



FOXCANCER™
PREVENT. DETECT. UNITE.

COPING TOOLKIT

presented by Kids Konnected & FCancer

Guide prepared by Sophia Sandoval-Meyer, LCSW



[f](#) [t](#) [i](#) @letsfcancer // @kidskonnected

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACTIVITIES

My Feelings Heart (Ages 4-7)	1
Grief Mask (Ages 8-12)	6
My Heart (Ages 8-12)	9
My Journal (Ages 13-18)	14
The Mask (Ages 13-18)	20



AN INTRODUCTION

We want to help you help your kids after a parent or caregiver is diagnosed with cancer. Kids Konnected and FCancer both understand that when a parent or caregiver is affected by cancer, kids need support and care to understand they are not alone. Although both organizations strive to create community through in-person peer and psychosocial support, too often families in need are outside of our service area and unable to find local in-person support services.

Discussing cancer affecting a parent or caregiver is scary for adults and children alike. Having tools and activities can help families open the lines of communication, break feelings of isolation and help children be heard. For this reason, we've created this online toolkit to help youth better understand and express their emotions, develop positive coping skills, and communicate about the cancer in their family. We recommend these activities be completed and/or shared with a parent, caregiver, or trusted adult.

**Parents and caregivers should monitor warning signs in their child that might require meeting with a therapist or mental health professional including:*

- *Symptoms of chronic depression: sleeping difficulty, restlessness, low self-esteem*
- *Experiencing academic failure or indifference to school-related activities*
- *Deteriorating relationships with family and friends*
- *Risk-taking behaviors such as drug or alcohol abuse, fighting, sexual experimentation*
- *Considering suicidal thought or plans*



ACTIVITIES

MY FEELINGS HEART

AGES: 4-7

INTRODUCTION

“My Feelings Heart” is an activity that helps individuals of all different ages learn to recognize their emotions and to express them through art in a healthy way. Those who experience changes or loss often have a lot of emotions inside. Individuals who keep their feelings trapped inside and do not have healthy ways of expressing them, often experience more severe symptoms, like anger outbursts or depression. Children need outlets to express their feelings non-verbally. Many children, when asked how they are feeling will report feeling “fine”, when in reality there may be much more going on beneath the surface. Some children may not even be aware of how they are feeling. When given “My Feelings Heart” activity, children who normally would not share about their feelings are able to do so more easily and may start to become more aware of their emotions. For parents who use this activity with their child, it can help them to better understand and help their child.

SUPPLIES LIST

- Glue
- Tissue paper (assortment of colors)
- Scissors
- Feelings heart (at the end of this handout)
- Color Key (at the end of this handout)
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS >>

MY FEELINGS HEART

AGES: 4-7

INSTRUCTIONS

This activity requires an adult and child interacting together. You will be asking your child to use the "Feelings Heart" and "Color Key", located at the bottom of the handout, for this activity.

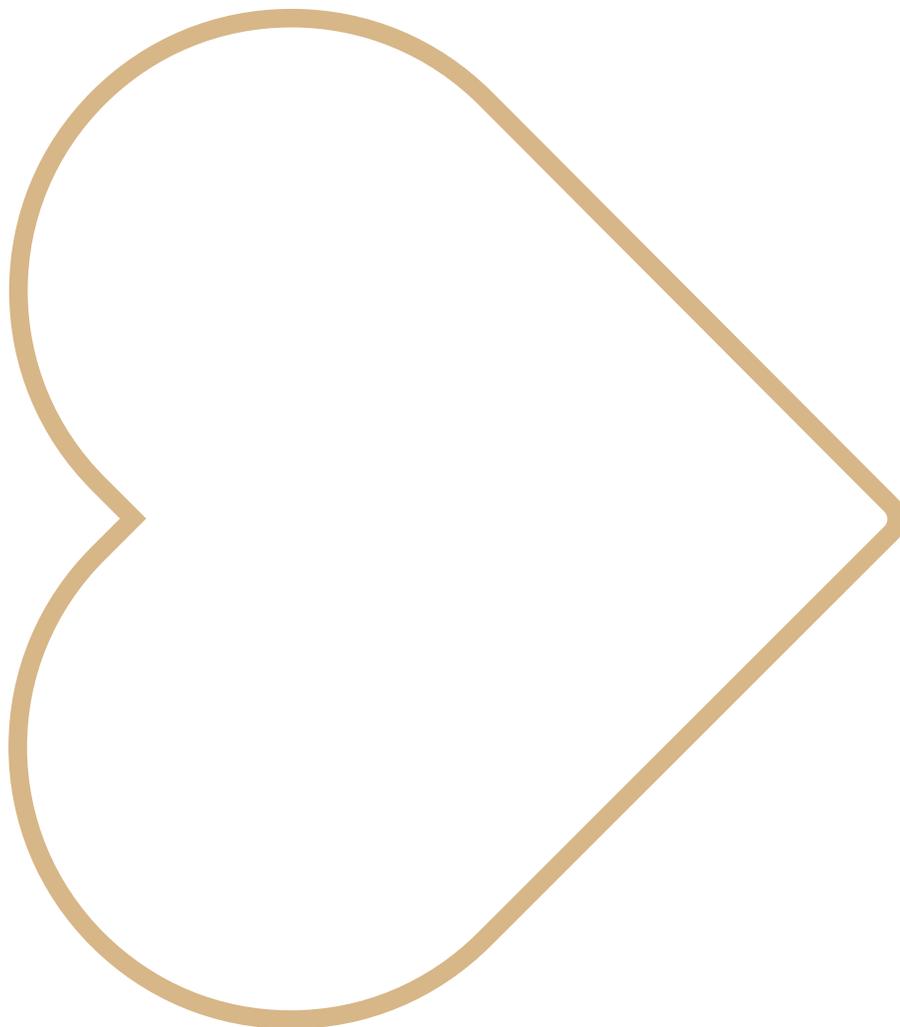
- 1) Take out all the art supplies and spread tissue paper out on a table.
- 2) Have your child locate the "Color Key" at the bottom of the handout. Print this out and place this in front of your child.
- 3) Have your child choose colors from the stack of colored tissue that represents each of the feeling words listed on the sheet. Additional places are left for your child or you to add in any other feelings they may be having. Your child may either choose to color the box in with colors that represent each feeling word or he/ she may choose to cut out various colors from the stack of tissue paper that represents a certain feeling word and glue it in down in the box drawn.
- 4) Next, locate "My Feelings Heart" at the bottom of this handout. Print this out and place this in front of your child ready for use.
- 5) Instruct your child to fill in their heart with the same colored tissue they used in their color key to represent their different feeling words. You can let the child know if they notice having that feeling a lot of the time, they will want to put a lot of that color of tissue paper into their heart. If they only feel that feeling a little bit of the time, they can put just a small amount of that color of tissue paper into their heart. Children can either tear the tissue paper or they can cut it into any shape or size they would like. Once the paper is torn or cut they will glue it onto their heart in any place that they would like until the entire heart is filled.
- 6) Once they have completed their heart, they will have an opportunity to share their creation with you. You may use this as an opportunity to explore what your child is feeling. (Example: "You put a lot of the red tissue for anger in there". Or "I see you put a little bit of yellow in your heart for happiness".) It's important to comment in a way that is nonjudgmental. For children who are less verbal, you may need to ask more questions or be more direct with getting information (example: "Tell me about the yellow that you put in your heart". "What were you thinking about?")
- 7) For children that describe having a lot of negative emotions this can be a sign that they need some additional support or tools for coping. Many kids benefit from group or individual counseling to help them learn to express their feelings.

RESOURCES >>

MY FEELINGS HEART

AGES: 4-7

MY FEELINGS HEART



MY FEELINGS HEART

AGES: 4-7

COLOR KEY

Sad

Mad

Name a feeling of your own

Happy

Worried

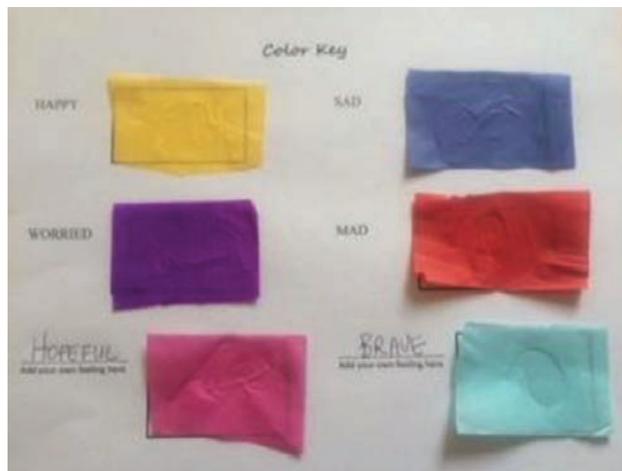
Name a feeling of your own

EXAMPLES >>

MY FEELINGS HEART

AGES: 4-7

EXAMPLES



GRIEF MASK

AGES: 8-12

INTRODUCTION

For Parents/ Caregivers: This is an activity that your child may choose to do alone or with you. They may need assistance in gathering art supplies and getting started. Let them be your guide in knowing how much help to provide.

A grief mask is a tool or activity to help a grieving person express their feelings in a healthy manner through art. Creating a grief mask is fun to do and is therapeutic because people are often better able to get in touch with their thoughts and emotions when creating art as opposed to talking it out. You don't have to be an artist to create a grief mask. You just have to be willing and accepting of whatever thoughts or feelings come up during the process. People report that the grief mask allowed them to get thoughts and feelings out that they would not have otherwise been aware of or felt comfortable verbalizing.

The creation of the mask involves decorating a mask with a variety of different art supplies, including magazine cut outs, paint, markers, scrap-booking embellishments, etc. There is really no limit to what you can put on your mask. Each mask is unique and is an expression of each person's individual process.

SUPPLIES LIST

- 1 mask (required and can be purchased at an arts and crafts store) paper/ cardboard masks work best.

SUGGESTED *(depending on what you would like to put on your mask)*

- Colored tissue paper
- Paints *(acrylic or water color paints)*
- Paint brushes
- Markers
- Glue
- Magazines *(a good variety with both images and words)*
- Scissors
- Images from the computer
- Stickers

INSTRUCTIONS >>

GRIEF MASK

AGES: 8-12

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Find an area large enough to spread out a variety of art supplies and with enough room to work on your mask. Place something protective down in case of any spills.
- 2) Place the blank mask down in front of you. Start by thinking about the change or loss that you are experiencing.
- 3) Look through magazines and anything that jumps out at you that makes you think about your loss. These are all things that you can cut out and add to your mask.
- 4) Think about the types of art supplies you want to include and just allow yourself to use whatever art supplies you are drawn to.
- 5) Be aware that there is no right or wrong when it comes to expressing yourself. Try not to judge what you are doing. It's not about what it looks like. The process of creating the mask is what counts. This is what will help you to work through your emotions.
- 6) Take your time with this project. There is no rush. You may need to leave it and come back to it later.
- 7) You are finished when you feel like it is complete. Consider talking to a family member or someone you trust about your mask to further process your emotions. (Not everyone feels like talking to someone. You are not required to share your mask with anyone).

EXAMPLES >>

GRIEF MASK

AGES: 8-12

EXAMPLES



MY HEART

AGES: 8-12

INTRODUCTION

“My Heart” is an activity that helps individuals of all different ages to recognize their emotions and to express them through art in a healthy way. Those who experience changes or loss often have a lot of emotions inside. Individuals who keep their feelings trapped inside and do not have healthy ways of expressing them, often experience more severe symptoms, like anger outbursts or depression. Many children, when asked how they are feeling will report feeling “fine”, when in reality there may be much more going on beneath the surface. Some children may not even be aware of how they are feeling. When given “My Heart” activity, children who normally would not share about their feelings are able to do so more easily. Also, children who might normally not have an awareness of how they are feeling, may start to become more aware of their emotions, the more often they use this activity. For parents who use this activity with their child, it can help them to better understand and help their child.

SUPPLIES LIST

- Glue
- Tissue paper (assortment of colors)
- Scissors
- Feelings heart (at the end of this handout)
- Color Key (at the end of this handout)
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils (optional)

[INSTRUCTIONS >>](#)

MY HEART

AGES: 8-12

INSTRUCTIONS

Adults: This an activity that involves some interaction between a child, (ages of 8-12) and a trusted adult. During the first part of the activity, children may feel more comfortable working independently. We would recommend allowing them to work independently while they are creating their "heart" but then having them share their "heart" with a trust adult or friend once it is completed. You will be asking your child to use the "Feelings Heart" and "Color Key", located at the bottom of this handout, for this activity.

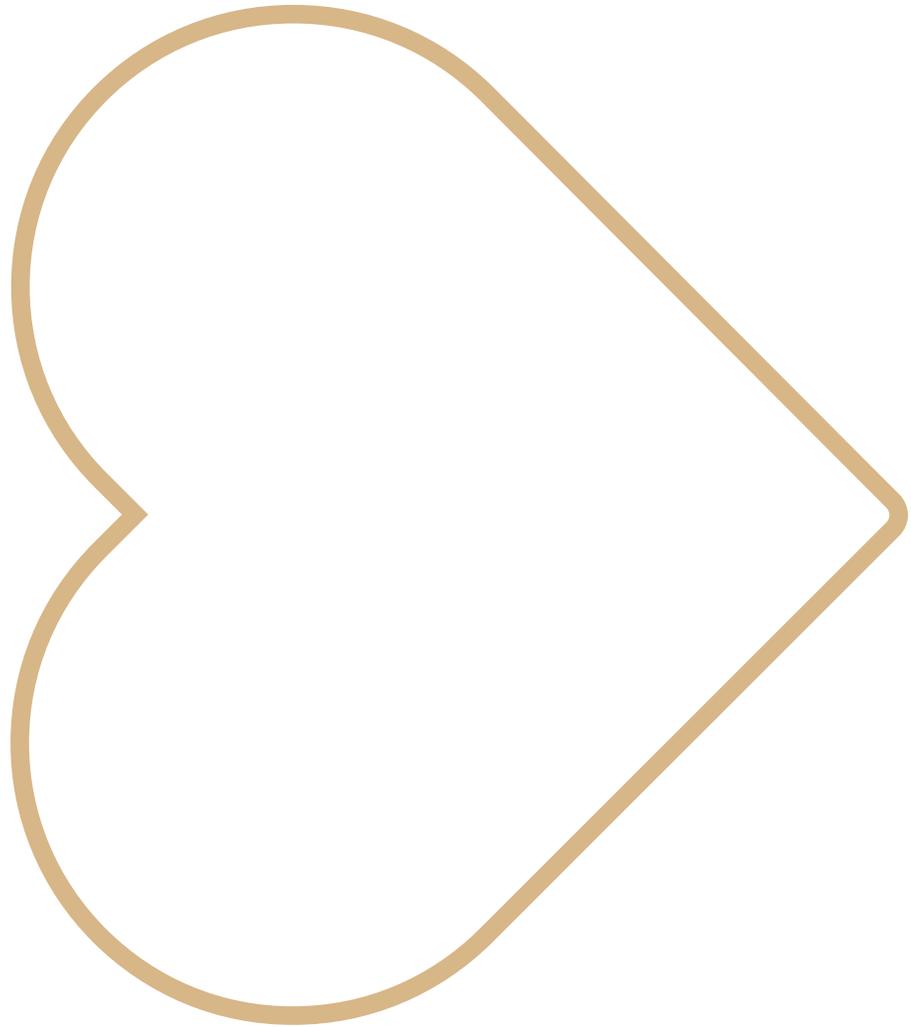
- 1) Take out all the art supplies and spread tissue paper out on a table.
- 2) Locate the "Color Key" at the bottom of the handout. Print this out and have it ready for use.
- 3) Next, choose colors from the stack of colored tissue that represents each of the feeling words listed on the sheet. Additional places are left for you to add in any other feelings you may be having. You may either choose to color the box in with colors that represent each feeling word or you may choose to cut out various colors from the stack of tissue paper that represents a certain feeling word and glue it in down in the box drawn.
- 4) Next, locate "My Feelings Heart" at the bottom of the handout. Print this out and have it ready for use.
- 5) Fill in your heart with the same colored tissue you used in their color key to represent your different feeling words. If you notice that you are having that feeling a lot of the time, you will want to put a lot of that colored tissue paper in your heart. If you only feel that feeling a little bit of the time, you can put just a small amount of tissue paper in your heart for that feeling word. You may either tear the tissue paper or you can cut it into any shape or size that you would like. Once the paper is torn or cut you will then glue it onto your heart in any place that you would like until the entire heart is filled.
- 6) Once you have a completed heart, you can share your creation with a trusted adult/person in your life. You may want to pay particular attention to any feelings that you experience a lot of the time. If you notice that you are experiencing a lot of sadness, anger, or worry this may be an indicator that you could use some additional support and it would be a good idea to talk to someone about your feelings.
- 7) Many older children benefit from group or individual counseling to help them learn ways to cope with difficult emotions.

RESOURCES >>

MY HEART

AGES: 8-12

MY FEELINGS HEART



MY HEART

AGES: 8-12

COLOR KEY

Sad

Mad

Name a feeling of your own

Happy

Worried

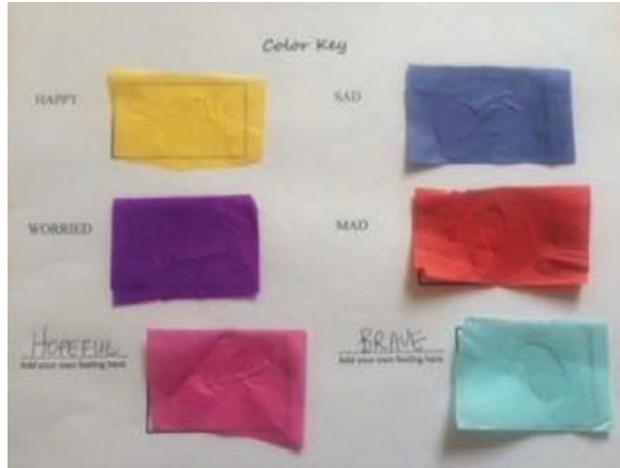
Name a feeling of your own

EXAMPLES >>

MY HEART

AGES: 8-12

EXAMPLES



MY JOURNAL

AGES: 13-18

INTRODUCTION

“My Journal” is a way for individuals to express themselves through use of various art media (painting, collage, drawing, photographs) in a journal. It can be done daily, weekly, or as often as one chooses. Expressing oneself through art can be helpful for anyone, but is particularly beneficial for someone who is experiencing a loss or change in their life. Using art as a form of expression is not dependent on talent or skill level and the person creating the journal can choose to keep it private or share it with someone else. There are many benefits to using an art journal: Art journals can help individuals learn to recognize their emotions, have a greater understanding of how their grief is impacting them, and have a healthy way to work through difficult / negative emotions.

SUGGESTED SUPPLIES LIST

- Journal (8 x 10 inches to bigger, with thicker pages)
- Tissue paper (assortment of colors)
- Glue, (glue stick, tacky glue, modge podge)
- Scissors
- Magazines (use a variety for cutting out images and words. Art magazines offer great pictures for expression)
- Computer Images
- Photographs
- Paint, (watercolor or acrylic)
- Paint brushes
- Markers, pastels, or colored pencils
- Scrapbooking embellishments (stickers, etc...)

INSTRUCTIONS >>

MY JOURNAL

AGES: 13-18

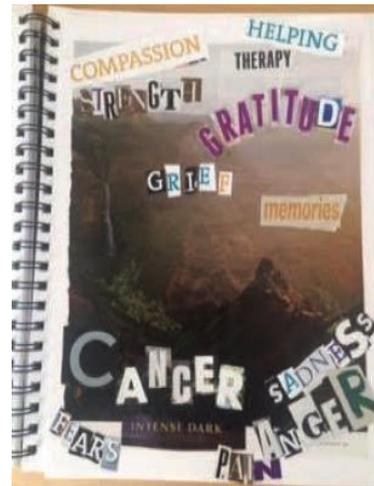
INSTRUCTIONS

A person has many different choices when creating a page in an art journal. The following are four different types of pages to choose from to when completing a page in your art journal: (You may choose to do one or all of these)

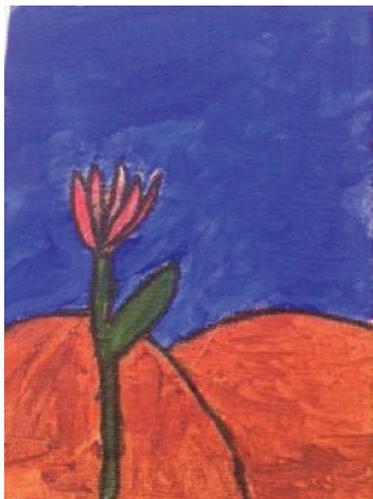
Color Expression



Collage Expression



Painting Expression



Mixed Media Expression



MY JOURNAL

AGES: 13-18

INSTRUCTIONS: COLOR EXPRESSION

- 1) Open up your journal book to a page where there are two blank pages on each side.
- 2) Choose colors from the stack of colored tissue that represents at least five different feeling words that you may be currently feeling or felt during the week. (e.g. sadness, anger, happiness, fear) Tear or cut out a very small amount of tissue paper (1 x 1 inch) and glue it down to your journal to create a color key. (see example)
- 3) Next, on the opposite page, fill in the journal page with the same colored tissue you used in your color key to represent your different feeling words. If you notice that you are having that feeling a lot of the time, you will want to put a lot of that colored tissue paper in your heart. If you only feel that feeling a little bit of the time, you can put just a small amount of tissue paper in your heart for that feeling word. You may either tear the tissue paper or you can cut it into any shape or size that you would like. Once the paper is torn or cut you will then glue it onto your journal page in any place that you would like until the entire page is filled.
- 4) Once you have a completed your journal page you can let it dry. You can keep it private or you can share your creation with a trusted person in your life. You may want to pay particular attention to any feelings that you experience a lot of the time. If you notice that you are experiencing a lot of sadness, anger, or worry this may be an indicator that you could use some additional support and it would be a good idea to talk to someone about your feelings.
- 5) Many teens benefit from group or individual counseling to help them learn ways to cope with difficult emotions.

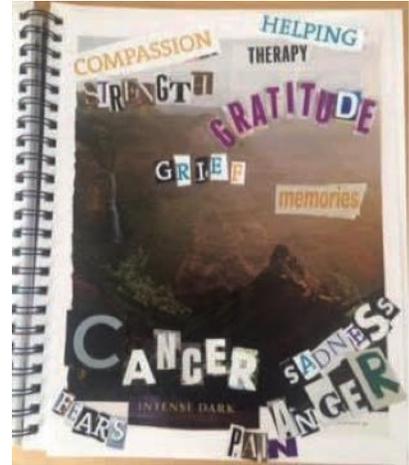


MY JOURNAL

AGES: 13-18

INSTRUCTIONS: COLLAGE EXPRESSION

- 1) Grab a stack of magazines (preferably ones you no longer want or use). It is good to have a variety of magazines to choose from (e.g. ones with lots of pictures, artwork, photos, words, and scenery).
- 2) Cut out pictures and words of things that represent your grief. This can take some time and you may need to finish the rest of this exercise at a later time.
- 3) Next, open your journal to a blank page.
- 4) Begin gluing down pictures, scenes, or words in any way that you would like. Sometimes people have creative ways of doing this. **Note:** there is no right or wrong way.
- 5) Again, once you have a completed your journal page you can let it dry. You can keep it private or you can share your creation with a trusted person in your life. Many times people report feeling better after they have done this exercise in their journal. This exercise can help to process feelings that you may be having. If you are having strong emotions, you may want to talk to someone.



MY JOURNAL

AGES: 13-18

INSTRUCTIONS: PAINTING EXPRESSION

- 1) You will want to start by getting out the painting supplies to use. (A cup of water for dipping paint brushes in, paint, paintbrushes, paper towels, etc...). You will need something protective to place down first in case there are any spills.
- 2) Next, take out your journal and open it to a blank page.
- 3) Allow yourself to just paint whatever you are feeling inside. It doesn't have to look like anything. It can be a design or even something more abstract. There is no right or wrong. You don't have to be an artist or even know how to paint. The point of this activity is just to get your feelings out on paper.
- 4) This can take some time to complete. It's important not to rush the process. Again, once you have a completed your journal page you can let it dry. You can keep it private or you can share your creation with a trusted person in your life. This exercise is a great way process feelings that you may be having. Again it's important to talk to someone if you are having strong emotions.



MY JOURNAL

AGES: 13-18

INSTRUCTIONS: MIXED MEDIA EXPRESSION

- 1) This activity is similar to the painting expression activity, except this time you will be adding multiple things to your journal page. You may choose several of the things from the list of supplies for your journal book page.
- 2) Again, you will be opening up your journal book to a blank page.
- 3) You will need something protective to place down first in case there are any spills.
- 4) Pick from the any of the art supplies that you have out to get started in expressing yourself. Allow yourself to just paint, draw, or glue down embellishments to express whatever you are feeling inside. It doesn't have to look like anything. It can be a design or even something more abstract. There is no right or wrong. You don't have to be an artist or even know how to paint. The point of this activity is just to get your feelings out on paper.
- 5) Again, this can take some time to complete. It's important not to rush the process. Once you have a completed your journal page you can let it dry. You can keep it private or you can share your creation with a trusted person in your life. The mixed media expression exercise is a great way process feelings that you may be having inside. Again, it's important to talk to someone if you are having strong emotions. Note: When using mixed media, if you start to feel overwhelmed, consider limiting the items that you are using to only 1-3 things or take a break and plan on returning to the journal page at a later time.



THE MASK

AGES: 13-18

INTRODUCTION

A mask is a tool to help a grieving person express their feelings in a healthy manner through art. Creating a grief mask is fun to do and is therapeutic because people are often better able to get in touch with their thoughts and emotions when creating art as opposed to talking it out. You don't have to be an artist to create a grief mask. You just have to be willing and accepting of whatever thoughts or feelings come up during the process.

A grief mask is especially helpful for someone suffering a loss or going through a significant change in their lives. A lot of emotions come up for people during these times and the mask is an excellent way to get those feelings out. Often people report that the mask allowed them to express themselves in ways previously unavailable.

The creation of the mask involves decorating a mask with a variety of different art supplies, including magazine cut outs, paint, markers, scrapbooking embellishments, etc... There is really no limit to what you can put on your mask. Each mask is unique and is an expression of each person's individual process.

SUPPLIES LIST

- 1 mask (required and can be purchased at an arts and crafts store) paper/ cardboard masks work best.

SUGGESTED *(depending on what you would like to put on your mask)*

- Colored tissue paper
- Paints (*acrylic or water color paints*)
- Paint brushes
- Markers
- Glue
- Magazines (*a good variety with both images and words*)
- Scissors
- Images from the computer
- Stickers

INSTRUCTIONS >>

THE MASK

AGES: 13-18

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Find an area large enough to spread out a variety of art supplies and with enough room to work on your mask. Place something protective down in case of any spills.
- 2) Place the blank mask down in front of you. Start by thinking about the change or loss that you are experiencing.
- 3) Look through magazines and anything that jumps out at you that makes you think about your loss. These are all things that you can cut out and add to your mask.
- 4) Think about the types of art supplies you want to include and just allow yourself to use whatever art supplies you are drawn to.
- 5) Be aware that there is no right or wrong when it comes to expressing yourself. Try not to judge what you are doing. It's not about what it looks like. The process of creating the mask is what counts. This is what will help you to work through your emotions.
- 6) Take your time with this project. There is no rush. You may need to leave it and come back to it later.
- 7) You are finished when you feel like it is complete. Consider talking to a family member or someone you trust about your mask to further process your emotions. (Not everyone feels like talking to someone. You are not required to share your mask with anyone).

EXAMPLES >>

THE MASK

AGES: 13-18

EXAMPLES

