



Manual

for

**Grief Support Groups for People
with Intellectual Disabilities**

Each facilitator of the Grief Support Group should have a copy of this Manual. Each member of the group should have a copy of *My Grief Support Group Journal*. This Manual and the other two documents that accompany it (*Grief Support Group Backgrounder*, and *My Grief Support Group Journal*) are made available by **L'Arche Canada** (www.larche.ca) on its Aging and Disability website: www.aging-and-disability.org/grief_support_kit.

L'Arche Canada is part of the International Federation of L'Arche. In L'Arche communities, people with and without intellectual disabilities share life together in households and creative day programs.



Acknowledgments

Thank you to the members of L'Arche Toronto's grief support groups and to my L'Arche colleagues—Lydia Banducci, April MacConnell, Mary Jane Kelley, and John Guido. Thank you to Diane Marshall, M.Ed., RMFT for reading our Grief Support Group documents. Thank you to Greg Lannan for his artwork, to Beth Porter for editorial work, and to Christine Higdon for the design. Thank you to Professor the Baroness Sheila Hollins for generously allowing us to use several drawings from her *Books Beyond Words* in Weeks 3 and 4, and to Sharon Rugg and W.J. Worden for permission to quote from their work.

Jane Powell may be contacted through the L'Arche Toronto office (416-406-2869) or by email at grief.support@larche.ca

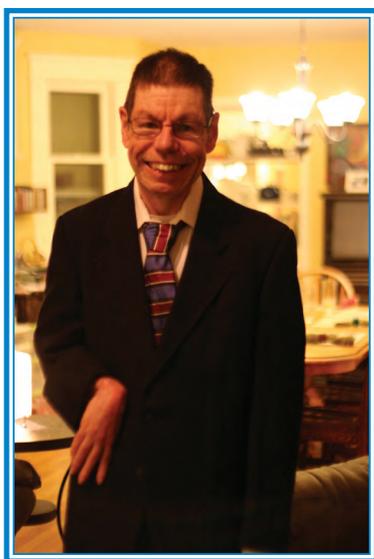


Photo of Greg Lannan
by Marion de Couto

A note about the cover artwork

“The clouds and rain are a symbol for being sad in your heart.

The sun represents the light of God and choosing to be open to new things as well as sad.

The heart reminds of being loved and listening.

The tree can be a sign of protection, spending time together, and forgiveness.

The flower invites us to be light and love for others and reminds us we cannot do it alone.”

Greg Lannan is a member of L'Arche Toronto

Manual

Grief Support Groups for People with Intellectual Disabilities

Contents

Basic principles and guidelines.....	4
Week 1: Thinking about loss	6
Ground Rules	9
Preparation for Week 2	10
Week 2: Sharing my story	11
Preparation for Week 3	12
Week 3: Saying goodbye	13
Preparation for Week 4	15
Week 4: What is grief?.....	16
Preparation for Week 5	18
Week 5: What do I need to do?	19
Preparation for Week 6	24
Week 6: Looking after myself.....	25
Preparation for Week 7	26
Week 7: Celebration: Life goes on, our lives continue	27
Appendix 1: Drawings for Week 3	28
Appendix 2: Drawings for Week 4	34
Resources	40

Basic principles and guidelines for a 7-week grief support group

The suggestions we offer are based on our experience as described in the *Grief Support Group Backgrounder*. Before using this Manual we suggest reading the Backgrounder and downloading and printing a copy of the document *My Grief Support Group Journal*. (Each participant will have a copy of this Journal.)

Number of participants: Aim for 5 or 6 participants (also called “group members,” to convey their shared ownership of the group.) Once started, the group is closed—no one new members are added. This is to allow the group to grow in trust and intimacy.

Facilitation: It is best to have two facilitators. This permits better planning and debriefing of meetings and allows for one facilitator to leave the group with someone experiencing difficulty.

Meeting time: Group members should be able to count on the regularity of meetings. Weekly meetings are preferable. Maximum length should be an hour and a half.

Physical space: Meeting area should be quiet and pleasant and meet the members’ needs for accessibility. Plants, draped fabrics and candles can help create ambiance. Seating should be comfortable. In general, sitting in a circle is ideal but, as some meetings include an activity that would be best done at a table, a table should be available.

Confidentiality: Group members must have confidence that what they share in the group is safely held within the group. Occasionally, something a participant says may need to be communicated to someone in their home. Permission should be asked of the participant, so that trust is not broken.

Listening respectfully: Each member needs to be capable of actively listening to the others. A “talking stick” may be useful—only the person holding the “stick” speaks. (As facilitators, we have been touched by the attentiveness and empathy members show one another.)

Readiness of each individual: Members need to be in a healthy enough emotional space to benefit from and not disrupt the group. Some people may need to do some individual grief work before participating in a group.

Respect for cultural and religious traditions: Ethnic groups and religions have specific traditions associated with death, disposal of the body, and grieving. To avoid awkward mistakes, facilitators should learn about such customs if a group member is of an unfamiliar culture or religion.

Well before you begin

- Decide on a suitable time frame and dates, and invite the participants whom you believe will benefit. They should be free to choose to commit to the group or not, and they should understand that their “Yes” means they commit to attending all seven meetings. Allow participants time for this decision.
- Arrange for a suitably quiet and comfortable location. Organize logistics (transportation, access to video, Internet or other technology as needed.)
- Ensure that each participant with an intellectual disability invites a friend (a buddy) to help them with preparation between the meetings. (Be in contact with these friends only if needed and after asking permission from the person concerned.)

Before you begin

- Choose an opening and closing ritual that can be used for each meeting and is appropriate to the group. Choose something that will help the group to quieten and focus (e.g., a song, prayer, lighting a candle).
- A few days before each meeting both facilitators should read through the information in this Manual for the upcoming meeting and do the preparations required of the facilitators.
- At the first meeting give each person a copy of *My Grief Support Group Journal*. (Do not distribute the preparation sheets until the week before the meeting in which they will be used. Distribute other handouts in the meetings where they are required. The preparation sheets and handouts are included in this manual.)
- Choose one facilitator to be the timekeeper and ensure each person has the opportunity to share during the meeting.
- It is best not to serve drinks or snacks as these can be a distraction. If this would be difficult for the group, serve tea at the beginning of the meeting.
- During meetings, pay attention to comments and the questions from participants. People may need more information than we think (e.g., one person, we realized, was afraid that dementia was contagious and thus was refusing to visit a loved one).
- Rituals are important and often are a way in which people who may not have many verbal skills can participate and grieve. Watch for opportunities to share together in rituals during the weeks of the meeting. (See the *Backgrounder* for ideas.)

Ground Rules

At the first meeting members should commit to

- starting and ending on time
- coming to all the meetings
- practicing goodwill (wish good for each group member)
- listening without judging
- staying on topic
- accepting that it is okay to cry or express other feelings
- maintaining confidentiality

Review the Ground Rules at subsequent meetings as needed. (You will find a pictorial handout of the Ground Rules below.)

Week 1 **Thinking about loss**

Goals

- To begin to create a safe environment
- To talk about the nature of loss and death in general terms

Facilitators' preparation for the first meeting

- Be familiar and comfortable with the plan and materials for this week and the preparation for Week 2.
- Plan the ambience of the meeting space and bring materials you will need to create this.
- Prepare name tags with first names. Prepare yourselves to welcome the group.
- Print a copy of *My Grief Support Journal* for each participant. (If possible, use a colour printer.)
- Print out enough copies of the 2 handouts: "Ground Rules" and the preparation sheet for Week 2, "How my loved one died."
- Bake the mandala divided in wedges (see recipe and directions below) and assemble markers, paints or other materials for decorating. Plan the work space for this activity.
- Ensure you will have the needed computer, Internet access, projector and speakers to show the YouTube video *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf*. Preview the video so that you are familiar with it.

Plan for the meeting

- Opening ritual
- Welcome and distribute name tags. Invite each person to say their name and share 1 or 2 things that they like to do.
- Go over the Ground Rules together (distribute handout). You may also wish to mount the handout in enlarged form on poster board and hang it on the wall of your meeting space. Emphasize that this is a privileged group and that respect and trust and confidentiality are important. What others say or do in the group is not to be talked about outside the group.
- Give a copy of *My Grief Support Group Journal* to each member. Ask members to turn to Week 1. Look at this page together and read it aloud. Explain that each week there will be some preparation to do for the next meeting. They can do this with the friend they have chosen to help them. Most weeks you will be giving them a handout sheet to take home, to help with their preparation.
- Talk about loss and death in general terms. We all experience lots of different types of losses. Give examples and help group members name some different types of losses they have experienced.
- Watch the Leo Buscaglia video *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf*. It is available on YouTube in 4 segments of about 4 minutes each. If time is limited, introduce the video briefly and show only the third segment: www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVnwrSL8id0
- Ask participants what struck them about the film.

Activity

- Create a mandala together (see directions below and on the next page. You will need the pre-baked play-dough circle in pieces, markers, or poster or tube paints for everyone, and polyurethane spray to preserve the pieces.)
- Show the picture of a colourful mandala (below) and explain that a mandala can serve as a symbol of the unity and care for one another that the group will develop as they learn about grief and support one another.
- Give each person a piece of the baked play-dough circle to decorate in a way that represents how they feel about loss or about coming to the group. The mandala can then be assembled. (Spray the pieces with clear polyurethane on the decorated side to preserve them once they are dry. At the last meeting participants will decorate the reverse side of their mandala piece.)
- This mandala, created together, can be used as a centre piece for future meetings, perhaps with a candle. Help the group to share their thoughts about what the mandala can symbolize for them. For example, it may remind participants that each of them is an important part of the whole group. It may be a reminder of the feeling of separateness or brokenness that grief may bring and the hope of coming together in wholeness again.

Closing

- Explain the preparations for participants to do at home with their Journal for the next meeting. Distribute the worksheet “How my loved one died.” Ensure each person has identified a friend (a buddy) if they will need help. Point out to participants that they are asked to bring a photo of their person who has died, if possible.
- Conduct a brief check-out. Invite each member to ask themselves, “Am I okay going home now?” and then to share briefly how they are feeling at the end of this first meeting.
- Closing Ritual (e.g., a song, or prayer or someone extinguishing the candle)

Preparing the mandala

What is a mandala?

The word “mandala” is from Sanskrit, the ancient language of India. It means “circle,” but a mandala is not just a circle. It stands for wholeness. It is regarded as a model for the wholeness of life and of the universe and the cosmos. It can be seen as a symbol of eternity or the infinite. It can remind us that our lives extend beyond our bodies and have a lasting aspect to them. The circle appears in many parts of our lives—a family circle, a circle of friends or of support, a ring we may wear to represent a lasting bond. The circle also appears in nature, in the earth, sun, and moon.



Two or three days before the first meeting, make the play-dough recipe and form it into the largest circle you can fit on a baking sheet.

Mandala recipe

(any good play-dough recipe will work)

4 cups all-purpose flour

1 cup salt

1 1/2 cups cold water

Directions

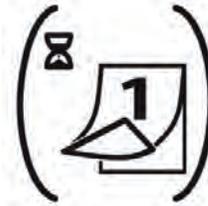
- Preheat oven to 300 degrees F (150 degrees C).
- Combine the flour, salt and water; mix well and knead for 10 minutes.
- Roll out one large circle on a lightly floured sheet of aluminum foil. (Dough should be rolled thin—not more than 1/2 inch thick—so it will not puff up when baked.) Slide the circle onto a baking sheet.
- Cut the circle into pie-shaped pieces so that each person in the group will have a piece to decorate.
- Very slightly separate each piece from the next with a spatula so that the pieces can be removed from the baking sheet separately when baked.
- Bake for 30 minutes or slightly longer if necessary. Allow to cool.

Ground Rules

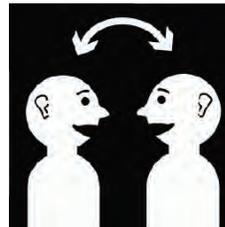
Start and end on time



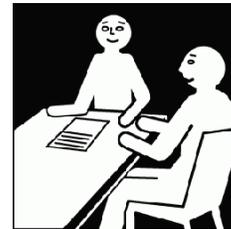
Come to all meetings



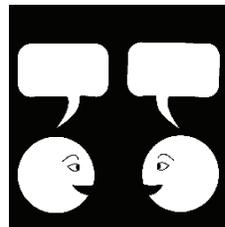
**Practise goodwill—
wish good for everyone**



Listen without judging



Stay on topic



It's okay to cry



Maintain confidentiality



Preparation for Week 2

How my loved one died

“Death happens when someone’s body becomes so old, sick or injured that it can no longer live and work like it is supposed to. A dead person cannot eat, sleep, breathe, think or feel. All of us have a body that we can see and many people believe that we also have a spirit or soul which we can’t see. Many people believe the spirit leaves the body when we die. When that happens our bodies no longer hurt or feel pain. We are calm and at peace.”¹

How my _____ died: _____

Where she/he died: _____

When she/he died: _____

Bring this page and a picture of your loved one to the next meeting.



1. Sharon Rugg et al., *Memories Live Forever*. 1995. p. 8

Week 2 **Sharing my story**

Goals

- **To enable participants to share the story of the death of their loved one and to listen to others as they share.**
-

Facilitators' preparation

- Be familiar and comfortable with the plan and materials for this week. Prepare yourselves to welcome the group.
- Plan the ambiance with the mandala and other items you may bring.
- Come prepared to be a model by sharing your own story and picture of someone you have lost, staying focused on the story, telling it clearly and simply, and not being shy to share emotion.
- Make copies of the handout on the next page: "What I liked and what I disliked or found difficult about the person who died."

Plan for the meeting

- Opening ritual
- Brief check-in (Each person to ask themselves, "Am I ready to be at the meeting?")
- One of the facilitators models telling their story of loss and putting a picture of their loved one in the centre of the circle for the rest of this meeting.
- Support each participant to share their story and place the picture they brought at the centre.
- Support participants to listen to the rest of the group as they tell their stories.

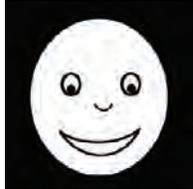
Closing

- Explain the preparations to do at home using their journal and the handout (below), before the next meeting.
- Brief check-out (Is each person okay to leave?)
- Closing ritual

Preparation for Week 3

What I liked and what I disliked or found difficult about the person who died

Under the two faces write or draw some things that you liked about the person who died and some things you did not like or found difficult about them.



What I liked about the person who died



What I found difficult about the person

Week 3 **Saying goodbye**

Goals

- To help participants come to as honest an understanding as possible of the person who has died.
- To help participants remember how they said goodbye to the deceased. If this did not happen, assist participants to discover some ritual to help them say goodbye.

Facilitators' preparation

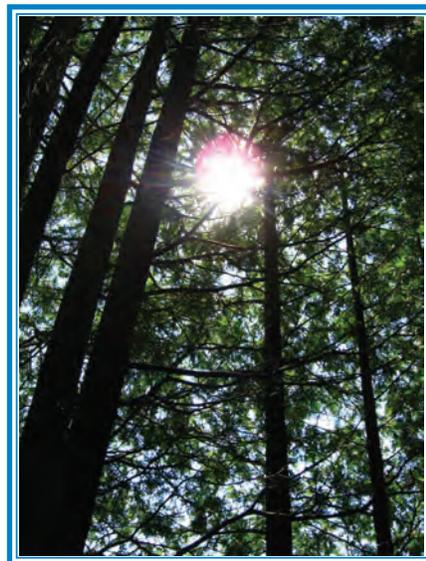
- Be familiar and comfortable with the plan and materials for this week. Prepare yourselves to welcome the group.
- Plan the ambiance with the mandala and other items you may bring.
- Be prepared to share personally.
- Have the drawings from Baroness Sheila Hollins' books (Appendix 1) ready to show or pass around. (Please note that these drawings are copyright. The author has given her permission for their use in this context but they should not be distributed for people to keep.)
- Make copies of the handout, "This is a card for my loved one who died." Use a paperclip to attach an envelope and a blank card to each page. (During the meeting each person will make a card.) Bring pens, pencils, and markers for participants to use.
- Make copies of the handout of the 4 main feelings. These are for the Journal preparation for Week 4.

Plan for the meeting

- Opening ritual
- Brief check-in
- Talk about what it means to say "goodbye"—separation from a person who is no longer here. Goodbye means "God bless you!" It means letting go and trying to focus on the people who are here, who are still present in your life.
- One of the facilitators: Model by sharing briefly about the funeral or memorial service for someone you lost. What did that service mean to you? Is there anything you do today to remember your loved one?
- Pass around the 6 drawings for Week 3 from Sheila Hollins' books *When Mum Died* and *When Dad Died* (Appendix 1). Allow time for comments. (These evocative drawings have often helped people who are grieving to share about how they said goodbye.)

- Support each member to share about how they said goodbye. If they did not have a chance to do this—perhaps they were not told about the death until later—help them to begin to think of a ritual that would be a meaningful way for them to remember or memorialize the person now. Even if participants did attend the funeral, finding ways to continue to remember their loved one can be very helpful. Individuals may need time during the coming weeks to decide how they would like to remember this person. Here are some examples:

- donating a gift of money or flowers in the person's name
- looking at old picture albums
- planting a tree or shrub or small garden and caring for it
- visiting the cemetery where the person is buried
- lighting a candle in memory of the person
- saving something that belonged to him or her *



- Help participants come to a realistic sense of who the person was. The person who died need not have been perfect to be loved by them. No one is perfect. Everyone is a mixture. There were things that people liked about the person who died and some things that may have been more difficult to like. (Refer to the preparation that members did using the handout they received last week.) Some members may wish to comment on this, but it is not necessary for all to do this. Some participants will have a greater sense of privacy about their family than others.

Activity

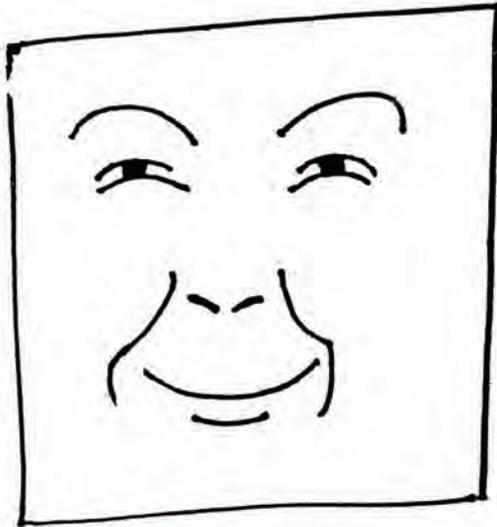
- Each participant will create a card for their loved one who died. The card may have a message in the form of a drawing or/and something written. A facilitator should explain that the card is an opportunity to record something that the member may wish to tell the person who has died. Suggest that members may want to keep the card in their Journal. Alternatively, some group members may decide to release their cards into the sky attached to helium balloons. You could plan this ritual for the following week.

Closing

- Pass out the handout with the pictures of the 4 main feelings that human beings have (Happy, Sad, Angry, Afraid). Explain: This is for your journal preparation. Next week we will talk about the different feelings we may have when we are grieving someone we have lost.
- Brief check-out (Is each person okay to leave?)
- Closing ritual

* Sharon Rugg et al., *Memories Live Forever*, p. 28

Preparation for Week 4
The 4 main feelings



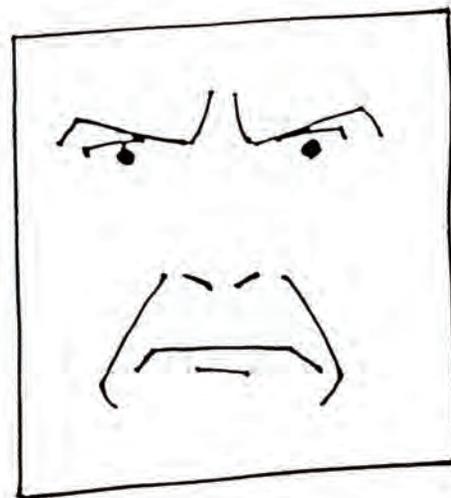
Happy



Afraid



Sad



Angry

Week 4 **What is grief?**

Goals

- To help normalize the experience of grief.
- To increase awareness of the feelings, physical sensations, thoughts and behaviors that can occur while grieving.

Facilitators' preparation

- Be familiar and comfortable with the plan and materials for this week. Prepare yourselves to welcome the group.
- Plan the ambiance with the mandala and other items you may bring.
- Make copies of the handout, "How is my life the same and how is it different since my loved one died?"
- Find Psalm 23 or choose an alternative comforting poem or reading on the themes of fear and trust for the closing ritual this week.

Plan for the meeting

- Opening ritual
- Brief check-in
- Speak about the 4 main feelings that human beings have, from the handout participants looked at for preparation during the week. Invite the members to create facial expressions to show these feelings: sad, frightened, angry and happy (peaceful).
- Explain that other feelings are combinations of these 4 main feelings.
- Pass around the 6 drawings from Baroness Hollins' books for participants to look at. What is happening in each picture? What are the people feeling? (See Appendix 2: Drawings for Week 4.)
- Use participants' comments on the drawings to talk about some of the feelings and experiences people may have while we are grieving. William Worden made a list of "Characteristics of Grief" (see below). Read through this list slowly, paraphrasing or giving examples. Of course, no one will experience all of these, but most people experience some of them. Stress that all these feelings are normal. They are part of being human.
- Invite the participants to share some of the feelings or experiences that they have had as they grieve. Invite any comments or insights from the group members.

Closing

- Remind the group that they are halfway through the 7 weeks of meetings.
- Explain the preparation to do at home for next week: After we lose someone close to us, our lives may change in some ways but will remain the same in some ways. Distribute the handout: "How is my life the same and how is my life different since my loved one died?"
- Brief check-out
- Closing ritual for this week: Read Psalm 23 ("The Lord is My Shepherd") or another poem or reading you have chosen.

Characteristics of Grief *

Emotions

- Sadness
- Anger
- Guilt and self-reproach [blaming ourselves]
- Anxiety
- Loneliness
- Fatigue
- Helplessness
- Shock [feeling stunned, feeling disbelief that this has happened]
- Yearning
- Emancipation [a feeling of freedom]
- Relief
- Numbness [no feelings]

Cognitions

[how our mind works]

- Disbelief
- Confusion
- Preoccupation
- Sense of presence [e.g., of the dead person, or of someone else we loved, or of God]
- Hallucinations [e.g., seeing or hearing something that is not really there]

Physical Sensations

[feelings we may have in our body]

- Hollowness in the stomach [emptiness]
- Tightness in the chest
- Tightness in the throat
- Oversensitivity to noise [noises that would not have bothered us before now seem too loud]
- A sense of depersonalization: “I walk down the street and nothing seems real, including me.”
- Breathlessness, feeling short of breath
- Weakness in the muscles
- Lack of energy
- Dry mouth

Behaviours

- Sleep disturbances [e.g., not able to sleep, waking up a lot, sleeping too much, sleep-walking]
- Appetite disturbances [being less hungry or more hungry than usual, wanting certain foods]
- Social withdrawal [not wanting to be in groups or with other people]
- Dreams of the deceased person [the person who died]
- Avoiding reminders of the deceased person
- Searching and calling out [for the person]
- Sighing
- Restless hyperactivity
- Crying
- Visiting places or carrying objects that remind us of the deceased
- Treasuring objects that belonged to the deceased.

* William J. Worden, *Grief Counselling and Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner*, 4th ed., (Springer Publishing Company, LLC, 2009.)

Preparation for Week 5

How is my life the same and how is my life different, since _____ (name) died?

Circle the word Same or Different beside each picture below.

Sleeping



Same Different

Home



Same Different

Eating



Same Different

Friends



Same Different

Work



Same Different

Have any other important things changed? Do some of the same activities feel different? How?

Week 5 What do I need to do?

Goals

- To help participants understand the major tasks of grieving.
- To help participants recognize that grief is a process that is unique to each person.

Facilitators' preparation

- Be familiar and comfortable with the materials and plan for the meeting. Prepare yourselves to welcome the group.
- Plan the ambiance with the mandala and other items you may bring.
- Photocopy and cut out 26 footprints, and cut out the 26 pictos from the pages below. You may wish to omit the labels when you cut out the pictos. This way, participants will be free to use their imagination to decide what the pictures mean. Tape one picto to each footprint. (You will create a path with these footprints.) Bring tape with you to the next meeting.
- Make copies of the handout 'Preparation for Week 6: What do I need to be well?'

Plan for the meeting

- Opening ritual
- Brief check-in
- Talk about the *Four Main Tasks of Mourning** (or grieving, since "grieving" is the word we have been using in this group). These are listed below as described by William Worden. Paraphrase and give examples for each task. Take time to ensure everyone grasps the meanings:
 1. To accept the reality of the loss
 2. To process the pain of grief [Review the emotions, etc., that we talked about last week.]
 3. To adjust to a world without the deceased person
 4. To find an enduring connection with the deceased person in the midst of embarking on a new life
- Invite participants to share about the preparation for this week, answering the questions, How is my life the same and how is my life different since my loved one died? Point out that although it may not feel like it, usually more things have remained the same than are different, even though in some ways perhaps everything has changed. Help participants see where there is still stability in their lives.

* Worden, 2009. (The word "mourning" is used increasingly today to include grief and also the process of healing and adaptation that permits the individual to move on. Thus, it includes rituals and other actions helpful to the particular individual.)

Activity

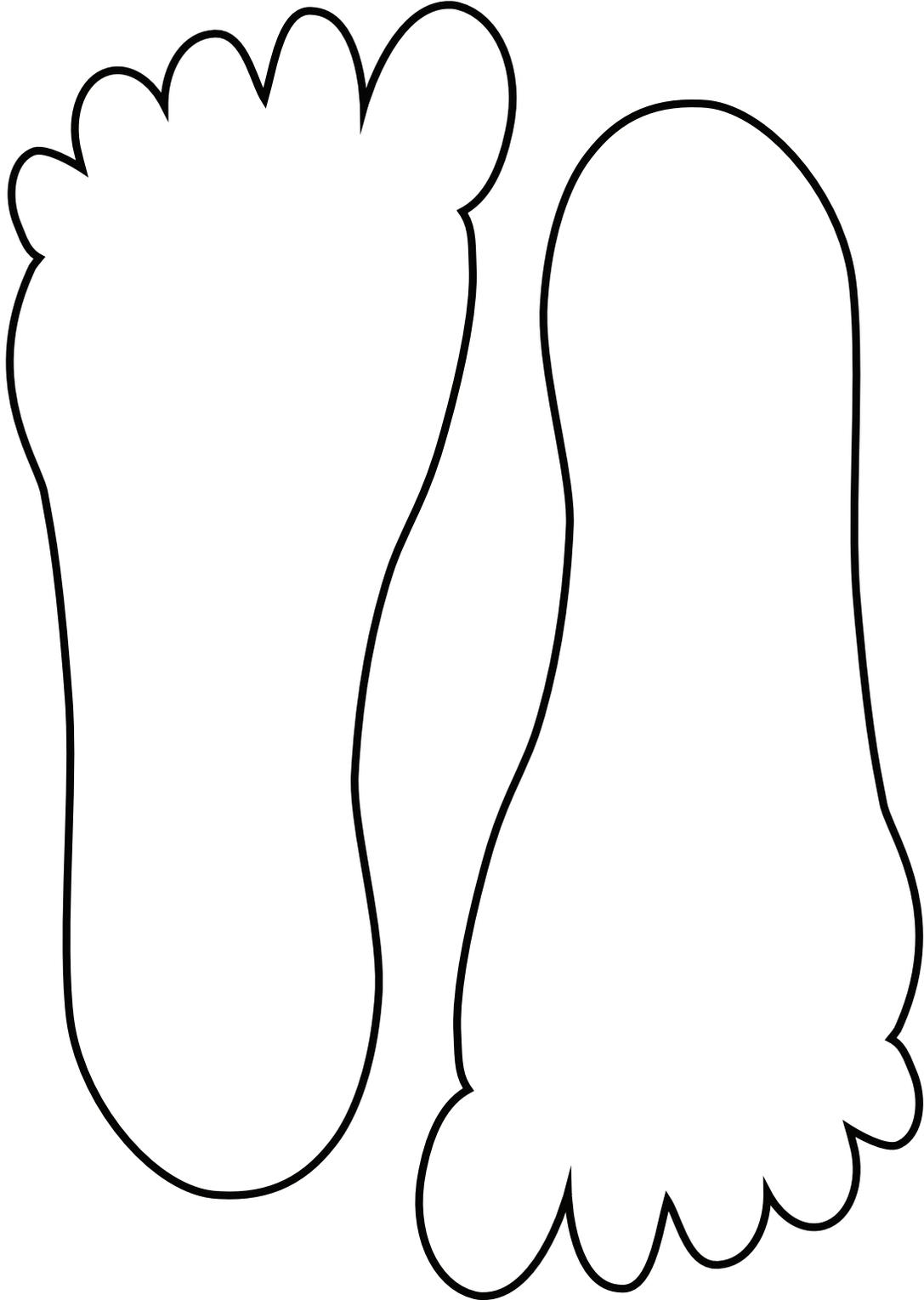
- Make a path by randomly arranging the footprints on the floor with the pictos taped to them. (You may need to anchor each footprint to the floor using tape.) Invite participants to walk along the path and discuss some of the pictures that speak to them. Point out that as people walk the path of grieving, different feelings such as sadness or gloominess will come and go and in between there will be ordinary or even good feelings. Point out that the path ends. This time of grieving will end; they will come through it.
- Ask participants to identify where they are on the path today. Ask what the symbol on the footprint that they chose means to them.

Closing

- Pass out the handout “What do I need to do to be well?”
- Explain the Journal preparations for the next meeting: In addition to working with the handout, each person is to do at least one special thing for themselves during the week and come prepared to share what this was at the next meeting.
- Brief check-out
- Closing ritual

Facilitators' preparation for Week 5

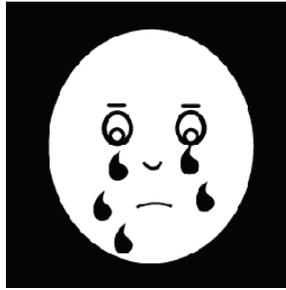
- Make 13 photocopies of the footprints on this page, so that you will have 26 footprints in total. Cut them out. Photocopy and cut out the 26 pictos on the pages that follow. Tape a picto to each footprint.



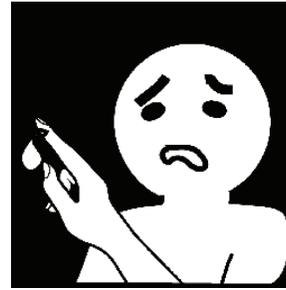
Thinking



Tearful



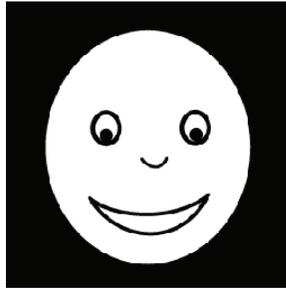
In pain



Not good



Happy



Confused



Overwhelmed



Losing my balance



Jogging



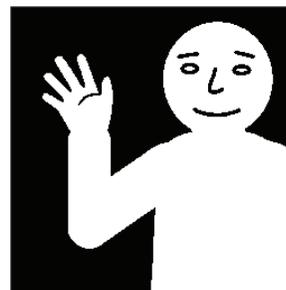
Fighting



Dressing up



Friendly



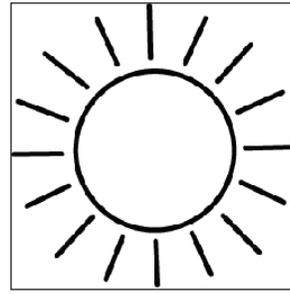
Receiving a gift



Angry



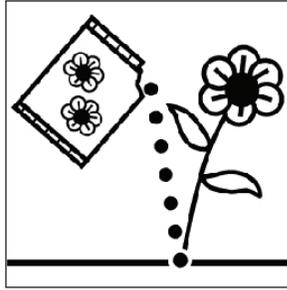
Sunny



Proud



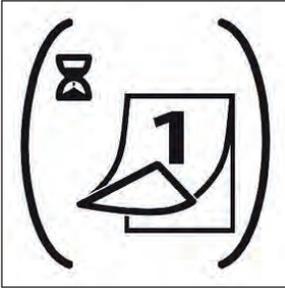
Growing



Rainy



Time is passing



Goodbye



Cloudy and foggy



"To do" list



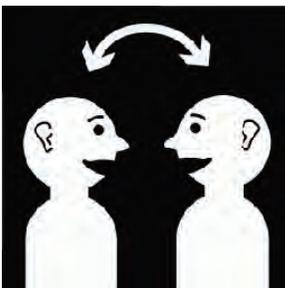
Meeting someone new



Prayer



Friendship



Things are good



Preparation for Week 6

What do I need to be well?

Directions: Circle the things on this page that help you to be well (relaxed, happy).
In the empty boxes draw or write in other things that help you to feel happy and relaxed.

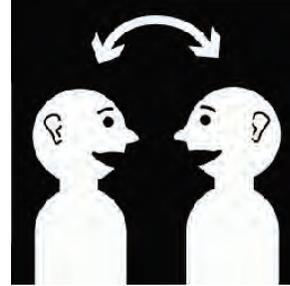
Exercise



Sleeping well



Friendships



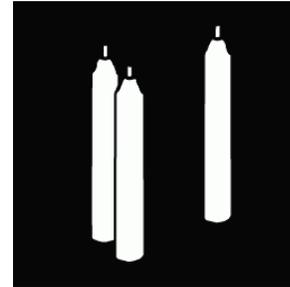
Things I enjoy



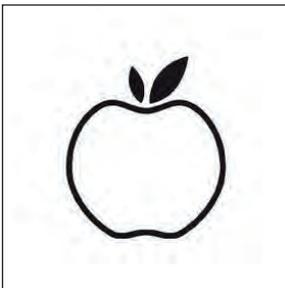
Celebrations



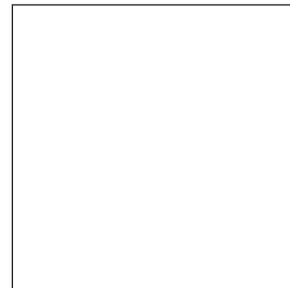
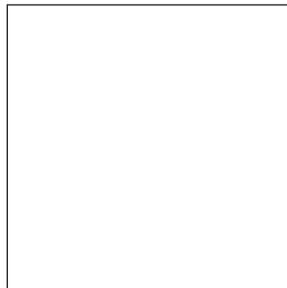
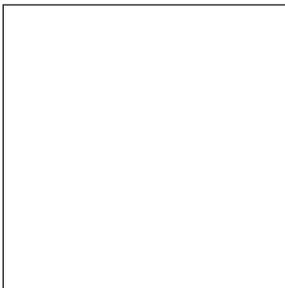
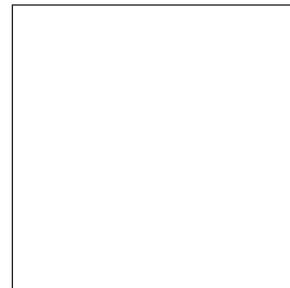
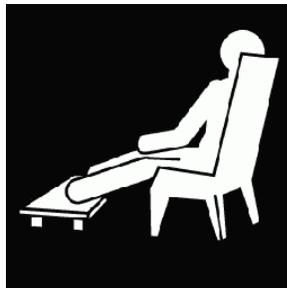
Prayer



Healthy eating



Relaxing



Week 6 **Looking after myself**

Goals

-
- **To talk together about ways of looking after oneself and the importance of doing so during a time of grief.**
-

Facilitators' preparation

- Be familiar and comfortable with the materials and plan for the meeting. Prepare yourselves to welcome the group.
- Plan the ambiance with the mandala and other items you may bring.
- Make copies of the handout for Week 7.
- Prepare 1 or 2 examples of self-care activities that the group members will participate in during the meeting. Here are some possibilities: Listening together to some calming music while sipping a cup of herbal tea; practicing deep breathing; doing a guided meditation or a video meditation; going together for a quiet walk in nature; watching the sunset; an art activity such as drawing, colouring or working with clay.

Plan for the meeting

- Opening ritual
- Brief check-in
- Invite members to share the special thing that they did for themselves during the week.
- Invite members to share about the handout from last week "What do I need to be well?"
- Talk together about the need to look after ourselves when we are grieving. A facilitator may share an example of some particular self-care activity that helps them.

Activity

- Practice 1 or 2 self-care activities together in the group.

Closing

- Pass out the handout for Week 7 and explain the preparation for next week. Participants should come prepared to share 1 or 2 goals they have set to help them continue to move forward during the weeks and months after the group ends.
- Explain: The final meeting will be a celebration (a dinner or a special dessert and tea). Assign items for participants to bring for the celebration.
- Brief check-out
- Closing ritual

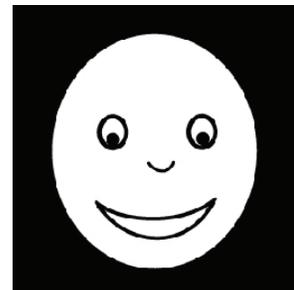
Preparation for Week 7

Continuing to move forward

- Name or draw some things you can do to keep growing in your acceptance of loss and/or to find new ways of entering more fully back into life.



- Name or draw some ways you can continue to look after yourself.



- Set 1 or 2 goals for yourself for the coming weeks and months. My goals are

Week 7 **Celebration: Life goes on, our lives continue**

Goals

- To help participants reclaim hope in their lives in an appropriate way.
- To help participants set realistic goals for after the group ends.
- To bring closure to the group. Recognize that this ending may also feel like a loss.
- To share in a special closing ritual.

Facilitators' preparation

- Be familiar and comfortable with the material and plan for the meeting. Prepare yourselves to welcome the group.
- Plan the ambiance with the mandala and other items you may bring.
- Think about each member of the group: how will you acknowledge their contribution to the group?
- Plan a closing ritual.
- Assemble markers or paints for decorating the reverse side of the mandala pieces if you decide to do this. The pieces might then be reassembled for the closing ritual and at the end of this ritual each person could be given their piece of the mandala to keep—a reminder that they share their on-going journey with others. Clear polyurethane spray can again be applied, this time to the reverse side of the pieces, to preserve them.
- Organize the celebratory dinner or dessert.

Plan for the meeting

- Opening ritual
- Brief check-in
- Enjoy dinner or dessert together (be mindful of time-keeping).
- Invite each person to share the 1 or 2 goal(s) that they have set for themselves to help them in continuing to be in a different relationship with the loved one they lost or/and continuing to move forward with their life.

Activity

- Invite each person to decorate the other side of their mandala piece with a symbol of hope or of something they received from these past weeks in the group.

Closing

- Decide as a group if you will come together again and, if so, who will organize this reunion.
- Check-out: Ask each one to share how they are as the group ends. Either here or in the closing ritual the facilitators should acknowledge each person's contribution to the group. Give out the mandala pieces to each participant if you have decided to do this.
- Closing ritual

Appendix 1

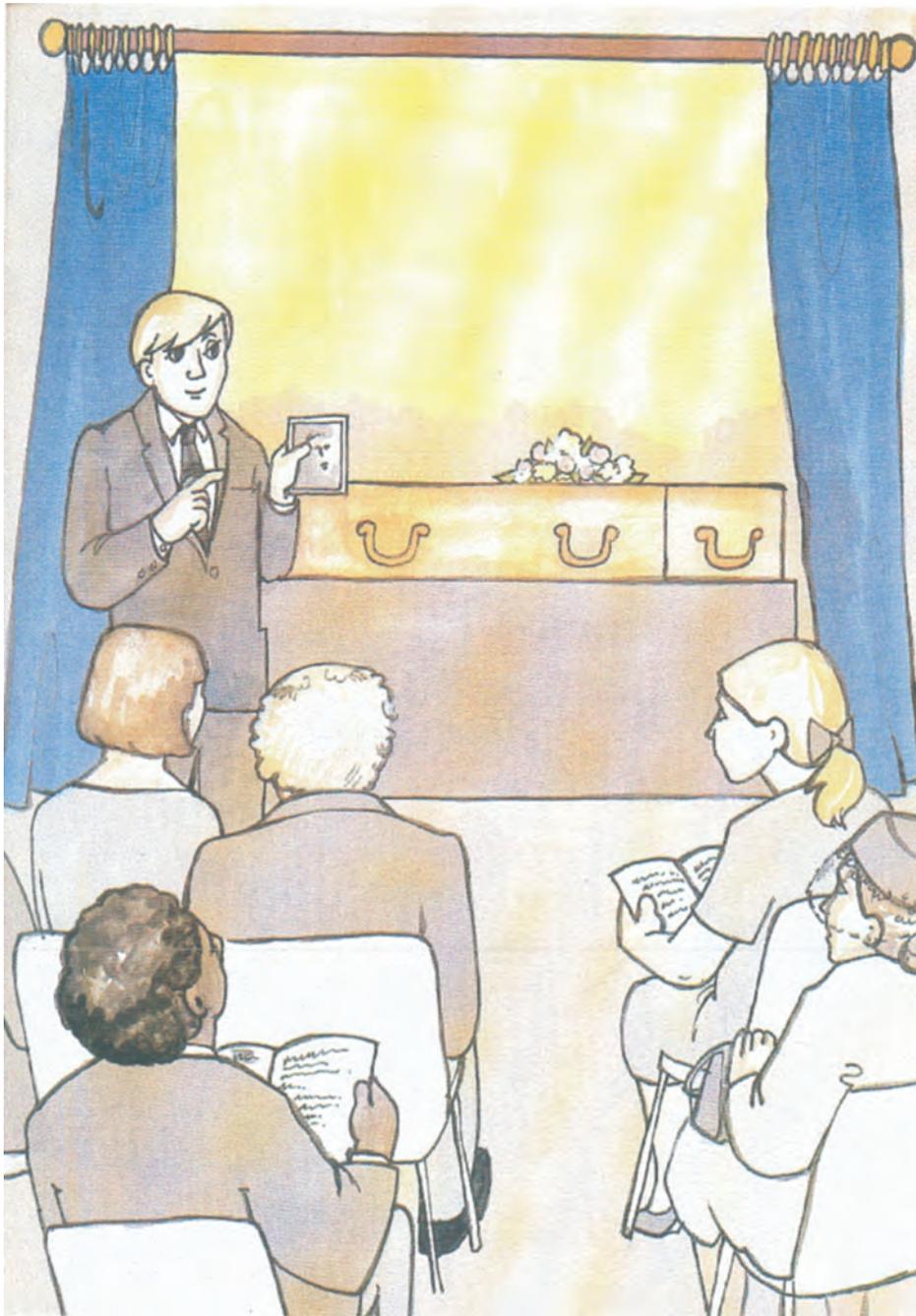
Drawings for Week 3

- Please note that these drawings are copyright to Sheila Hollins and Beth Webb. (Beth Webb is the illustrator.) Baroness Hollins has kindly given her permission for their use in this context but they should not be distributed for people to keep. See Resources section for bibliographic details and a link for ordering the books.



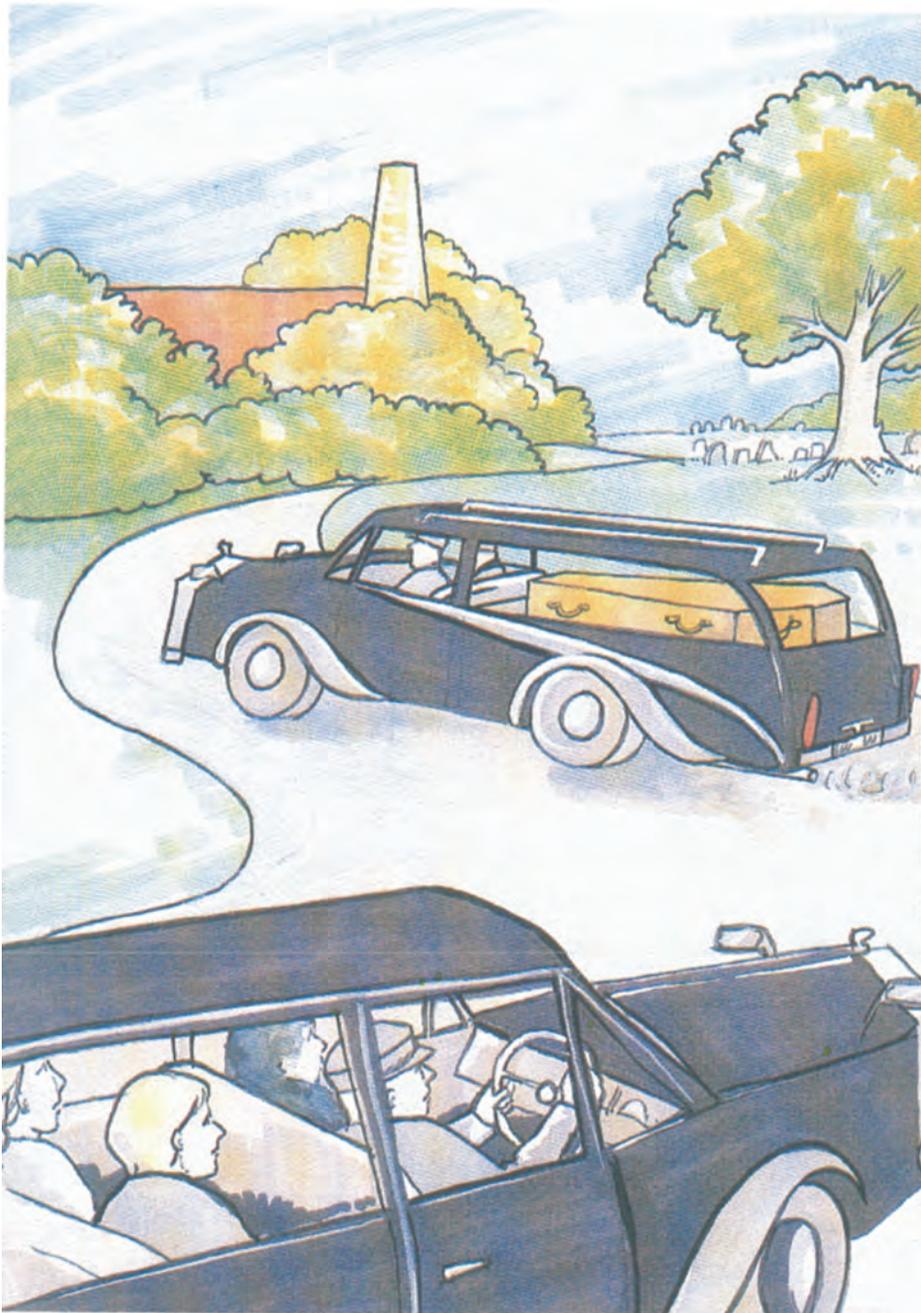
When Mum Died, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling

Appendix 1: Drawings for Week 3 (continued)



***When Dad Died*, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling**

Appendix 1: Drawings for Week 3 (continued)



***When Dad Died*, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling**

Appendix 1: Drawings for Week 3 (continued)



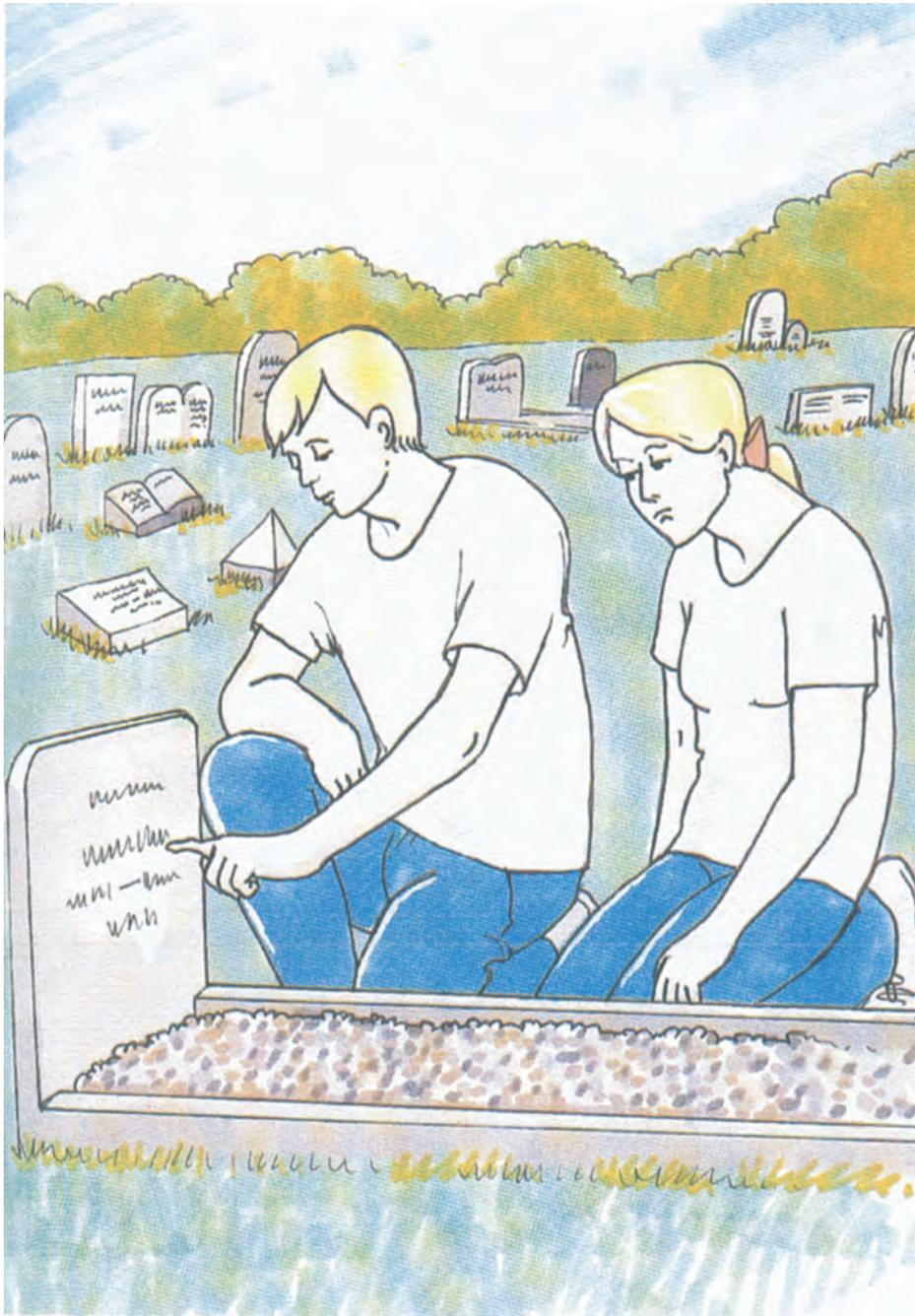
***When Dad Died*, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling**

Appendix 1: Drawings for Week 3 (continued)



***When Mum Died*, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling**

Appendix 1: Drawings for Week 3 (continued)



***When Dad Died*, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling**

Appendix 2

Drawings for Week 4

- Please note that these drawings are copyright. The author has kindly given her permission for their use in this context but they should not be distributed for people to keep. See Resources section for bibliographic details and a link for ordering the books.



Ron's Feeling Blue, by Sheila Hollins, Roger Banks and Jenny Curran

Appendix 2: Drawings for Week 4 (continued)



When Dad Died, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling

Appendix 2: Drawings for Week 4 (continued)



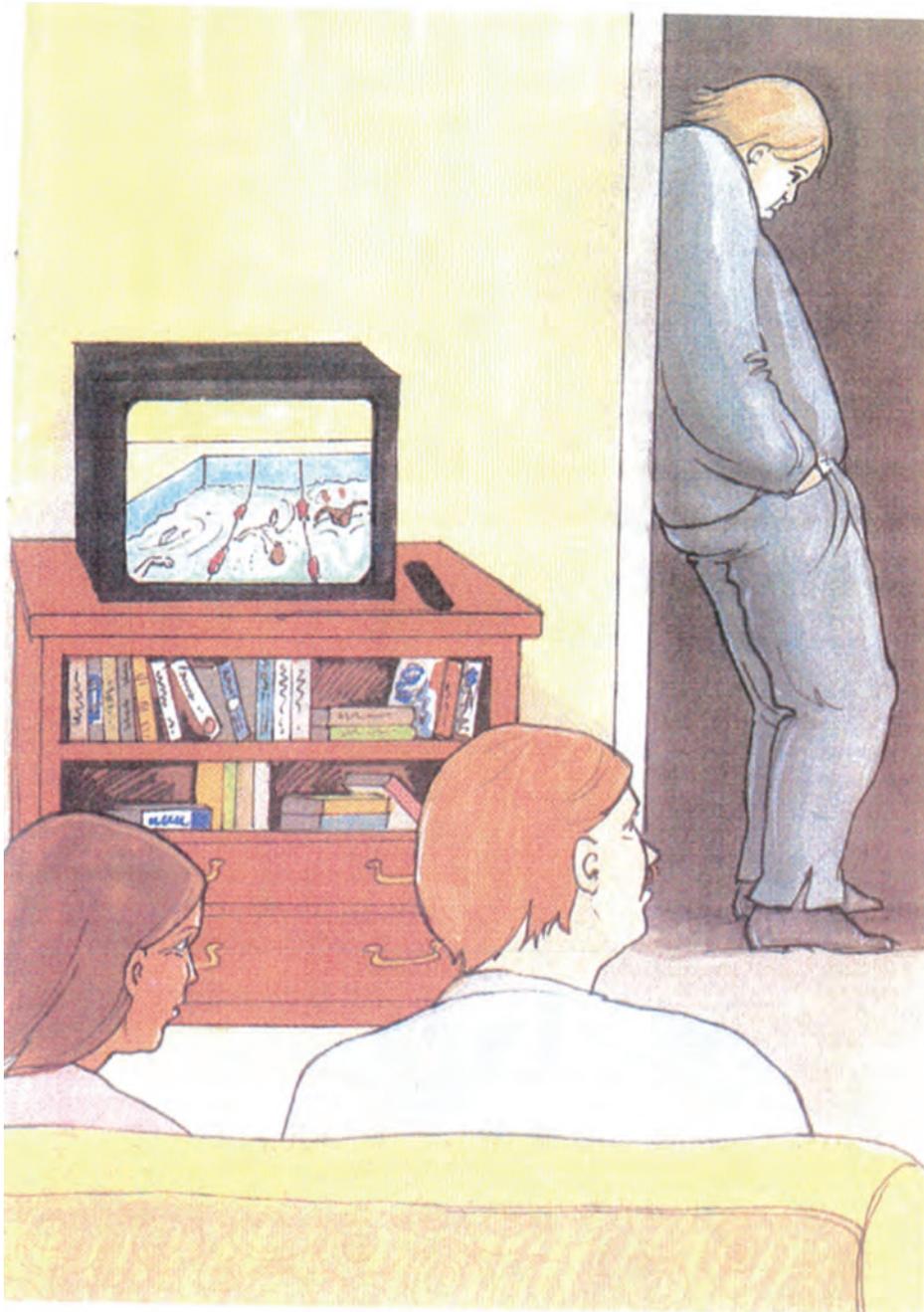
***When Dad Died*, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling**

Appendix 2: Drawings for Week 4 (continued)



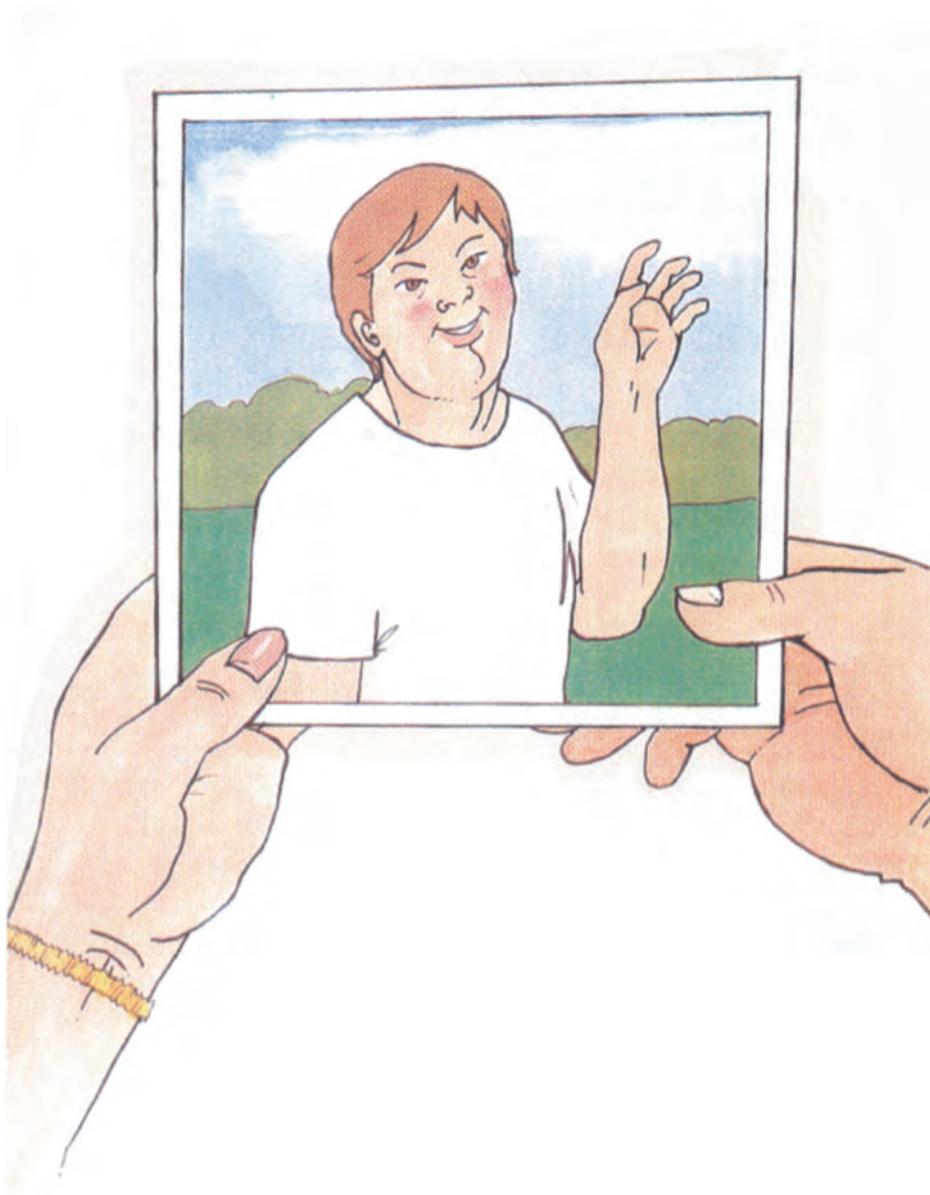
***Ron's Feeling Blue*, by Sheila Hollins, Roger Banks and Jenny Curran**

Appendix 2: Drawings for Week 4 (continued)



***Ron's Feeling Blue*, by Sheila Hollins, Roger Banks and Jenny Curran**

Appendix 2: Drawings for Week 4 (continued)



***Ron's Feeling Blue*, by Sheila Hollins, Roger Banks and Jenny Curran**

Resources

L'Arche Canada's website on Aging and Disability (www.aging-and-disability.org/) includes a section titled "Grieving" with short videos by members of a grief support group. The website's Resources and Links section includes several resources related to bereavement and grieving.

Books copyright Sheila Hollins and Beth Webb (illustrator):

Recognizing the need in her counseling practice with people who have intellectual disabilities, British psychiatrist Baroness Sheila Hollins has created these and many other small books with evocative drawings and little or no text.

When Dad Died, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling ISBN-10: 1904671047, ISBN-13: 978-1904671046

When Mum Died, by Sheila Hollins and Lester Sireling ISBN-10: 1904671039

Feeling Blue, released in 2011 in a new edition with more text under the title, *Ron's Feeling Blue*, by Sheila Hollins, Roger Banks et Jenny Curran. ISBN 978-1-908020-09-3

These books can be ordered from the "Books Beyond Words" Website: www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk or by email from custserv@turpin-distribution.com.

Ruggs, Sharon, et al. *Memories Live Forever*. 1995. ISBN 0-9652410-0-9.

This little grief workbook written for children can readily be adapted for adults with intellectual disabilities. It can be obtained for \$5.00 (USD) from: www.compassionbooks.com

Worden, W.J. *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy, A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner*, 4th ed., ISBN-13: 978-0826101204, Springer Publishing Company, LLC, 2009.

