**8 Week Grief Group**

***Provide students with an empty folder for handouts (keep it for them until the last session).***

| **Session One:**  Obj. Group rapport and expectations. | **Session Two:**  Obj. Big picture view of grief  **Unique yet Similar** | **Session Three:**  Task 1: Accepting the reality of the loss  **Facing Reality** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Check In:**   * Confidentiality assurances (every session) * Review and discuss benefits of a group ( handout) * Have students write desired group expectations on a 3x5 card and turn in to facilitator   (This initial check-in will take longer than the check ins you do moving forward) | **Check In:**  Hang the group expectations poster and review responses from last session.  Ask each student how they are doing, if they practiced the calming technique and if so, how it worked for them. | **Check In:**  Take a moment to check in with each student,asking how they are doing and how the calming technique has worked for them.  \* Let them know it’s okay if they like some techniques better than others. |
| **Activity:**   1. Ice breaker/get to know you activity 2. Reassemble and discuss ice breaker activity 3. Share what loss brought you to the group. | **Activity:**   1. Have students highlight their primary emotions on the emotions wheel (handout). 2. Briefly compare wheels 3. Instruct them to watch for their survey responses in the following video: “Avengers Endgame Stages of Grief”   <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R87dqSlypUA&t=579s> | **Activity:**   1. Hand out “The 4 Tasks of Mourning” (inform them the next 5 sessions will address these tasks). 2. Read and discuss the handout on Feelings of Shock and Denial. 3. Color the tangled ball of grief handout. (They can color while reading and discussing the handout). |
| **Possible Discussion Points:**   * Is there anything from the benefits of a group handout that you especially hope for? * Pass out strips of paper and have students anonymously write discussion topics and questions for discussion. Draw from these if there is ever a need for backup material. | **Possible Discussion Points:**   * What did you see in the video that relates to your survey results? * Which character do you most identify with right now and how? * What was in the video that really stood out to you? * Discuss Stages of Grief/My Experience handout | **Possible Discussion Points:**   * Handout includes questions * Compare and contrast the balls of grief and emphasize grief may look different for each person * Discuss how talking emotions out can help “untangle” them so you can begin to accept reality. |
| **Closing:**  Practice a calming or mindfulness technique. Challenge them to try it throughout the week.  *After group record the expectations from the 3x5 cards onto a poster and/or make handouts for next time.* | **Closing:**  Practice a calming or mindfulness technique. Challenge them to try it throughout the week.  *(You can get ideas from mindfulness decks such as “The Mindfulness Game” from Innericons.com or “Stress Less Cards: 50 Mindfulness & Meditation Exercises” on Amazon.* | **Closing:**  Practice a calming or mindfulness technique. Challenge them to try it throughout the week. |

**GRIEF GROUP**

| **Session Four**  Task 2: Processing the pain of grief  **The BIG Emotions** | **Session Five:**  Task 2 cont.: Processing the pain of grief.  **Normalizing Emotions** | **Session Six:**  Task 3: Adjusting to the world without your loved one.  **Survival Skills** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Check In:**  See how everyone is doing and ask for feedback on last week’s calming technique | **Check In:**  See how everyone is doing and ask for feedback on last week’s calming technique | **Check In:**  See how everyone is doing and ask for feedback on last week’s calming technique |
| **Activity:**  Anger Volcano Activity (handout)   1. Start by labeling the volcano eruption with visual & physical signs of anger. 2. Next, label the undersea part of the volcano with pressures and emotions others don’t see that can lead to eruptions. 3. On the left side of Coping Sea label unhealthy things people do to cope. 4. Finish by labeling the right side with healthy coping strategies.   *Students can individualize their own volcano handout with personal answers while the facilitator creates a poster with group responses.* | **Activity:**  Play a therapy game that generates discussion about emotions.  **Possible Games:**  Free emotion task card game: <https://www.mygroupguide.com/freeplan/>  Grief Jenga cards in resources. | **Activity:**  This is a good video for you as the facilitator or you can use as an option:  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0WzSL2Vr2c>  Other video options to play and discuss adjustment:  Option 1:  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmzy6fRLcCU>  Option 2:  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clsxYaQek4I>  Give each student a sheet of paper.  Fold paper into three sections.   1. In the **first** section, list your strengths, skills, and positive coping strategies. 2. In the **third** section, list challenges, issues, and emotions you’ve been struggling with since the loss. 3. In the **middle** section, write some ways you could use strengths from the first section to help you with issues in the third section. 4. Discuss individual responses. |
| **Possible Discussion Points:**   * Looking at the finished volcano chart, what parts do you have no control over? * What parts do you have control over? * What does it mean to say anger is a secondary emotion and not a primary emotion? | **Possible Discussion Points:**   * Are there emotions that we should not have? Give students a moment to share. * If emotions can influence our thoughts and behaviors… can we also use thoughts and behaviors to influence our emotions? Explain. | **Possible Discussion Points:**   * Do you prefer the term “adjustment” or “acceptance” and why? * Refer back to handout from session one about Jada, what would “acceptance” or “adjustment” look like for her? * What does it look like for you?   \* Give students a reminder to bring pictures, stories, or songs that remind them of their loved one next week. |
| **Closing:**  Practice a calming or mindfulness technique. Challenge them to try it throughout the week. | **Closing:**  Practice a calming or mindfulness technique. Challenge them to try it throughout the week. | **Closing:**  Practice a calming or mindfulness technique. Challenge them to try it throughout the week. |

**GRIEF GROUP**

| **Session: Seven**  Task 4: Memories/lasting connections  **Never Forgotten** | **Session Eight:**  Obj: Group Closure  **Self-Care** | **Facilitator Tips** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Check In:**  Ask each student how they are doing and how the calming technique worked for them. | **Check In:**  Ask each student how they are doing and how the calming technique worked for them. | Participants sometimes have a tendency to compare the severity of their loss. Establish from the outset that all losses are a reason to be in the group and everyone’s participation is of value. |
| **Activity:**  Play songs about remembering a loved one  Option 1: Fire and Rain by James Taylor <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbD7lfrsY2s&t=27s>  Option 2: I’ll Stand by You by The Pretenders  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLpmj059JFA>  Option 3: Fix You by Coldplay  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k4V3Mo61fJM&list=PLnmIu-_MMfOfb8G2dqU3ADIGYxE8y-gxU&index=15>  Option 4: Hurt by Christina Aguilera  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwCykGDEp7M>   1. Take turns sharing pictures and personal stories related to their loss. 2. Create memory stones or name bracelets. | **Activity:**   1. Give out folders, distribute and discuss the following handouts:  * Help resources * Self help app list * Calming Coloring sheets * Mindfulness exercises  1. Self-care Toss (resource). Have questions prewritten on a ball or dice - toss around and discuss ways to self-care. | Be cognizant of the fact that some students may have had a less than wonderful relationship with the deceased (such as a dysfunctional parent). Choose your words wisely, especially during the memorial activities in session 7. Some students may be mourning what “could have” or “should have been” rather than what was. Make no assumptions. Continuously acknowledge and validate differences in feelings and experiences among participants. |
| **Possible Discussion Points:**   * One way your loved one changed your life that will stay with you. * What could you do to keep their memory special? (ex. cemetery visits, honor their birthday, keep a memento…) * One thing you’ve learned through this loss experience that you never want to forget. | **Possible Discussion Points:**   * Use Self-Care Toss questions. * If time permits, draw and discuss the questions that are still left from the strips they filled out during the first session. | Conduct a one-on-one follow-up with each group member within a few days of the last session. They will appreciate the opportunity to reflect on and process their group experience. You can also ask for their feedback on the group at this time. Let me know if they have some good ideas! ~ Deb |
| **Closing**:  Practice a calming or mindfulness technique. Challenge them to try it throughout the week.  ***\*Side note to facilitator, nice to bring snacks for last meeting :0)*** | **Closing:**  Give each student a special award or certificate to keep in their memory folder and an opportunity to state what they most want to remember from participating in the group. | Give referrals for private counseling  to students who continue to demonstrate high levels of distress and lack of progress. |