reading someone's personal thoughts?
- What glimpse do you get into the life of that person through that prose moment.
- What do you learn about what they need?
- What do you learn about what they do not need?

Do more than one prose Moment and colour if you have time.

Facilitator needs to monitor time here and circulate through the groups giving encouragement and suggestions.

When everyone is finished, each small group shares key things they discovered together about prose moments.

Session Five Homework

Choose a colour and a subject (food, a holiday, a photo etc) and write a first person prose Moment that fits. Feel free to create a dialogue with the support person.

SESSION SIX

A gentle flow into session six can begin with tea, coffee, water, simple snacks and conversation.

Facilitator asks everyone to take a seat when all are present. There may be more time needed for this session. Everyone needs to be asked if that will be okay.

Participants are asked to read out loud what they wrote for their homework. Each prose Moment read out loud is met with reflective silence so all have a chance to share.

For the discussion following all readings, facilitator can ask the following:

- What did it feel like to write a first-person account of grief?
- What did you learn?

Activity Six - Stepping into Another Skin

Facilitator asks participants to break into groups of two. If there is an odd number, the facilitator will participate in this activity.

Each pair decides on the colour they will use. Facilitator writes 4 words on the board: Food, Holiday, Clothing, Photographs.

Each person in the pair will choose one of these subjects and begin to write their Moment (or use one they wrote for homework in session four or five) that will fit into the colour the pair has chosen. They will both write a Moment as the one in grief. It can be prose or poetry. Facilitator says each person has 8 minutes to write their entry. GO.

Once each person has written their Moment, they turn their book over and put down their pencil to show they are finished. When all are finished, the facilitator explains the next part. Each pair will choose to be A and B. 'A' will take the role of griever first and read their Moment

to B. B will listen and then answer as the support person using the language, tone and vocabulary discovered earlier. A short dialogue can develop.

When all have finished the facilitator will tell them to switch. Now B will read their entry and A will respond as the support person.

When everyone is finished, the group comes back together.

The facilitator will begin a discussion about the experience of being the one in grief:

- How did it feel to be the grieving person?
- How did you feel as the grieving person, after you heard the responses from your partner?
- As the grieving person, how did it feel to say directly how you felt to another?
- Who had difficulty with this activity and why?

Now begin a discussion about support/companion person during the exercise:

- How did it feel to be the support person?
- How did you feel as the support person, after you heard the responses from your grieving partner?
- How did you feel offering words of support to the grieving person? Was your choice of words different from what it would have been prior to this workshop? How and why?
- Who had difficulty with this activity and why?

Now begin a discussion about the griever and the support person:

- How did the Moment show where someone was in their grief journey?
- How could you use this learning when speaking to someone in grief in the future?
- How does the language change for the one in grief as the colour changes?
- How does language progress for the support person to fit with the griever and the colour they are in?

Finally, what did you take away from this activity. Each person is allowed one sentence.

Facilitator asks participants to bring in photographs or magazines that reflect things they enjoy for the activity next session.

Session Six Homework

As the grieving person, think of some instances that have happened to you where the response from another made you feel worse. What would you say to that person now?

As a support person, what situation in the past has made you feel uncomfortable and you didn't know what to say to the one in grief. How would you handle that situation now?

SESSION SEVEN

Facilitator needs to have large pieces of paper, markers, crayons, glue sticks, scissors and magazines for today's activity. If this is a virtual meeting, each participant will have to collect their own supplies and work on their own.

Participants enter session seven, enjoy a cup of a hot drink or some water, snacks. Some conversation and then take their seats.

Session seven opens with a discussion of what was discovered during the homework from session six. Facilitator will ask for observations about the grieving person and the support person. Recorded comments for an email will be beneficial.

Activity Seven - Working with Grief

Facilitator explains that doing kinesthetic, tactile activities can help work through grief and emotions, allowing feelings to be revealed in what is created, much the same way that art therapy works. The blank page suggestions in each *Remember, It's OK* book, allow for just this kind of experience. This is one way to achieve mourning, as explained in *Guidebook One*.

For this session, work in groups of two, three or four.

You can work on the floor, a small coffee table or a large table. Make sure you have a large paper for each small group, markers, magazines, scissors, glue sticks. The small group decides on a colour they will focus on.

The facilitator then introduces the focus: a collage of things you love.

Together the group will cut out pictures from magazines, or use photos that were brought in. Even though everyone will have different things they love or enjoy, that's ok, because this is an experience showing the things your small group loves and creating it together will be a tactile experience in and of itself. Try to include your 'colour language' during conversations during this exercise.

Facilitator gives 15-25 minutes for the activity.

When finished, each group will present their collage and explain the colour they chose. They will also talk about what it was like to create together, how it led their conversation, how 'colour language' was used and how it felt (not what was thought, what was felt) to actually make something that dealt with feelings.

Final question:

After your experience creating this collage, how important is it that someone in grief do the blank page suggestions to further their healing and progress.

Facilitator will remind the group that the next session is the last one. Depending on the time of day you have been meeting, you may decide to have a small potluck meal together at the end of the last session. Decide on what food everyone will bring and beverages.

Session Seven Homework:

Leaf through your Remember, It's OK book and find a blank page suggestion that resonates for you. Do the activity on the blank page provided.

SESSION EIGHT

The facilitator needs to prepare for this last session. The focus is music. Do a little research in order to be able to explain how powerful music can be for healing and how music deeply affects the listener.

Many people have an awareness of technology and playlists, spotify, apple music etc. But many do not. Music can have a large part to play in helping the one in grief. It can also be a powerful tool in the hands of a support person. But as with any power, awareness is needed.

In preparation for this session, have collection of pieces of music that can be played for the group, preferably with no lyrics or lyrics not easily understood, from a variety of genres (classical, jazz, country, pop, latin, etc) Choose a few pieces that are slow in tempo, and a few that are more upbeat. Do this for each genre. Again, best if they have no lyrics or lyrics are unclear.

Then find pieces of music, of different tempos and genres, but this time with lyrics and print off the lyrics so they can be handed to each participant. The facilitator will have to take some time to find songs with lyrics that are not sad or about death and loss or even love, but rather have empowering messages or ones with hope and renewal. Music can be a healer, but it can also close doors. And then have one song where the lyrics are about love, and one about loss (lots of these to be found in country music).

At the end of the session, you may need to help people learn how to put a playlist together on their phone or device. If they don't have a device, suggest radio stations, CDs etc.

Facilitator may also want to email the list of all pieces of music played to participants.

Participants enter, knowing this is the last session. Allow a bit longer for mingling, drinking and snacking before beginning. Any food for the potluck can be placed in the designated spot. Everyone will take their seats.

Participants now show and tell what blank page suggestion they chose to do and why from previous homework assignment. Then they will explain how it felt before, during and after their creation.

Once everyone has presented, the facilitator will ask the group as a whole:

- Were the Blank Page Suggestions helpful? Why?
- What do the Blank Page Suggestions add to the book?
- What do the Blank Pages add to the book?

Final Activity - Music and Grief

Facilitator will explain the power of music. For the one in grief certain types of music can be an awful trigger or provide healing and renewal. The same can be said for lyrics. Lyrics about love and pain and loss can be another difficult trigger. In time, there will be space to listen to any kind of music and lyrics, but the griever and support person needs to be sensitive to how powerful music can be one way or the other, depending on the 'colour' someone is experiencing.

Facilitator will explain that they will play ten different pieces of music. The first five will be without lyrics, the next five with lyrics. They will be called; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (no lyrics). A B C D E (with lyrics).

Participants will close their eyes while listening to a music selection. After listening to a selection, they will write down what colour they feel this piece of music would best fit, in order to support and help the one in grief. Would the music exacerbate how a person in Red is feeling or sooth them. Would the music stimulate a person in Turquoise or pull them down. Participants need to ask themselves these questions as they listen.

Once all pieces have been played (1 2 3 4 5) with no lyrics, a discussion begins. Participants with facilitator guidance will discuss the pieces using their number. See how many people are in agreement about where a piece of music fits, or how a piece of music had very different results of placement. Discuss why this happened. Try to isolate what it is about the piece of music that allows it to sooth or do the opposite; instruments used, tempo, genre, etc. This will help participants choose music for themselves if they are the one in grief, or for the one choosing to support. The choice of music will depend on where a person is on their grief journey.

Facilitator now turns to the songs with lyrics (A B C D E) and hands out the lyrics to each song, with the letter at the top. Each song will be played and participants can read the lyrics while listening. This time, they decide where the song will fit, into what colour and what purpose it will serve, based on the feel of the music but more importantly, what the lyrics are saying. Do the words help or hinder one in grief in a particular colour and why or why not? Is the song appropriate for one on the grief journey, why or why not? Does the style of music amplify the lyrics or not.

When all the music has been played, the facilitator opens the floor to discussion and how music fits into the grief journey for the one in grief:

- Is music with lyrics the best choice for someone on a grief journey? Why or why not.
- When would lyrics be added to a playlist and what type of lyrics would be best? Elaborate.
- How would appropriate music for each colour be chosen to support the feeling and tone of a colour on the grief journey.
- Is there a style of music that is best during a grief journey? Explain.

There are no wrong answers here but the more involved everyone is in the conversation, willing to hear different perspectives and maybe adjust how they see certain types of music, the more powerful the take away will be about the use of music to support grief. Music is very personal, as personal as a fingerprint, as personal the grief journey itself. One song may work for one person in a particular colour, but not another. Great sensitivity is needed here.

Facilitator mentions that if anyone needs help creating a playlist on a device they would be pleased to help during the potluck.

Session Eight Homework

Take some time to find music that can soften the emotions of someone in a hot colour and support the emotions in cool colours. Consider labelling your choices based on colour. Try and include a variety of music genres, so when you are assisting and supporting someone in grief you can provide a playlist that resonates with their tastes in music. The goal is to create softness for the one in grief, not discord.

Find pieces of music without lyrics, and ones with lyrics for hot colours and cool colours. Then have another playlist that has music with lyrics talking about love and loss that can be saved for the appropriate time.

Once you have these compiled, you can offer them to a person in grief. Someone who is dealing with a loss will appreciate this as they have little energy to create one of their own.

Playlist can be shared. If you are not familiar with how to do this, that is part of your homework assignment so you have ready answers for the one in grief.

FINAL DISCUSSION

As the 8-session program comes to an end, the facilitator will ask each participant to reflect on the following and jot notes in their *Remember, It's OK* book:

- How did you feel when you entered the program?
- How do you feel now?
- What have you learned about grief?
- What have you learned about supporting one in grief?
- What have you learned about how to view grief differently?
- What will you do differently going forward?

Once everyone has written their thoughts down, the facilitator will ask if anyone would like to share a personal highlight that occurred for them during the 8 sessions. These reflections are important to read the next day any other day you feel a reminder is needed about what grief is and how you want to walk the journey.

Extended information about the books on the RememberItIsOK.com website.

Facilitator congratulates everyone for their bravery and sensitivity.

The contact sheet is handed out to everyone and will be emailed.

Potluck and networking begin.

Bravo!!!
You have entered a new paradigm for grief.
You are now part of the healing conversation around grief!!

NOTE:

If you would like to know more about our books (how we created them, about the colours we chose, what was our process etc) please go to our websites. There you will find podcasts, articles and pages that will give you more in-depth information about the books and how to care for yourself, as one in grief or as a support person. Each website will offer something unique.

RememberItIsOk.com

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