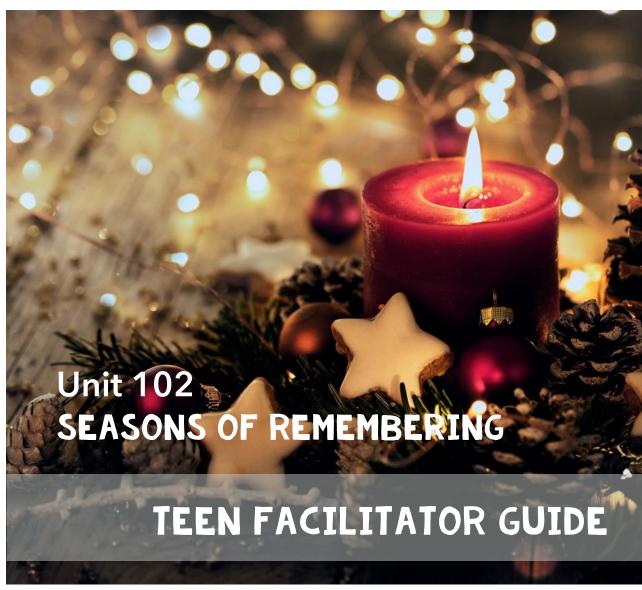
## **MOURNINGSTAR**

Grief Curriculum for Small Groups

GWEN KAPCIA SHELLEY HENNING





# MOURNINGSTAR Grief Curriculum for Small Groups

GWEN KAPCIA SHELLEY HENNING

## GRIEF AND THANKSGIVING

TEEN SUPPORT GROUP 1

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering



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## **GRIEF AND THANKSGIVING**

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering Teen Support Group 1

PURPOSE	LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT	OBJECTIVE OF HEALING
Managing the conflicting emotions of thankfulness and pain	1 Thessalonians 5:16-18  "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."	Releasing the Pain

#### **SUMMARY**

The first Support Group of each unit is a gradual introduction. Participants will only share basic information about the death of their person. They will be given an opportunity in the following weeks to share details of their grief story. Do not go into detailed grief stories in the first group. When sharing becomes too emotional in the first week, it may negatively influence attendance at future groups.

It is helpful to set the expectation on the first week regarding the group rules. They can be reviewed at subsequent Support Groups if needed, but they must be introduced for new participants in week one.

The pain of having someone close to you no longer physically present is a reality that takes time and patience to face. Turning into the pain rather than running from it helps in the healing process. Creating a safe and secure place for the bereaved to release pain is vital to grief support.

#### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

Amazing Me Worksheet (attached)	Deck of Uno Cards
Feelings Colors reference page (attached)	Tape
Strips of construction paper (variety of autumn colors)	Pens or markers
OPTIONAL: Sunglasses with different colored lenses	
Light for the Night cards (attached)	

# BEING THANKFUL IS ONE WAY TO REMAIN CONNECTED WHILE YOU ARE GRIEVING

## **WELCOME**

## 25 minutes

Welcome the group as a whole and introduce yourself to any new participants. Acknowledge any specifics for this first week of the unit.

you con sha son	Ilo friends! My name is (briefly introduce yourself.) I want to welcome a to Grief Support Group! This is a place where we all have something in mon - someone special to us has died. That makes this a safe place to are our thoughts and feelings with friends who understand. We have me rules and expectations that we follow.  NOW:  ad the rules and expectations for the Support Group.
	RULES AND EXPECTATIONS
	This is a place where you will be able to share how you feel deep in your heart about losing your person.
	2. In this place, we use many different ways to share how we feel: art, storytelling, writing, music, and more.
	3. This is a place where we always bring our best. That means we have a good attitude, we respect other people, we listen carefully, and we treat everyone with kindness.
	<ul> <li>4. We have rules that we need to follow:</li> <li>a. If someone tells you to stop, STOP</li> <li>b. No throwing</li> <li>c. No put downs</li> <li>d. No hitting or hurting</li> <li>e. What we say here stays here</li> </ul>
	5. Everyone has the option to say "I pass" at any time if they are not ready to speak about their grief.
	6. We have a Confidentiality pledge- "I promise not to tell anyone what my friends say in my support group. It is okay for me to tell others what my leader says or what I say."



### **PAUSE AND PRAYER**

Begin exercise and demonstrate

#### SAY:

We begin each support group with Pause and Prayer. This is a breathing exercise to help slow down our nervous system and center our minds. For Pause and Prayer, we will close our eyes and keep our feet flat on the ground. Follow along while I prompt you with the next steps:

- 1. Stretch your hand out like a star.
- 2. Get your pointer finger from the opposite hand ready to trace your fingers up and down.
- 3. Breathe in as you slide up each finger. Breathe out as you slide down each finger.
- 4. Keep going until you finish tracing your hand.

### **PRAYER:**

Lord, as we continue to see reminders of the holidays all around us, give us strength. Allow us to see how to walk through them while we grieve. Amen.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

#### SAY:

Now let's learn a little about each other. We're going to take turns sharing your name and the name of the person in your life that died. Who would like to start? (Progress around the circle, allowing each teen a brief turn, not going into details of their grief stories in this first week)

Now let's get to know each other in a different way!



#### ICEBREAKER: ABOUT THE AMAZING ME

Give each participant an Amazing Me worksheet. Have pens or pencils on the table for the group to use.

### SAY:

You each have a page to complete that will tell the group more about you. After everyone has filled in the worksheet, we will go around the group so that each of you can share the completed page, and we can learn more about each other.

## **LESSON**

40 minutes

Have the group sit in a circle for this part of the lesson.

### SAY:

Part of coping with grief in a healthy way is deciding how to celebrate the holidays while, at the same time, caring for your grief needs.

One of the most challenging holidays to consider is the one that launches us into the "holiday season." Thanksgiving.

If any holiday has conflicting emotions with grief, this is certainly it. As we look around us, we see images everywhere of what "normal" holidays look like – joyful, thankful, and peaceful. The reality looks very different for those who are grieving. When we are grieving, there is nothing normal about the holidays. Everything has changed. Our feelings might be very different from everyone around us.

Grief during Thanksgiving can change how we see things, keeping us focusing only on loss and pain. Breaking up those negative thoughts with positive ones about the people, places, and things we love can be a refreshing and muchneeded shift in thinking. Being thankful is one way of actively remaining connected to other people and the world while you are grieving. Just remember that it is perfectly okay for changes to be made to the holiday season in order to fit what you and your family are comfortable with.





### **ACTIVITY: FEELINGS UNO**

Have a deck of Uno cards for the group to use for this activity. Print the Feelings Colors page for reference. Give instructions to the group on how to play a typical game of Uno if necessary.

## SAY:

We're going to play Uno with a little twist. When it is your turn, and you lay down a card, you will share something about Thanksgiving that gives you a certain feeling. The feeling is based on the color, and it's listed on the reference page on the table. If you lay down a color card and don't have that feeling about Thanksgiving, you can say, "not feeling it!" For example, if you lay down a red card, you will share something about this Thanksgiving that you are angry about. (such as: "I'm angry we have to go to my Aunt's house")

The winner is the first person to get rid of all their cards.

#### KNOW:

OPTIONAL: For the next portion of the lesson, have sunglasses with different colored lenses for the group to try on.

#### SAY:

It's perfectly okay and normal to have all these mixed-up feelings right now. Grief makes us see things differently. Being thankful is really hard when we are sad.

If you were wearing glasses that made everything you looked at red, would you be able to see yellow? (allow responses)

No. Wearing colored glasses makes everything one color.

Grief is the same way. It can hide the things that we are thankful for and make us only see things that are sad or different. Even when we are grieving, there is always something that we can be thankful for. We just can't always see it until we look for it.

The best thing that we can do is to look for one small thing that we are thankful for. It might be your favorite food, a friend, or the sunshine. Looking for good things will help you to stay connected with family, friends, and things happening in your life.

Our next activity will help us to practice finding things we can be thankful for.



ACTIVITY: THANKFUL CHAINS  Cut strips of construction paper in a variety of autumn colors. You will need tape and pens or markers for the group to use for this activity.
SAY: We're going to create a Thankful Chain. After we start them, you can take your chain home and add to it each time you think of something you are thankful for.
<ul> <li>Choose a strip of paper to be the first color for your chain. Think about one thing that you are thankful for, or something that makes you smile. Write it on the paper strip you chose.</li> <li>Tape the strip ends together, so that the writing is on the outside, creating a loop.</li> <li>Choose another paper and write one more thing you are thankful for.</li> <li>Tape these strip ends together around the first loop.</li> <li>Continue for as many things you can think of to give thanks for.</li> </ul>
APPLICATION  10 minutes  arse, so the group sees that you are reading from God's Word. Hand out the Light for the  SAY:
Our Light for the Night comes from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18:  "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."
More often than not, we tend to "save-up" our list of things-to-be-thankful-for and open it on one day each year. Scripture told us long before the holiday of Thanksgiving was established that giving thanks was for <i>every</i> day, in <i>every</i> circumstance.
To give thanks in everything goes against the norm. Our emotions don't always match the actions of rejoicing and Thanksgiving.
Paul writes this verse, convinced that in everything, God is working on behalf of his people. He is not instructing us to thank God <i>FOR</i> everything that happens but <i>IN</i> everything. Even in grief, sorrow, worry, or fear, we can be thankful for the good that God will accomplish through difficulties. We can be thankful for God's presence and our salvation through His Son, Christ Jesus.
CLOSING PRAYER:

rejoice in. Help us to trust Your will in our grief. Amen.

## **RULES AND EXPECTATIONS**

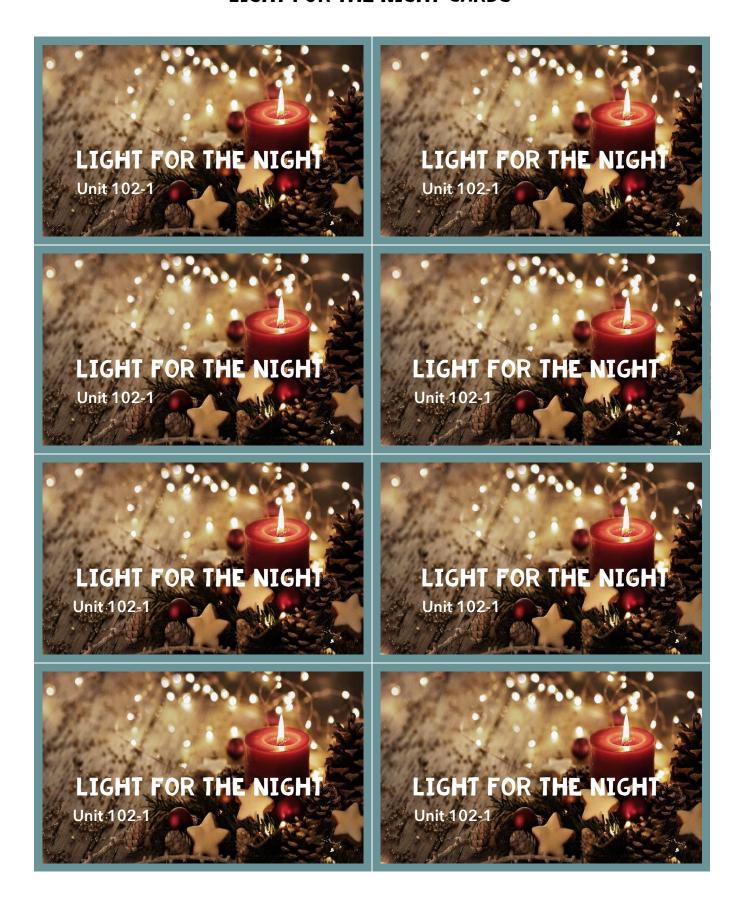
- ★ This is a place where you will be able to share how you feel deep in your heart about losing your person.
- In this place, we use many different ways to share how we feel: art, storytelling, writing, music, and more.
- This is a place where we always bring our best. That means we have a good attitude, we respect other people, we listen carefully, and we treat everyone with kindness.
- We have rules that we need to follow:
  - o If someone tells you to stop, STOP
  - No throwing
  - o No put-downs
  - No hitting or hurting
  - o What we say here stays here
- ★ Everyone has the option to say "I pass" at any time if they are not ready to speak about their grief.
- ★ We have a Confidentiality pledge- "I promise not to tell anyone what my friends say in my support group. It is okay for me to tell others what my leader says or what I say."

## **ABOUT THE AMAZING ME!** My name is years old, and I live in Iam Three words that describe me are: 1. 2. 3. God made me amazing! There is no one else like me. One unique thing about me is: When I am older, I want to be: My favorite hobby is: If I could meet anyone in history, it would be:

## **FEELING COLORS**

RED	ANGRY
YELLOW	SAD
BLUE	LONELY
GREEN	HAPPY

## LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT CARDS



## LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT CARDS

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

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1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

# MOURNINGSTAR Grief Curriculum for Small Groups

GWEN KAPCIA SHELLEY HENNING

## GRIEF THROUGH THE SEASONS

TEEN SUPPORT GROUP 2

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering



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## **GRIEF THROUGH THE SEASONS**

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering Teen Support Group 2

PURPOSE	LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT	OBJECTIVE OF HEALING
Recalling grief stories through the lens of the four seasons	Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot"	Recognizing the Truth

#### **SUMMARY**

Most often, people are not prepared for the journey grief puts them on. It is overwhelming and painful. Pain is not something we readily lean into, so it can be tempting to deny that it is real. Sharing stories and retelling experiences helps the bereaved recognize the truth and reality of the death.

This Support Group is an opportunity for the participants to share those grief stories and release the emotions that will surface. Storytelling is an essential objective in grieving because it helps the bereaved person process and accept the death as reality.

Telling grief stories brings feelings to expression. When these deep emotions are expressed, it can cause us to be uncomfortable. Be present with the participants in their pain, but do not feel that you are responsible for taking that pain away.

As these stories are shared, emotions may flow, and if tears come, it is natural for us to want to give tissues to a crying person, but we do not want to interrupt their expression of grief. Allow them to get tissues when *they* are ready.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

Grief through the Seasons worksheet (attached)
Markers, colored pencils, or pens
Light for the Night Cards (attached)

## GRIEF MAKES US LOOK AT EACH SEASON IN A DIFFERENT WAY

## **WELCOME**

## 5 minutes

Welcome the group as a whole and briefly introduce yourself to any new participants. Take a moment to allow new members to introduce themselves. If needed, review the rules and expectations from Support Group 1.

	back, friends! It's great to see you all again. My name is (take a o introduce yourself).
	PAUSE AND PRAYER  Begin exercise and demonstrate
system. F	with pause and prayer to help slow down our nervous follow along with this breathing exercise while keeping your eyes diffect flat on the ground.
	1. Stretch your hand out like a star.
	<ol><li>Get your pointer finger from the opposite hand ready to trace your fingers up and down.</li></ol>
	3. Breathe in as you slide up each finger. Breathe out as you slide down each finger.
	4. Keep going until you finish tracing your hand.
different	Father, as we grieve, different seasons bring different memories, worries, and more changes. Give us strength and courage as we all of these. Amen.

Be aware of the number of participants who will be sharing and keep the time in mind so that everyone has an opportunity to share. Have the group gather in a circle.

#### SAY:

With each season, we see changes. The weather changes, the colors change, our wardrobe changes. From the smell of fresh-cut grass to gentle spring rain, even the smells change!

Some seasons we look forward to, and others we dread. As you grieve, you may look at each season differently than you had before the death of your person. Reminders of your person can make it difficult to look forward to a specific season. You may feel a sense of dread as you think about what was once your favorite time of year.

As we share our grief stories, we'll also look ahead to how the seasons may change for us because of our stories.



## ACTIVITY: GRIEF STORY THROUGH THE SEASONS

Give each group member a copy of the Grief through the Seasons worksheet. Cut the page around the red lines. Fold on the green line to create a story booklet. Have markers, colored pencils, and pens for the group to use.

### SAY:

On the worksheet in front of you, you are going to tell your grief story through pictures. For each box, draw the answer that tells about your person who died. We'll take 15 minutes to work on our stories. When everyone has finished, we'll go around the circle and share what we have drawn.

#### KNOW:

When the group is finished, have them sit in a circle with their completed worksheets. Allow each teen to share the first box. Then have each teen share the second box, going around the circle again. Keep working in this pattern until everyone has shared their story through all eight boxes.

## Z Ш Ш

## **BIBLICAL APPLICATION**

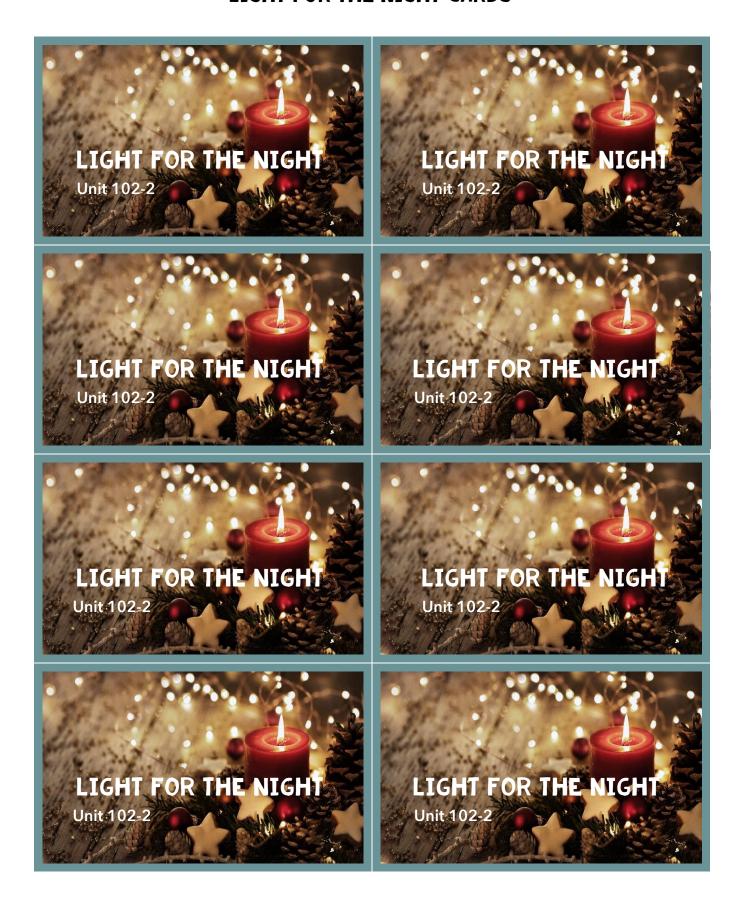
## 10 minutes

Open a Bible to the verse, so the group sees that you are reading from God's Word. Hand out the Light for the Night Cards.

SAY:
 Our Light for the Night this week is Ecclesiastes 3:1-2:
"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot"
As these verses in Ecclesiastes state, there is a season for everything. Just as the seasons outside change, the seasons in our lives do as well. From new birth to death, each season causes significant changes. There are times when we put down roots and times when we 'uproot' for new beginnings.
We feel certain right now that this season of mourning death will last forever, but it, too, will change. We will grow, heal, and even try new things as the seasons come and go. A time of year that brings pain now may eventually bring joy, as it holds precious memories of your person. We can be confident that God, the very Creator of these seasons, will carry us through if we trust in Him.
 CLOSING PRAYER:
 Lord, thank you for the beauty in each season. While we do not feel it now, we know that You have purpose for our lives in this time. Amen.

102-2

## LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT CARDS



## LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT CARDS

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot..."

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot..."

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot..."

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

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Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

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Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

# MOURNINGSTAR Grief Curriculum for Small Groups

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## PREPARING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

TEEN SUPPORT GROUP 3

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering



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## PREPARING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering Teen Support Group 3

PURPOSE	LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT	OBJECTIVE OF HEALING	
Thinking ahead to make a plan for how the holidays will happen this year	Proverbs 22:3 "The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty."	Reinforcing our Support	

### **SUMMARY**

Grief reinforces how our Creator made us for relationship and community. Pain is something we are not meant to endure alone. Seeking and creating a support network is crucial. This objective explores many different support methods, including people, places, and activities that help on the journey through grief.

## **MATERIALS NEEDED**

☐ 2 Medium-sized boxes, wrapped in Christmas paper;
Using a permanent marker, label one box with an "S" and one box with a "D."
☐ Music source for activity (must be able to play and pause)
☐ Blank Notebooks
Pens or Pencils
☐ Holiday Planning sheet (attached)
☐ Light for the Night Cards (attached)

## WE CAN CHOOSE HOW THE HOLIDAYS WILL HAPPEN FOR US

## **WELCOME**

## 5 minutes

Welcome the group as a whole and acknowledge any specifics.

SAY: Welcome to	to Starlight! It's great to see you all again.
	PAUSE AND PRAYER Begin exercise and demonstrate
	n with pause and prayer to help us focus on the time ahead of us.
	1. Stretch your hand out like a star.
	2. Get your pointer finger from the opposite hand ready to trace your fingers up and down.
	3. Breathe in as you slide up each finger. Breathe out as you slide down each finger.
	4. Keep going until you finish tracing your hand.
PRAYER: Dear God, Amen.	thank You for this time to talk and to listen. Be with us as we grieve

Have the group sit in a circle for this portion of the lesson.

### SAY:

There are a lot of different things that we get ready for. When we get ready, we make plans and prepare for whatever is ahead of us.

What are some things that you prepare for? (allow responses and offer suggestions such as a marathon/sports event, a test, a vacation, a fire drill)

If we want something we are going to go smoothly and safely, we need to plan well.

Right now, everywhere we look, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas! It's telling us that ready or not, the holidays are coming! Stores, churches, neighbors, and friends are all planning and preparing for the holidays.

You may feel differently about the holidays this year than you ever have before. Let me share an example: if Grandpa always took you sledding and made hot chocolate for you, now that he has died, you are worried you won't be able to go sledding. Or maybe you feel that you don't want to go sledding because grandpa won't be there. You might be worried because you know it will be different without your person who died. You might wish that you could just skip the holidays altogether.

We can't stop the holidays from happening, but we can choose how they will happen for us. We can prepare and be ready. Having a plan for our holidays will help us to think through our choices, carefully plan what we want to do, and be ready for all that the holidays will bring.



#### **ACTIVITY: SAME OR DIFFERENT**

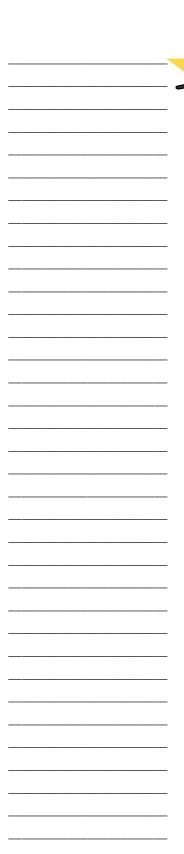
Have the group stand in a large circle. Using a permanent marker, write a large letter "S" on one of the wrapped gifts and the letter "D" on the other. Have a music source for this activity pre-loaded with holiday tunes. You'll need the ability to pause and play the music throughout this activity.

#### SAY:

We're going to do an activity called "Same or Different." This is a mix of 'hot potato' and 'musical chairs.'

I have two gifts. One marked with the letter 'S' and the other with the letter 'D". When the music starts, you'll begin tossing both boxes around the group. Keep tossing until the music stops. Whoever is holding the 'S' box at that time will share one thing that will be the same for them this holiday without your person. Whoever is holding the 'D' box will share one thing that will be different for them this holiday without your person.





## **ACTIVITY: HOLIDAY SURVIVAL PLAN**

The reason behind doing the activity as it is written (one page at a time) is to show they have given forethought about the plan and therefore are ready to use it when the time comes. Have a notebook for each teen with pens, pencils, or markers for the group.

#### SAY:

Now that we've thought about some things that will be different and some things that will be the same, we can begin to create a Holiday Survival Plan.

Open your notebook to the first blank page.

I'm going to have you think about a few different holiday activities. After I read each, close your eyes and envision what you would normally have or do. Then, based on what you have thought of, write or draw out on the first page of the notebook what you definitely want for your Christmas this year. When your notebook is finished, you can bring it home to talk with your parents and families about what you want to choose for the holidays.

I'm also going to handout a Holiday Planning Page for you to keep in your notebooks. You may find this helpful as you talk about the upcoming holidays with your family.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What Christmas food items were favorites of your person who died?
- What food items do you definitely want to have at Christmas this year?
  - o TURN PAGE
- What Christmas decorations were favorites of your person who died?
- What decorations do you definitely want to have at Christmas this year?
  - o TURN PAGE
- What Christmas traditions were favorites of your person who died?
- What traditions do you definitely want to have at Christmas this year?
  - o TURN PAGE
- What New Year's Eve foods were favorites of the person who died?
- What food items do you definitely want to have on New Year's Eve?
  - o TURN PAGE
- What New Year's Eve activities were favorites of the person who died?
- What activities do you definitely want to do this New Year's Eve?
  - o TURN PAGE
- What New Year's Day foods were favorites of the person who died?
- What foods do you definitely want to have this New Year's Day?
  - o TURN PAGE
- What New Year's Day activities were favorites of the person who died?
- What activities do you definitely want to do this New Year's Day?

## **BIBLICAL APPLICATION**

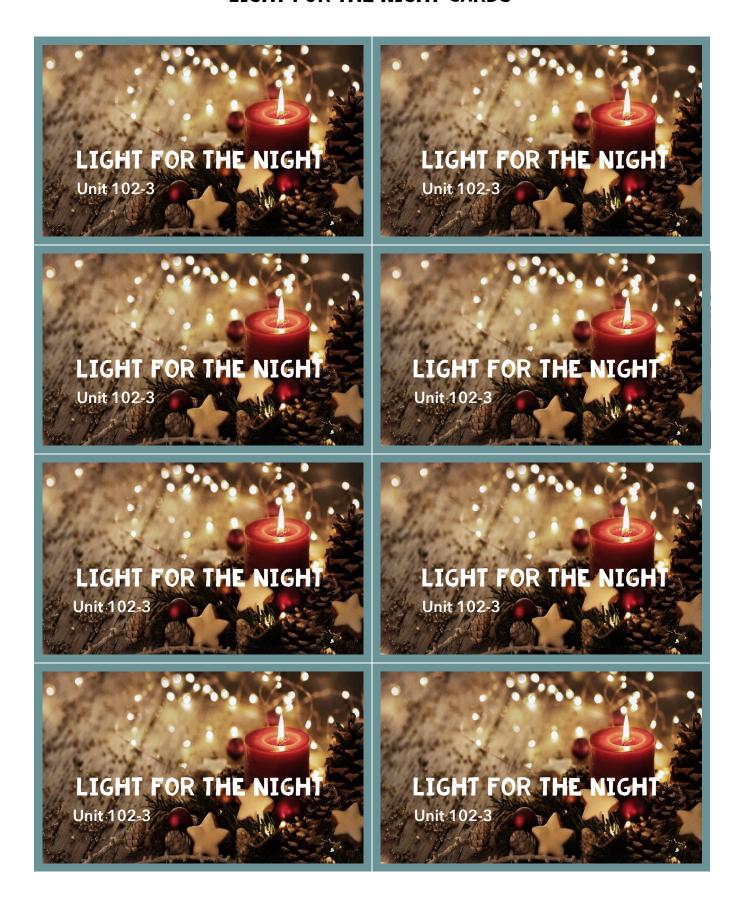
## 10 minutes

Open a Bible to the verse, so the group sees that you are reading from God's Word. Hand out the Light for the Night cards.

SAY:	
Our Light for the Night this week is Proverbs 22:3:	
"The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty."	
This scripture was written by King Solomon. God gave him the gift of wisdom. Wisdom is more than just being smart. Wisdom is having experience and knowledge in order to make good decisions. King Solomon's words can help us to make decisions, too.	
For those grieving during the holiday season, Christmas lights seem to be flashing the warning: "Danger Ahead."	
Oxford Dictionaries tells us that to be 'prudent' means to act with or show care and thought for the future. As Solomon tells us, we have a choice. We can be prudent and plan ahead, or we can simply keep going through the same motions. Each of these choices has its own consequence. Being prudent and thinking ahead to what we will experience during the holidays will give us protection from more hurt. We will find a safe place to continue to grieve and, while it may not feel like it now, a place that begins to give us healing and peace.	
CLOSING PRAYER: Lord, as this season waits around the corner, we ask for patience to plan and wisdom to prepare. Amen.	

# HOLIDAY PLANNING WORKSHEET

TRADITION (Who, What, When or How)	<b>CONTINUE</b> (Why is this important to keep?)	CHANGE (How are you shifting?)	<b>STOP</b> (How will it help to stop this?)



"The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty."

Proverbs 22:3

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### MOURNINGSTAR Grief Curriculum for Small Groups

GWEN KAPCIA SHELLEY HENNING

### CHRISTMAS TREASURES

TEEN SUPPORT GROUP 4

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering



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### **CHRISTMAS TREASURES**

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering Teen Support Group 4

PURPOSE	LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT	OBJECTIVE OF HEALING
Identifying and honoring the gifts of the person who died	James 1:17 "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."	Remembering the Person

### **SUMMARY**

**MATERIALS NEEDED** 

Healing does not mean we forget. Healing means we remember with honor those who have died. Remembering gives value to the life that was lived and to our own lives. The activity portion of this objective allows the bereaved to create keepsakes that they treasure throughout life. Memories written are not forgotten, so no matter our age, special moments with our person can be preserved by looking back.

☐ Gifts Ornament Pattern (attached) copied	onto colorful Christmas paper and cut as marked
☐ Hole punch	☐ UnGame Questions, pre-cut (attached)

☐ Brads (paper fasteners) ☐ Jar

☐ Twine or ribbon ☐ Pens or Fine-Tip markers

☐ Light for the Night Cards (attached)

# EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE NOT PHYSICALLY PRESENT, THE GIFTS OUR PERSON GAVE ARE TREASURES THAT REMAIN

### **WELCOME**

### 5 minutes

Welcome the group as a whole. You are likely beginning to get to know teens in your group on a more personal level as you develop relationships.

	PAUSE AND PRAYER  Begin exercise and demonstrate
	se and Prayer as we calm our minds before we enter this time close our eyes and keep our feet flat on the ground.
 1	. Stretch your hand out like a star.
2	2. Get your pointer finger from the opposite hand ready to trace your fingers up and down.
 3	Breathe in as you slide up each finger. Breathe out as you slide down each finger.
4	. Keep going until you finish tracing your hand.
hurting. Help ι	as is such a special time, but it is hard to see that when we are us to treasure the memories of the past as precious gifts that ne future. Amen.

Have the group sit in a circle for the first part of this lesson.

### SAY:

The holidays may look different because your person who died isn't physically present. We can still keep our person who died a part of our holidays in a new way.

Think of all the "gifts" your special person gave you. Not gifts that come packaged and wrapped, but gifts such as joy, safety, laughter, and love. These gifts are treasures! Even though the giver is gone, we still have the gifts they gave us. Those gifts can never be taken away.

We are going to do some activities that will help us to name some of those gifts.



### **ACTIVITY: UNGAME**

Copy and cut the UnGame questions. Place the paper strips in a jar.

### SAY:

This is called the "UnGame." I am going to pass around this jar that has some questions in it. Each of you will choose a question out of the jar and share your answer with the group. If you do not like the question, you can choose to pass or make up a question of your own to answer.



### **ACTIVITY: GIFTS ORNAMENT**

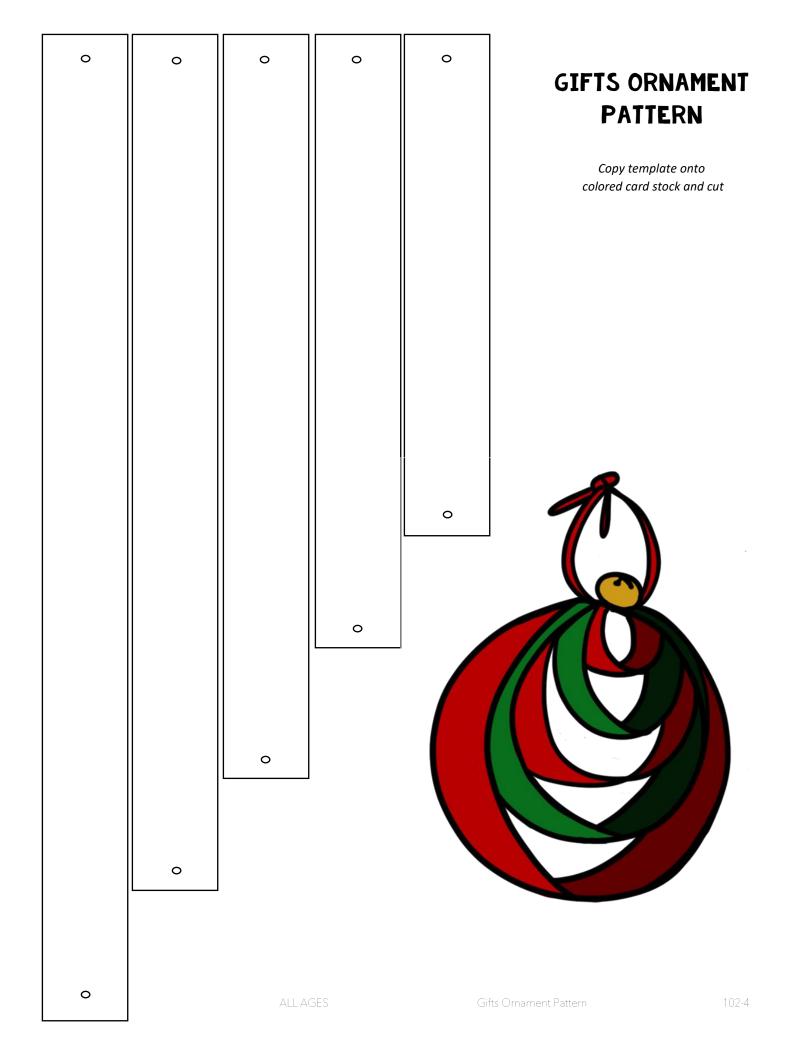
Copy the Gifts Ornaments instructions and pattern page. Give each participant the five strips from the pattern page, two brads, pens, and a piece of twine or string. Pre-punch holes as marked on each strip or have hole punches available. Note that your hole punch must be smaller than the top of your brad.

### SAY:

Now that we've thought about some things that are gifts from our person who died, let's create a reminder.

### **UNGAME QUESTIONS**

WHAT LESSON DID YOUR PERSON WHO DIED TEACH YOU?
WHAT WAS SOMETHING IMPORTANT YOU LEARNED FROM THE PERSON WHO DIED?
WHAT DID YOUR PERSON WHO DIED DO TO MAKE YOU SMILE?
WHAT DID YOUR PERSON WHO DIED DO TO MAKE YOU LAUGH?
WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE THING TO DO WITH YOUR PERSON WHO DIED?
WHAT WAS YOUR PERSON'S FAVORITE HOLIDAY?
WHAT WAS YOUR PERSON'S FAVORITE HOLIDAY TRADITION?
WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY WITH YOUR PERSON WHO DIED?



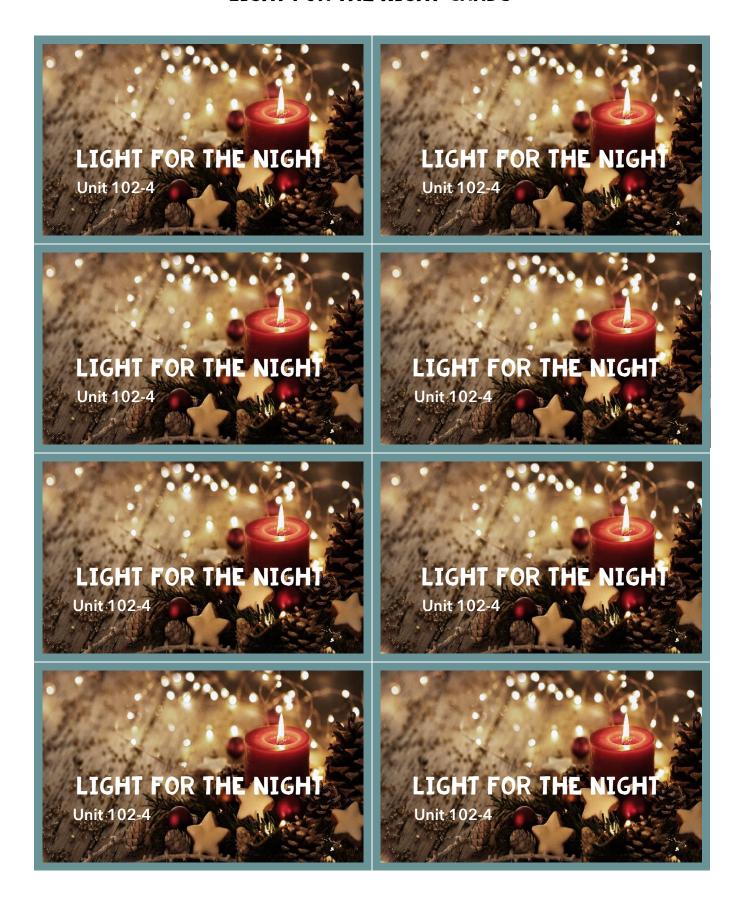
### GIFTS ORNAMENT INSTRUCTIONS



- 1. Copy the template onto colored paper or your choice. A thicker cardstock is easier to work with and allows the ornament to keep its shape well.
- 2. Cut the template along the lines indicated. Each template makes one ornament with five strips of paper. Feel free to mix colors, as long each ornament has the five correctly sized strips to create it.
- 3. Use a 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch hole punch to punch out the circles on each end of the strips as marked.
- 4. Tie the ribbon into a knot behind the head of the

brad.

- 5. Write on each strip a gift that was passed on by the person who died. Examples of gifts could be love, gratitude, companionship, or respect. Or phrases such as "showed me what it truly means to give" or "taught me to ride a bike."
- 6. After gifts are written on each strip, take the smallest strip of paper and form the first circle to match the holes.
- 7. With the next smallest paper strip, add the second circle around the first, matching the holes.
  - \* Tip: it can be helpful to hold the ends together with a binder clip.
- 8. Take the third-smallest paper strip and add the third circle around the first two.
- 9. Repeat this process for the fourth and fifth strips
- 10. Align all the holes and place the fastener through. Separate the metal to hold the strips together.
- 11. Once the fastener is secured, tie a knot at the top of the ribbon to create a loop to hang the ornament. Trim the ends of the ribbon if necessary.



"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."

James 1:17

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### MOURNINGSTAR Grief Curriculum for Small Groups

GWEN KAPCIA SHELLEY HENNING

### REFLECTING ON THE YEAR

TEEN SUPPORT GROUP 5

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering



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### Z I I I L

### REFLECTING ON THE YEAR

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering Teen Support Group 5

PURPOSE	LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT	OBJECTIVE OF HEALING
Looking back to celebrate resilience in the face of both ups and downs	Psalm 147:3 "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."	Reaffirming our Identity

### **SUMMARY**

A death loss brings about many changes in life, not only in finances, lifestyle, safety, and security but also in the self-esteem of the bereaved. Discovering changes in life and developing the person the bereaved has become after the death is key to healing. This objective encourages the discovery that life can and does continue to have meaning.

MΑ	TERIALS NEEDED
	Yo-Yo (for each teen)
	Medicine for Healing Grief worksheet (attached)
	Pens
	Light for the Night cards (attached)

### GRIEF IS A PROCESS THAT GOES IN STAGES OF UPS AND DOWNS

### **WELCOME**

### 5 minutes

By now, you've made relational connections with the group. Your welcome may be more personal based on things they have shared with you over the last few weeks.

	PAUSE AND PRAYER  Begin exercise and demonstrate
	SAY: Let's center ourselves with Pause and Prayer before we begin. Close your eyes and keep your feet flat on the ground.
	<ol> <li>Stretch your hand out like a star.</li> <li>Get your pointer finger from the opposite hand ready to trace your fingers up and down.</li> <li>Breathe in as you slide up each finger. Breathe out as you slide down each finger.</li> <li>Keep going until you finish tracing your hand.</li> </ol>
I	PRAYER: Dear God, as we look back on the past year, we realize our dependence on You through all the seasons of life- both difficult and pleasant. You are the great physician, and we trust You to heal our hearts. Amen.

Copy the Medicine for Healing Worksheet for group members.

### SAY:

I am going to give each of you a yo-yo. You can practice your yo-yo skills while I talk.

As you think back through the past year, you may feel as if you have come a long way in the healing of your grief. Or, you may feel that you have not taken any steps at all. Just as a yo-yo goes up and down, you may feel a little like a yo-yo in your grief! Our grief goes up and down. Some days are good, some days are bad. Sometimes our grief and the feelings we have are moment-by-moment instead of day by day. Let's go around the circle, and each share using these questions that I will ask.



### **ACTIVITY: UP AND DOWN YEAR**

Have the group sit back in a circle for this activity. Put the yo-yos aside.

### SAY:

Let's start with the bad and end with the good. We'll go around the circle and ask each of you to describe three "downs" from the past year.

Once each of you has shared "downs," we will go around the circle a second time and describe three "ups."



### **ACTIVITY: MEDICINE FOR HEALING**

Give group members the Medicine for Healing Grief worksheet. Have pens for the group to use.

### SAY:

Now let's talk about what we can do when we are feeling "down."

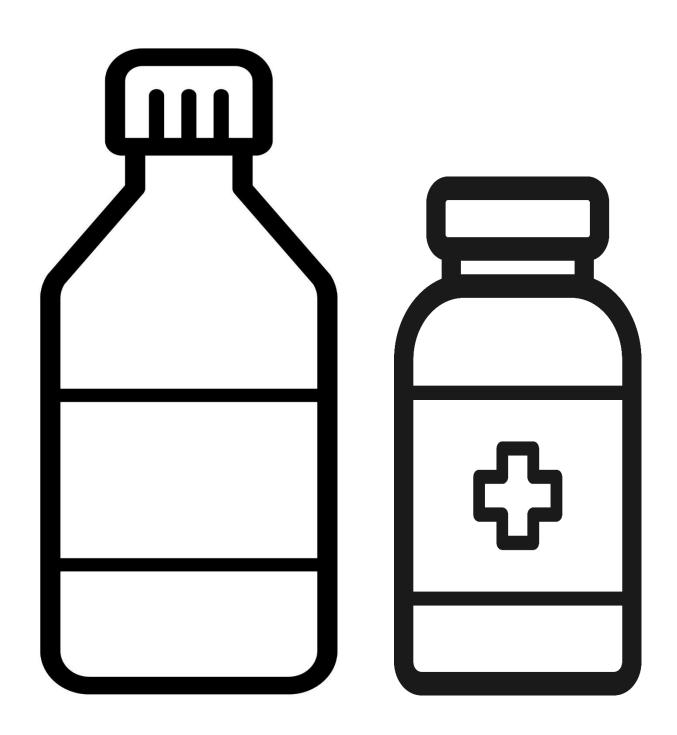
Raise your hand if you have ever been sick. Everyone gets sick one time or another in their life! When you are sick, you feel "down." You can go to a doctor, and they might give you medicine to take that helps to heal you and makes you feel better. Today we are going to think about a different kind of medicine for healing. There are things that we can do that help us with healing our grief.

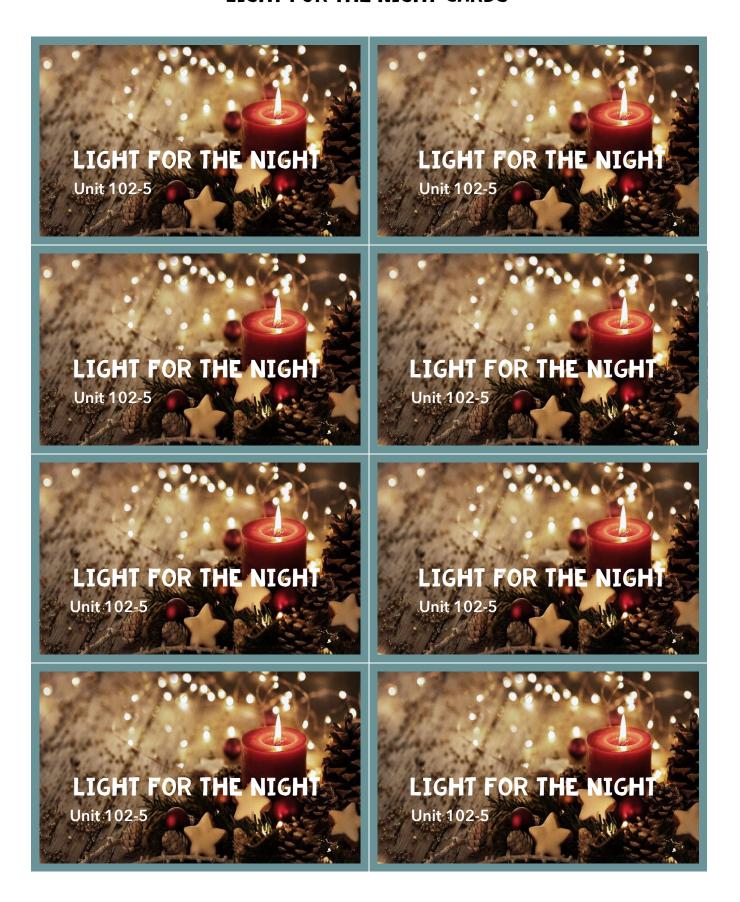
Think about things that you can do that could be good "medicine" to help heal you. Write or draw them on the medicine bottle. When you are finished, we'll go around the group and share our ideas.

### FI FI Z

SAY: Healing is not an overnight process but a daily cleansing of pain. Grief will never leave you, but it does change over time. You will not always be brokenhearted and wounded. Healing doesn't mean the damage never existed it means that the damage no longer controls your life.  IBLICAL APPLICATION  10 minute  and a Bible to the verse, so the group sees that you are reading from God's Word. Hand out the Light for the Cards.  SAY: Our Light for the Night this week is Psalm 147:3:  "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."  God is a part of the healing process. He promises to "bind" our wounds.  The Hebrew translation of "heal" in this verse is "rapha." It means to heal, to sew together or mend.  Have you ever had to have stitches? A surgeon needs to stitch our wounds to hold them together, so they have time to heal. In Exodus 15:26b, we learn one of the names of God is Jehovah Rapha, or "Lord who Heals." We can't physical see the healing God does inside our hearts and minds, but He is at work and is sewing you together again "stitch by stitch" so that you receive complete healing over time.	S
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	e lly
CLOSING PRAYER:	
Father, You are the perfect healer. Help us to trust You with our grief. Amen.	

### MEDICINE FOR HEALING GRIEF





"He heals the brokenhearted "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." and binds up their wounds." Psalm 147:3 Psalm 147:3 "He heals the brokenhearted "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." and binds up their wounds." Psalm 147:3 Psalm 147:3 "He heals the brokenhearted "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." and binds up their wounds." Psalm 147:3 Psalm 147:3 "He heals the brokenhearted "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." and binds up their wounds." Psalm 147:3 Psalm 147:3

### MOURNINGSTAR Grief Curriculum for Small Groups

GWEN KAPCIA SHELLEY HENNING

### HOPE FOR THE NEW YEAR

TEEN SUPPORT GROUP 6

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering



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### **HOPE FOR THE NEW YEAR**

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering Teen Support Group 6

PURPOSE	LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT	OBJECTIVE OF HEALING
Looking to the future and establishing goals	Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."	Reasoning the Purpose

### **SUMMARY**

Why? How did this happen? Am I safe in the world? What do I believe about life, death, and afterlife? These are questions often processed in the journey through grief. We seek to reason the meaning of the death from the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God.

Each six-week Unit closes with the theme of healing and hope. Many participants may not be in a place of feeling hope but are feeling hopeless. The theme of hope is introduced so they can begin to consider what it might feel like for them.

### **MATERIALS NEEDED**

Bag of Cotton Balls or Craft Pom Poms (per team)
New Year's Eve Party Hats
New Year Brochure (attached)
Crayons, Markers, and Pens
Light for the Night Cards (attached)

# REFLECTING ON THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE CAN HELP US TO SEE HOPE

### **WELCOME**

### 5 minutes

Personalize your welcome based on connections you've made with the group. Acknowledge that this is the last week of the unit.

PAUSE AND PRAYER  Begin exercise and demonstrate
SAY: Let's close our eyes and keep our feet flat on the floor. We begin with pause and prayer to calm our minds and bodies.
Stretch your hand out like a star.
Get your pointer finger from the opposite hand ready to trace your fingers up and down.
 3. Breathe in as you slide up each finger. Breathe out as you slide down each finger.
 4. Keep going until you finish tracing your hand.
PRAYER: Dear God, as we look to another year, we ask You to help us to see the hope we have. Amen.

### **LESSON**

### 60 minutes

Teens in the group may not have a relationship with God or even know who He is. Be sure to connect any group members with questions to someone who can share the Gospel and connect them with a faith community.

### SAY:

Approaching a new year is different for every grieving person. It may be welcomed, dreaded, or completely ignored. Whether the loss was this year or many years ago, there will also be deep grief that will continue to surface when you least expect it.

Looking ahead to a new year is usually exciting, but it can make us feel very differently when we are grieving. Even facing one new day can be hard, so a whole new year can be overwhelming.

Thinking about the past, present, and future can help us to see what hope we have. We're going to begin with a game that will help us to understand.



### **ACTIVITY: DON'T LOOK BACK!**

Divide the group into pairs. Each pair will need a bag of cotton balls or pom-poms and two New Year's Eve party hats.

### SAY:

Listen to the instructions carefully before we begin the game.

### **DON'T LOOK BACK INSTRUCTIONS**

- Player one from each team stands facing the front of the room. Player one must face forward from this point on and cannot look behind them!
- Player two from each team must stand 10 steps behind the first person. They will also face the front of the room. (player one's back will be facing player 2)
- Player two will get a bag of pom-poms to hold in their party hat.
- Player TWO will take a pom-pom and toss it over the head of player one.
- Player one must try to catch the pom poms <u>without</u>
   <u>turning around and looking back</u> at their teammate, just
   by stretching and reaching to catch the pom poms.
- First team to catch five first wins.

 SAY: Great job, everyone!
<ul> <li>This game shows us that it can be tough to try to do something without looking</li> <li>back first. If we look back, we can know exactly where we are so that we can</li> <li>reach a goal.</li> </ul>
Thinking ahead to the New Year is the same. Looking back at what has happened in the past and where we stand right now helps us see goals that we can hope for.
 Let's begin to do that with our next activity.
ACTIVITY: NEW YEAR BROCHURE  Give a New Year Brochure to each participant. Have the group begin by filling in their name and adding the year in each of the blank lines provided.
SAY: On the page in front of you, you'll see three columns. We'll begin with the first section – the Past. Let's read through each box together. Draw or write your answer in the box for each question.
KNOW: Once everyone has completed each section, take the time to discuss their answers.
<ul> <li>"PAST" DISCUSSION QUESTIONS</li> <li>The best thing that happened this year</li> <li>The worst thing that happened this year</li> <li>If I could change anything that happened, it would be</li> </ul>
SAY:  Next, let's look at the present. The present is what is happening right now.  We'll read through each of these boxes together. Draw or write your answer in the box for each question.
<ul> <li>"PRESENT" DISCUSSION QUESTIONS</li> <li>Right now, my school</li> <li>Right now, my best friend</li> <li>Right now, my best quality</li> </ul>

Now let's think about the future. This is where we can begin to create a plan of action for our hopes.

### **"FUTURE" DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- A school-related goal...
- A personal goal...
- Worries or fears that I need to let go...

### **BIBLICAL APPLICATION**

10 minutes

Open a Bible to the verse, so the group sees that you are reading from God's Word.

### SAY:

The Light for the Night is found in Jeremiah 29:11:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

This Bible verse was a special message of encouragement from God. His people had been forced into captivity in Babylon. They were far away from their home, and they were very sad about it. God gave the prophet Jeremiah these words to help them. We can be encouraged by this message, too.

Future means "a time that is still coming." We can remember that grief and sadness is not an ending. God has more coming for our lives, and they are good plans. No matter what we have been through in the past, what we have right now in the present, or what will come in the future, God is always working in our lives, even when we cannot see it or feel it.

While we wait on God to show us the plan for our future, we can trust that everything He does is for our best. We can hope in God's promise to bring us to a good future.

### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

God, we can't see what You have for our future, but we know that You can. We trust You and the Hope we have in You. Amen.

# LET'S TAKE A LOOK!



STARTING OUT THE NEW YEAR.

**IT'S IMPORTANT TO** 

TAKE TIME TO LOOK BACK

AT WHERE WE HAVE BEEN

AND WHERE WE ARE GOING.

THE BEST THING ABOUT MY SUPPORT GROUP IS...





TEEN

102-6



# THE PRESENT

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THE WORST THING THAT HAPPENED

IN ..... WAS...

MY BEST FRIEND:

# **APERSONAL**

GOAL FOR \_\_\_\_\_ IS...

# IF I COULD CHANGE ANYTHING

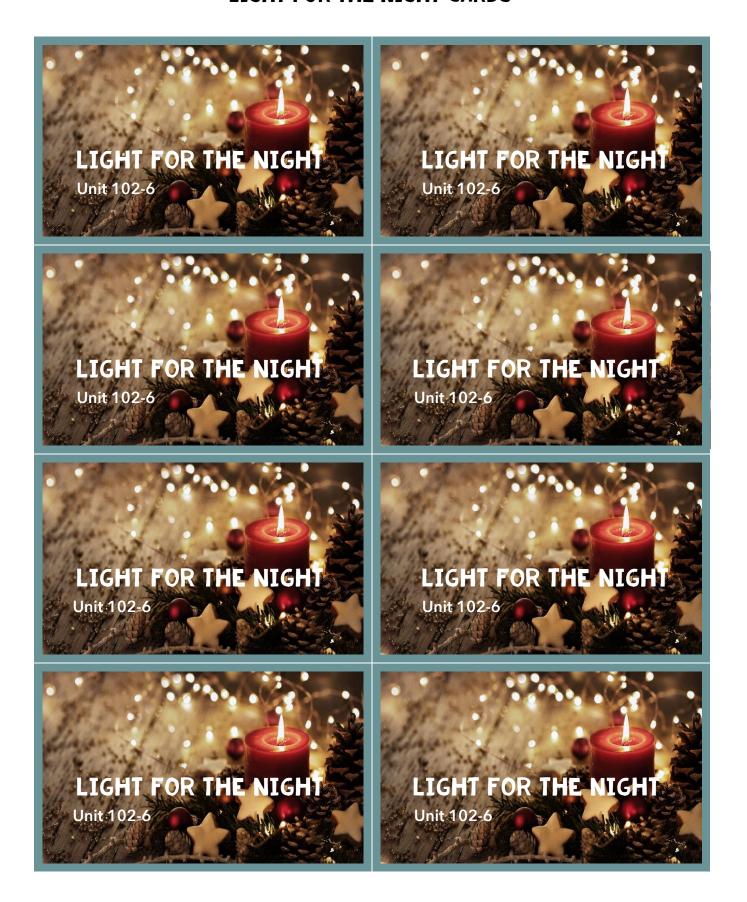
THAT HAPPENED IN I WOULD...

## RIGHT NOW...

MY BEST QUALITIES:

# **WORRIES OR FEARS I WANT TO**

LET GO OF IN \_\_\_\_\_



"For I know the plans I have for you,"

declares the Lord,

"plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29:11

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