

HEALING YOUR  
GRIEVING HEART  
FOR KIDS

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100 PRACTICAL IDEAS

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Companion  
**PRESS**

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## A NOTE TO PARENTS AND OTHER LOVING GROWN-UPS

This book is for children ages 6-12 who are grieving the death of someone they love. The basic message of the book is that children need to mourn—that is, to express their grief outside themselves—if they are to heal. They also need the compassionate support of adults like you.

Please read through this book before giving it to a child so you'll be able to help the child with the 100 Ideas. You may need to read the book aloud to or along with 6-8 year-olds who are just starting to read independently.

Thank you for being a grown-up who helps children mourn well so they can go on to live well and love well.

# Introduction

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When I was a kid, one of my friends died. His name was Phil. We played on a baseball team together. Sometimes we went on long bike rides all over town. Then he got sick with a cancer called leukemia. He lived for a while, but then he died.

I was very sad. I also had lots of questions. But nobody wanted to talk to me about the death! The grown-ups in my life thought they could protect me by not talking about it.

Inside I felt lots of grief about the death. (Grief may be a word you haven't learned, but it just means the painful thoughts and feelings you have after someone you love dies.) The trouble was, I wasn't helped to let my grief out. I was confused and sad for a long, long time.

Now I'm a grown-up with kids of my own. I became a grief counselor. I've helped lots of grieving kids over the years. They've taught me many important lessons. The most important lesson grieving children have taught me is that they need to mourn.

Letting your grief out is called mourning. You need to mourn so you can start to feel better. If you don't mourn, your feelings will stay all bottled up inside like mine did.

I wrote this book to help you mourn. The 100 ideas give you ways to think about and feel your grief.

I'm sorry that someone you love has died. This is a very hard time for you. But I promise you this: If you let your grief out, and if you can find grown-ups who will help you with your mourning, you'll feel much better. And, over time, your life will be full of joy and happiness again.

You are special. You are loved. And you are so alive. I know you can do this. Mourn well and live well. Go for it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alan D. Wolfelt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "A".

# 1.

## Learn that grief and mourning are different.

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*Grief* (rhymes with leaf) is what you think and feel inside when someone you love dies. When you're in grief, you're *grieving* (rhymes with leaving).

*Mourning* (pronounced the same as morning) means letting those thoughts and feelings come out somehow.

You need to mourn so you can start to feel better. If you keep everything inside you'll only feel worse.

**Write or draw your feelings about this:**

# 2.

## Take it easy on yourself.

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The death of someone you love is probably the hardest thing you'll ever have to deal with. Go easy on yourself. This is going to take time.

**Write or draw your feelings about this:**