



Mental Health – Stress Grade 7

UNIT OVERVIEW

*...leave your gift there before the altar and go;
first be reconciled to your brother or sister
and then come and offer your gift.*

Matthew 5: 23

Duration

- [Stress in Family and Other Relationships](#) 40 minutes
- [We See Things Differently](#) 70 minutes
- [A Time for Reconciliation](#) 30 minutes

[Link to GRIEF lessons](#)

Description

This unit introduces examples of stress in the family and other relationships, the importance of recognizing different perspectives in these situations and the value of reconciliation as an appropriate way to bring closure to any hurtful aspects that have occurred.

Background Information

Respecting Privacy

Family members, including parents, have a very clear right to privacy in matters related to mental health. As this unit begins, it is important to instruct the class that you will be expecting personal family information to remain private. The use of role playing, case studies, stories, film or television clips allows the discussion to remain objective while still having relevant application to the personal lives of students.

Clearly encourage and support the value of reconciliation when a family situation has been affected due to hurtful events among the family members.

Catholic Graduate Expectations

A. Stress in Family Relationships

- 6(a) Relates to family members in a loving, compassionate and respectful manner.
- 6(c) Values and honours the important role of the family in society.

B. We See Things Differently

- 3(a) Recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges.
- 3(b) Creates, adapts, evaluates new ideas in light of the common good.
- 3(c) Thinks reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems.

C. A Time For Reconciliation

- 1(i) Integrates faith with life.
- 1(j) Recognizes that “sin”, human weakness, conflict and forgiveness are part of the human journey” and that the cross, the ultimate sign of forgiveness is at the heart of redemption.
- 7(c) Seeks and grants forgiveness.

Ministry Expectations Codes Expectations Language

The student will be able to:

- identify various sources of stress in relationships with their families
- identify positive strategies for handling stress in their family relationships
- identify sources of support with regard to issues related to stress in their families
- be encouraged to accept the changing nature of their relationship as they approach adolescence
- be encouraged to appreciate the value of good communication and flexibility in family relationships
- examine and apply a model for decision-making

Assessment and Evaluation

- Demonstrates an understanding of the meaning of stress
- Identifies sources of stress in the family
- Works cooperatively in group projects
- Identifies positive strategies for dealing with stress
- Can express sensitivity and awareness to differences of perspectives
- Can give examples of Scripture teachings being applied to everyday life
- Can explain the meaning of Reconciliation
- Can give examples of Reconciliation as related to stressful situations

Links to Fully Alive

Fully Alive: Theme Two “Living in Relationship”, Topic 2: The Family

Suggestions for Accommodations

As per individual student’s IEP’s, implement such strategies as flexible groupings, fewer content expectations, scribing, re-phrasing, retelling, oral quizzes, or posters rather than written work.

Appendices

Black Line Master 1: Stress Information Sheet

Additional Resources

Esherick, Joan. *Balancing Act: A Teen's Guide to managing Stress*. Philadelphia: Mason Crest Publishers, 2005. (This outstanding book offers teens a primer on stress.)

Carlson, Richard, *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff for Teens: Simple Ways to Keep Your Cool in Stressful Times*. New York: Hyperion, 2000.

Morganett, R.S. *Skills for Living: Group Counselling Activities for Young Adolescents*. Champaign, Illinois: Research Press, 1990

Powell, Mark and Kelly Adams. *Stress Relief: The Ultimate Teen Guide*. Lanham. Mass.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.

Youngs, Bettie and Jennifer Youngs. *A Taste-Berry Teen's Guide to Managing Stress and Pressures of Life*. Deerfield Beach, Fla.: Health Communications, 2001.

Websites

Teacher Reference Only:

www.griefworksbc.com

www.kidshealth.org

www.aacap.org

www.mindspring.com

www.teachhealth.com

www.lifelongmentalhealth.com

www.life.familyeducation.com

www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_signs.htm

Stress - Grade Seven

Lesson One

STRESS IN FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

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Description

This activity is an introduction to stress and the process of identifying examples of stress in family relationships.

Materials

- Chart paper,
- Markers,
- Black Line Master 1

Notes to Teacher

Stress is the emotional experience of distress, strain or pressure usually caused by outside or interior factors. Many adolescents experience a range of stress factors in their lives. These often occur because of the natural desire for greater independence and the changes of puberty as well as the new physical, intellectual, and social experiences adolescents are encountering.

These learning activities will focus on stress in family relationships. The accompanying Black line master Stress Information Sheet will provide additional information about stress, causes of stress and the physical results of stress.

Overall Learning Expectation

identify various sources of stress in relationships with families
be encouraged to accept the changing nature of their relationships as they approach adolescence

Assessment Opportunities: suggestions for assessing expectations

Demonstrates an understanding of the meaning of stress
Identifies sources of stress in the family
Works cooperatively with others in a group

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

- 1) Introduce the topic of stress to the students with the information given in the “Notes to the Teacher” above and distribute the Stress Information Sheet Black line Master 1.
- 2) Highlight some key ideas from the black line master. Ask the students to spend a few minutes reading over the sheet individually. Have the students focus on the second paragraph and identify specific times when they have experienced these various physical responses to stress.
- 3) Have the students work in groups of four. Distribute to each group a piece of chart paper with the word STRESS written in the middle. Using the Mind Mapping Strategy, have the students list examples of stress that adolescents’ experience in the family.
- 4) When the students have completed recording their ideas, ask each group to share two of their examples. Continue the sharing of ideas as long as they are not repeating examples.
- 5) Post the sheets around the classroom.

Stress Information Sheet

Stress is the emotional/physical experience of distress, strain or pressure usually caused by outside or interior factors. Stressors are the factors that cause and provoke stress. These include a whole range of outside as well as interior sources. Besides reaction to pressures and differences between family members' expectations, the adolescent's own sense of self-esteem, poor coping mechanisms, perception of one's own physical appearance and body image, fear of social non-acceptance, and concern of academic achievement can be some of the interior stressors that cause stress.

Physical Signs of Stress:

When a person experiences high levels of stress the body responds in a variety of ways. The nervous system and specific hormones become activated and cause the body to produce more adrenaline and cortisol that will enter the blood stream. As a result there is a strong increase of heart rate, blood pressure, breathing rate and metabolism.

There may be problems sleeping, upset stomach, sweaty palms, changes in eating patterns (eating more than usual or less than usual), frequent headaches, butterflies in the stomach, nausea or vomiting.

The large muscle groups receive an added blood supply and this puts the muscles on alert. As stored glucose is released, there is a great increase of body energy. Sweat occurs to help cool the body.

Psychological Signs of Stress

These signs might include feeling irritable or depressed, forgetful, feeling rushes of anger for no apparent reason, crying easily, and being accident prone.

Behavioural Signs of Stress

Over reacting to situations, constantly arguing with parents and friends, avoidance, blowing up in anger, being mean or hurtful to others are examples of this.

(More examples can be found at www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_signs.htm)

“It is integral to note that every individual responds to stress in their own unique manner and hence no one experiences exactly the same physical, psychological or behavioural signs of stress. Exhibiting one sign does not automatically mean that you are experiencing stress. For example, having a headache could mean you are dehydrated. However, exhibiting a number of signs consistently over time, could mean you are not coping with stress well.” (Morganett, 1990)

In some situations, low level stress can occur from long-term stressful situations such as long term illness, the apprehension of moving and changing schools, coping with a parental separation or divorce and an unsafe living environment.

Stress - Grade Seven

Lesson Two

WE SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY

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Materials

- T-Charts for each pair of students

Description

This activity is intended to help the students realize that persons involved in the same stressful situation with one another often are experiencing the situation from a different perspective. It is intended to sensitize the students that there is often a different viewpoint to the situation.

Notes to Teacher

Stress is often related to an individual interpretation of the situation. Using examples of family stress, explain that sometimes persons are approaching the stressful event from entirely different perspectives. For example, a student comes home an hour late after working on the weekend. He/she sees no problem with “hanging out” with some friends after work even though it is much later than an established time has been set. His/her parents are anxious and concerned. The result is frequent stress filled conversations following the late arrival events.

Discuss what the different perspectives and interpretations of this situation would be from the student’s perspective and from the parents’ perspective. Take time to identify some of the key differences and reasons for the differences. It is important that both the student and the parents are aware of and tuned into the very different perspectives and interpretations involved with the same situation. (This Lesson relates closely to Fully Alive Grade 7, Theme 2, “Communication in the Family”, pages 40-45.)

Over All Learning Expectation

The student will be able to:

- Recognize that stress often occurs because of different perspectives of a situation
- Identify a positive strategy for handling stress
- Be encouraged to appreciate the value of good communication and flexibility in family relationships

Assessment Opportunities: suggestions for assessing expectations

Role-playing

Sensitivity and awareness to differences of perspectives

Summary of conclusions

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

- 1) Group the students in pairs
 - a) Assign one example of the stressful situations that were generated in Activity One to each pair of students.
 - b) The pairs of students are to prepare a role-playing situation in which one student will role-play the situation from the student's perspective and the other student will role-play the situation from the other family member's perspective.
 - c) In attempting to "hear" the other person's perspective, the technique of "self-talk" might be helpful. This technique is an attempt to use cues that help to deal more effectively with the stressful situation. (Examples: "Slow down...take a deep breath... clear your mind." "Something positive is bound to come of this...take your time... gather your thoughts.")
 - d) Ask the students to make a real effort to "hear" the other person's perceptions, viewpoints, and feelings.
 - e) Use concepts from Notes to Teacher in highlighting sensitivity and awareness to another person's perspective.

- 2) Continuing to work in pairs
 - a) The students prepare a T-Chart to identify and list the student's perspective in one section of the Chart and another family member's perspective in the other section of the Chart
 - b) The students are asked to prepare a concluding paragraph that expresses what they have observed as the differences of the perspectives and viewpoints of the persons involved in the situation.
 - c) Have a number of the students present their role-playing situations and present their observations to the class. Ask for further comments and insights to be shared.
 - d) Post the T-Charts and do a gallery walk to observe the insights of different perspectives that the students have identified

Optional Activity

The students work in groups of eight students and take turns sharing their role-playing situations with the follow-up observations and discussion.

Stress - Grade Seven
Lesson Three
A Time for Reconciliation

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Description

This activity invites the students to grow in awareness of the value and need for reconciliation when a stressful situation has included hurtful interaction between persons. The complexity and difficulty of reconciliation is highlighted.

Materials

A Bible for Scripture passages: Matthew 5: 23-24, Genesis 37: 1-36 and 45:1-15, Luke 15: 11-32

Notes to Teacher

Reconciliation involves recognizing the importance of acceptance and an effort to be in tune with the other person's perspective instead of building walls which can cause stress between family members. Reconciliation enables persons to build bridges and make connecting links.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus' teachings clearly remind us of the importance and necessity of being reconciled. Before we offer a gift at the altar, if there is a situation that a brother, sister or any family member has anything against us, we are encouraged to leave the gift there before the altar and first be reconciled with that brother, sister or family member.

Reconciliation is not always quick and easy. Often it takes time, patience, and a sincere effort to be respectful of the other person's viewpoint and position and to recognize the need to be reconciled. At times we need to pray and ask God's help to be open to the person and another side of the situation. It is not necessary, however, to entirely respect the other's viewpoint, since it might be wrong. Often we have been genuinely hurt by the actions of others. Reconciliation does not mean that we accept the wrong that has been done to us. Rather, through the grace of God, we are willing to move on, letting go of anger and hatred.

It is important to note that reconciliation, therefore, is at the level of the relationship. It does not necessarily condone or approve of actions. The Father of the prodigal son forgives and reconciles, but he did not have approve of his son's actions.

Over All Learning Expectation

The student will be able to:

- identify the meaning of forgiveness
- identify reconciliation as a source of support in dealing with stress

Assessment Opportunities: suggestions for assessing expectations

- Apply Scripture teaching to everyday life
- Concluding written statement about reconciliation

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

- 1) Read to the students the Scripture Passage of Matthew 5: 23-24.
 - a) Keeping in mind the role-playing activity previously experienced and any personal stressful situations of family conflict, invite a conversation/discussion with the class of how we can put into practice in everyday life the teachings of the Gospel passage. Incorporate the concepts from the Notes to Teacher given above.
 - b) Ask the students “Why is it difficult to ask forgiveness? Why is it difficult to forgive someone? Suggest to the students that sometimes an act of kindness can open the door to reconciliation.
 - c) Have the students write a personal statement of why and how reconciliation can bring closure to a stressful situation that has been hurtful to the persons involved.
 - d) Use the role playing activity from Lesson Two to portray reconciliation in the stressful situation.

Optional Activity

- (a) Have the students work in groups of four. Give half of the groups the Story of Joseph and His Brothers from Genesis 37:1-36, and the other half the Story of The Prodigal Son from Luke 15: 11-32.
- (b) The students are to prayerfully read the Scripture story assigned to their group and list the main characters of the story and then describe the main story line. (Each of the stories describes situations in which jealousy is exhibited against a sibling.)
- (c) Ask the students to write a modern day version of the scripture story. Even though the main characters of the original stories are brothers, in the modern day versions the students can adapt it to be sisters or brothers and sisters. They are to make their stories as real as possible to contemporary life circumstances.
- (d) Using the insights from Lesson Two, have the students identify and list the possible steps that need to be taken to deal with the situations in order that a resolution can be reached and reconciliation achieved.
- (e) Read Genesis 45:1-15, where reconciliation is depicted.

Grief - Grade Seven

UNIT OVERVIEW

*Then they told what had happened on the road,
and how he had been made known to them in the
breaking of the bread.*

Luke 24:35

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Duration: Number of lessons; number of hours

- a. [Circle of Losses](#) 40 minutes
- b. [Healthy Grieving](#) 120 minutes
- c. [God Is With Us Always](#) 40 minutes

Description

Although a person's life journey will include a number of losses, it is important to learn the steps of healthy grieving in order to continue to find hope and meaning in life. Throughout this journey, believers can celebrate again and again the reality that God is always with us even when deep sadness and grief are experienced.

Right to Privacy

Family members, including parents, have a very clear right to privacy in matters related to mental health. As this unit begins, it is important to instruct the class that you will be expecting personal family information to remain private. The use of role playing, case studies, stories, film or television clips allows the discussion to remain objective while still having relevant, personal application to the private lives of students.

Background Information

Losses occur throughout life's journey. Grief is the emotional response to losses in life. The person who is grieving needs support and help to deal with the grief.

It is very important to emphasize that our loving God does not cause the losses of life but our loving God is always with us throughout life's journey. It is in acknowledging Christ's presence even in the sadness and pain of loss that gradually we can find meaning and hope. It is important to keep in mind that each person is a unique and precious part of God's loving creation.

Catholic Graduate Expectations

A. Circle of Losses

- 4(a) Demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the

dignity and welfare of others.

4(g) Examines and reflects on one's personal values, abilities and aspirations influencing life's choices and opportunities.

6(a) Relates to family members in a loving, compassionate and respectful manner.

6(c) Values and honours the important role of the family in society.

B. Healthy Grieving

2(a) Listens attentively and critically to understand and learn in light of gospel values.

3(a) Recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges.

3(c) Thinks reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems.

C. God Is With Us Always

1(a) Illustrates a basic understanding of the saving story of our Christian faith.

1(c) Actively reflects on God's Word as communicated through the Hebrew and Christian scriptures.

1(i) Integrates faith with life.

Over All Expectations Language

The student will be able to:

- identify various examples of loss they experience in family relationships
- identify positive strategies for dealing with grief in their families
- use Scripture to recognize that God is with us in our joys and sorrows
- deepen their understanding of the family
- be encouraged to recognize the need for balance in their lives
- write a prayer to express the awareness of God's presence with us always

Assessment and Evaluation

Explain the meaning of grief

Circle of Losses activity

Individual and cooperative group work

Role-playing presentations

Identify the four tasks of healthy grieving

Writing a prayer

Links to Fully Alive and We Are Strong Together Catechetical Resource

Fully Alive: Theme Two "Living in Relationship:", Topic 2: The Family

Believe in Me Unit 9, "Is there Hope?"

Suggestions for Accommodations

As per individual student's IEP's implement such strategies as flexible groupings, fewer content expectations, scribing, re-phrasing, retelling, oral quizzes, or posters rather than

written work

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Black Line Masters

Black line Master 2 Circle of Losses

Additional Resources

Frost, Dorothy R. *Dad! Why'd You Leave Me?* Herald Press. (Told from an explicitly Christian perspective, this story offers a source of hope and healing to those who have experienced a significant loss in their lives.)

Gootman, Marilyn E. *When A Friend Dies – A Book for Teens Grieving and Healing*. Free Spirit Publishing.

Grollman, Rabbi Earl. *Bereaved Children and Teens: A Support Guide for Parents and Professionals*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996. (A comprehensive guide to helping children and teens.)

Gross, McKeever, Takacs Debly. *Dealing with Loss and Grief (A Resource for Intermediate/Senior Teachers)*. Ottawa: Novalis, 2007. (A compassionate resource for guiding intermediate and senior students through a range of losses.)

Moss,FSP, Mary Martha, Groome, Thomas H. (*God Is Here...*) *When Bad Things Happen*. Pauline Books and Media. (Not only does this text offer helpful ways to view an old problem, it explores the issues in terms of the hope of the Resurrection and the love of God.)

Wezeman, Phyllis, Jude Dennis Fournier and Kenneth Wezeman. *Guiding Young Teens Through Life's Losses: Prayers, Rituals and Activities*. Mystic,CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2003. (In addition to covering a range of losses, it includes prayers and activities to comfort and strengthen young teens dealing with loss.)

Wolfelt, Dr. Alan D. *Healing Your Grieving Heart – For Teens: 100 Practical Ideas*. Companion Press.

12. Websites

www.griefworksbc.com

www.kidshealth.org

www.aacap.org

www.mindspring.com

www.teachhealth.com

www.lifelongmentalhealth.com

www.life.familyeducation.com

Grief - Grade Seven

Lesson One

CIRCLE OF LOSSES

[top](#)

Description

This activity will introduce the topic of grief and the range of life experiences that cause us to grieve.

Materials

- Black Line Master 2

Notes to Teacher

Respecting Privacy

Family members, including parents, have a very clear right to privacy in matters related to grieving. As this unit begins, it is important to instruct the class that you will be respecting their privacy. As well, students must respect each others privacy as well.

This unit has a potential to provoke deep, painful feelings. A classroom is not a place of therapy, but rather one of educational guidance. It is important for the teacher to understand this distinction and refer students to health professionals if required.

The use of role playing, case studies, stories, film or television clips allows the discussion to remain objective while still having relevant application to the personal lives of students.

These lessons on Grief can be integrated with Unit 9 of Believe in Me. The theme is “Is there Hope”.

Grief is the response to losses in life. This response includes the emotional, psychological, physical, and spiritual reactions to the loss. This response can be a complicated experience including a range of emotions such as anger, sadness, fear, frustration, guilt or anxiety.

Grief includes all the range of emotions we feel when losses occur in our lives. Loss is the experience of being deprived of something important that is valued a great deal. One person’s loss may seem trivial or unimportant to another person. Great sensitivity is needed to respect and hear the pain a person expresses when a situation of loss occurs.

Grief includes more than the experience of bereavement when someone we love dies. Examples of loss cover a wide range of life’s experiences. Some of these might include divorce/separation in the family, moving and relocating, loss of friendship, not being chosen for a team or group, loss of employment, chronic or severe illness, an older sibling leaving home, or abusive

treatment.

Healthy grieving involves telling the story of the loss. It is very difficult to grieve alone. It is important for the person experiencing the grief to reach out for support. Sometimes the grief is so overwhelming that the person does not even have the energy to reach out for the help that is so necessary. Healthy grieving is the gradual process of integrating loss into life. One does not get over the loss but grows to live with the reality of the loss.

Over All Learning Expectations

The student will be able to:

- identify examples of loss in relationships
- explain the meaning of grief

Assessment Opportunities: suggestions for assessing expectations

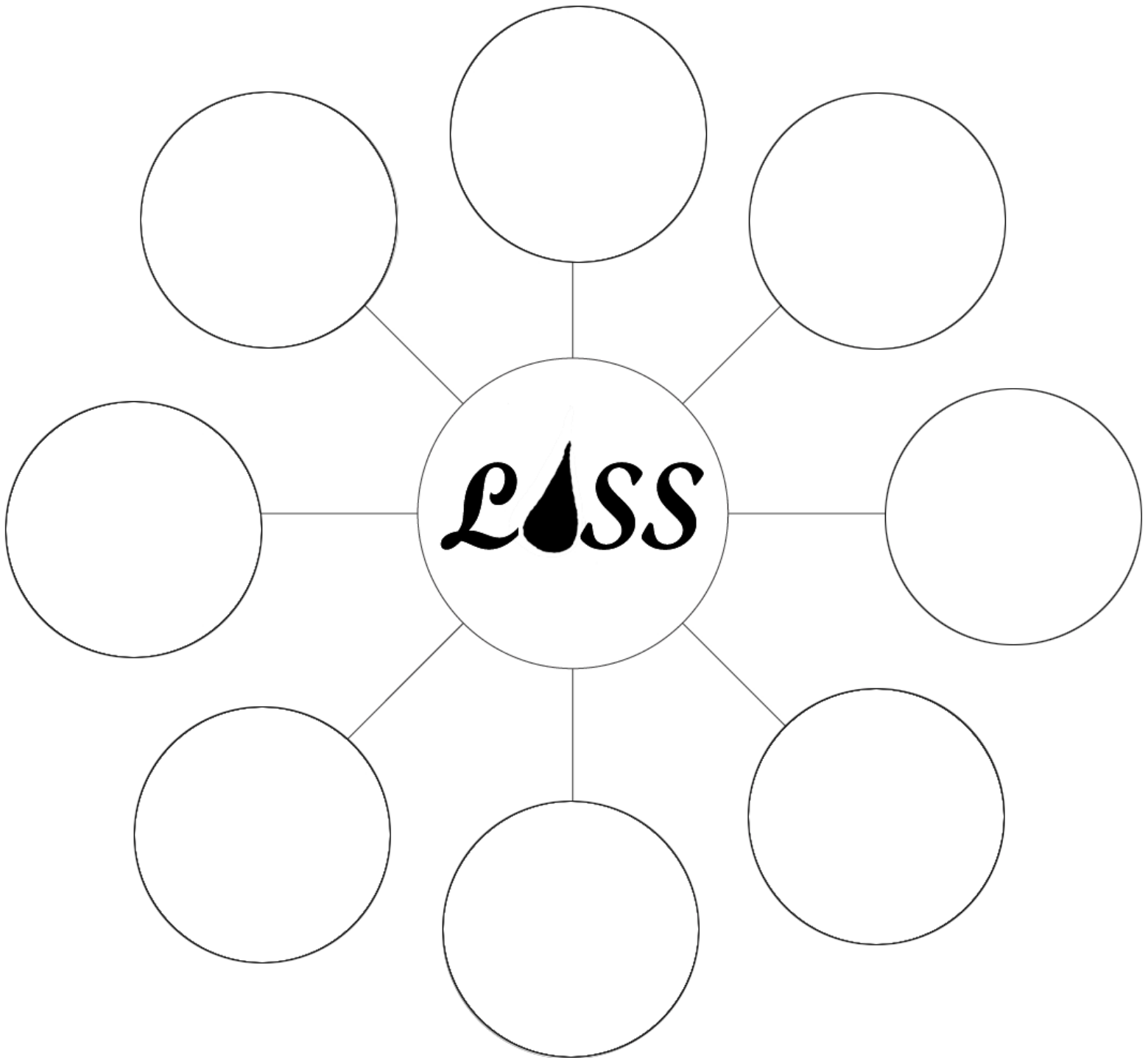
- Explain the meaning of grief
- Complete Circle of Losses activity
- Engage in individual and group work

Teaching/Learning Strategies

- 1) Introduce the topic of Grief by highlighting concepts from the Notes to Teacher above.
 - a) Unit 9 of Believe in Me focuses primarily on the loss of death.
 - b) This activity is intended to extend the understanding of loss and grief to a much broader range of the losses experienced in life.

- 2) Use BLM 2Circle of Losses to brainstorm examples of losses that young people experience. To respect personal privacy, it is not necessary or desirable for students to disclose personal information in this exercise.
 - a) First do this individually and then have the students work in groups of four and using a blank copy of Circle of Losses summarize the examples they had identified individually.
 - b) Display the summarized Circle of Losses in the classroom.

Circle of Losses



Grief Grade Seven

Lesson Two

HEALTHY GRIEVING

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Description

This activity guides the students in identifying the Four Tasks of Healthy Grieving.

Materials

Chart paper, Markers, Chart prepared with the Four Tasks of Healthy Grieving (see Notes to Teacher below).

Notes to Teacher

Use the following Four Tasks of Healthy Grieving to create a chart.

Grieving is part of the life journey. There are generally four tasks involved in healthy grieving:

- to gradually face and admit the finality of the loss
- to experience the many emotions and pain of the loss
- to adjust to the changes that take place in life because of the loss
- to gradually regain energy and re-invest in life's activities and relationships

There is no determined or set timeline to follow in moving through these tasks. Each person journeys through his/her grief in her/his own unique way.

Ministry Expectation Code Learning Expectation

The student will be able to:

- identify next steps in the grieving process
- identify and explain the four tasks involved in healthy grieving

Assessment Opportunities: suggestions for assessing expectations

- Role-playing presentations
- Explain the four tasks of healthy grieving

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

- 1) Ask the students to choose two examples of the losses they identified in the Circle of Losses activity.
 - a) With a partner they are to prepare a role-playing presentation of each of the two losses and indicate what they think is a helpful next step they might take in dealing with the family losses they have chosen.
 - b) The students present their role-playing situations to the class and explain what the helpful next step would be.
 - c) Record these suggestions on chart paper.
 - d) Post the chart listing the Four Tasks of Healthy Grieving. Tally as many of the students' suggestions that match with the four tasks.
 - e) Use this process to explain the four tasks.
 - i) Clearly emphasize that there is no determined timeline.
 - ii) Even family members do not necessarily grieve in the same way or on the same timeline.
 - iii) Each person's grief journey is unique.

Optional Activity

Students write a "Dear Abby" letter about a loss and respond to the letter with suggested ideas for dealing with the grief in a healthy way.

Grief Grade Seven

Lesson Three

GOD IS WITH US ALWAYS

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Description

This activity enables the students to realize that our loving God is always with us even during the times we feel abandoned and completely alone.

Materials

BLM 1 or Bibles The Scripture passage Luke 24:13-35

BLM 2 Order of Christian Funerals

Notes to Teacher

This Activity develops further Unit 9, “Is There Hope?” of Believe In Me. Death is one of the examples of a loss that is encountered in the journey of life. As painful as the loss of a loved one is, we can be assured that we are never alone in our suffering. At times we can feel dreadfully alone and abandoned but in the face of tragedy we can know that our loving God is always with us in our hearts, in our family members, in the Scriptures and the celebration of the Sacraments.

Sometimes it may take a period of time before we are able to acknowledge the reality of the God presence that is there for us. Our faith affirms that God always accompanies us in all of life and in our human sufferings.

When losses occur it is important to clarify and emphasize that God does not plan and cause events that bring us loss and suffering. It is the human condition, human error, nature unfolding in natural ways etc. that cause life’s losses. Our loving God is always with us in our loss and pain. The Scripture story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus is an incredible example of the hope that can spring from deep grief.

Ministry Expectation Code Learning Expectation

The student will be able to:

- use Scripture to identify God’s faithful loving
- acknowledge the importance of prayer in developing one’s faith life

Assessment Opportunities: suggestions for assessing expectations

- Scripture reading/ reflection
- Writing a prayer

TEACHING/LEARNING STRATEGIES

- 1) Read the Scripture story from Luke 24: 13-35.
 - a) Ask the students why the disciples did not recognize Jesus.
 - b) Expand the idea that often when we have experienced deep loss and sadness we can be blinded by our brokenness, confusion and disorientation.
 - c) Can you imagine the amazement of the two disciples when they realized it was Jesus who had been walking and talking with them?
 - d) Use information from the Notes to Teacher to express the hope and promise we can carry with us that God is truly with us loving us deeply even when we feel totally lost and empty.
- 2) Using the Scripture story of the Road to Emmaus and any personal example of their own loss, ask the students to write a prayer expressing hope and trust in God's faithfulness to us.
 - a) Invite those students who are comfortable sharing their prayers to share them either in small groups of four or with the entire class.
- 3) Art Activity- decorate artistically the prayer the students have written
- 4) How does the Church today rite us to encounter the risen Christ as we grieve the loss of a person close to us?

After sharing prayers, slowly and reflectively share BLM 2 which describes the meaning of a Christian funeral within the Catholic faith tradition. Invite discussion.

The Christian understanding of death is one of passage to eternal life with God. Nature takes its course with the human body; there is no need to blame God for death. Rather, through the passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are given the gift of eternal life.

The Road to Emmaus Luke 24:13-35**BLM 1**

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad.

Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?"

Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"

That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

The Christian Funeral

BLM 2

In the face of death, the Church confidently proclaims that God has created each person for eternal life and that Jesus, the Son of God, by his death and resurrection, has broken the chains of sin and death that bound humanity.

At the death of a Christian, whose life of faith was begun in the waters of baptism and strengthened at the Eucharistic table, the Church intercedes on behalf of the deceased because of its confident belief that death is not the end nor does it break the bonds forged in life. The Church also ministers to the sorrowing and consoles them in the funeral rites with the comforting word of God and the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Christians celebrate the funeral rites to offer worship, praise and thanksgiving to God for the gift of life which has now been returned to God, the author of life and the hope of the just. The Mass, the memorial of Christ's death and resurrection, is the principal celebration of the Christian funeral.

The Church through its funeral rites commends the dead to God's merciful love and pleads for the forgiveness of their sins. At the funeral rites, especially at the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice, the Christian community affirms and expresses the union of the Church on earth with the Church in heaven in the one great communion of saints. Though separated from the living, the dead are still at one with the community of believers on earth and benefit from their prayers and intercession. At the Rite of Final Commendation and farewell, the community acknowledges the reality of separation and commends the deceased to God. In this way it recognizes the spiritual bond that still exists between the living and the dead and proclaims its belief that all the faithful will be raised up and reunited in the new heavens and a new earth, where death will be no more.

The celebration of the Christian funeral brings hope and consolation to the living. While proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and witnessing to Christian hope in the resurrection, the funeral rites also recall to all who take part in them God's mercy and judgment and meet the human need to turn always to God in times of crisis.

**From BEFORE WE GO OUR SEPARATE WAYS, A Pastoral Guide to the Order of Christian Funeral,
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