

HEALING YOUR  
GRIEVING HEART  
For Teens

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100 PRACTICAL IDEAS

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ALAN D. WOLFELT, PH.D.



Companion  
PRESS

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# 1.

## Understand the difference between grief and mourning.

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- Grief is what you think and feel on the inside when someone you love dies. It's numbness, sadness, anger, guilt, and sometimes relief, all rolled up into one. It's a pain in your gut and a hole in your chest.
- Mourning is expressing your grief, letting it out somehow. You mourn when you cry, talk about the death, write about it, punch a pillow.
- Everybody grieves inside when someone they love dies. But only people who mourn really heal and move on to live and love fully again.
- This book does two things: It teaches you about grief and gives you mourning ideas. Mourning is awesome. Really. It's powerful and it's the only thing that works.

### Express yourself:

What feelings are you having right now about the death? Express them right this minute by writing them down or by telling someone.

How do you feel now that you've done a bit of mourning?

# 2.

## Understand the concept of "reconciliation."

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- Sometimes you'll hear people talk about "recovering" from grief. I don't like this term because it implies that grief is an illness that must be cured. Grief is not an illness but a natural and necessary process.
- Besides, you don't "recover" from or "get over" grief. Instead, you become "reconciled" to it. In other words, you learn to live with it and are forever changed by it.
- This does not mean a life of misery, however. We often not only heal but grow through grief. Our lives can potentially be deeper and more meaningful after the death of someone loved.
- Reconciliation takes time. You may not become truly reconciled to your loss for several years and even then you may have "griefbursts" forever.

### Express yourself:

Talk to someone who's experienced the death of someone she loved. Ask her how she survived and if she's "recovered" from the deaths. Her story may help you understand that though grief is forever, it softens over time and that life can be joyful once more.

# 3.

## Attend the funeral or memorial service.

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- Rituals allow us to honor and memorialize someone who's died. It may seem difficult to face going to a funeral or memorial service. But participating in such an event will help you acknowledge the loss and begin to reconcile yourself to it.
- There's comfort in knowing that others share your loss, and the support of others can help you through your grief.
- Being part of a memorial ritual helps dose you with the reality of the death and melt feelings of denial or disbelief you may have experienced when you first learned of the death.
- You can participate in the funeral by doing a reading, playing music, creating a personalized program on your computer, lighting a candle or placing something special inside the casket.

### Express yourself:

Say goodbye to the person who died. Let him know that you will miss him and keep memories of him alive.

# 4.

## UNDERSTAND THE SIX NEEDS OF MOURNING

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### **Need 1. Accept the reality of the death.**

- Someone you love has died and can never come back. That's a really hard thing to accept, but it's true.
- It may take you weeks, even months, to really accept the fact that this person is gone. It's normal for it to take that long.
- First you'll come to accept the death intellectually, with your head. Only over time will you come to fully accept it with your heart.
- Now and then, especially at first, you may push away or deny the reality to yourself. That's also normal. You'll accept the reality, bit by bit, as you're ready.

### **Express yourself:**

Tell someone about the death today. Talking about it will help you work on this important first step to reconciling your loss.