

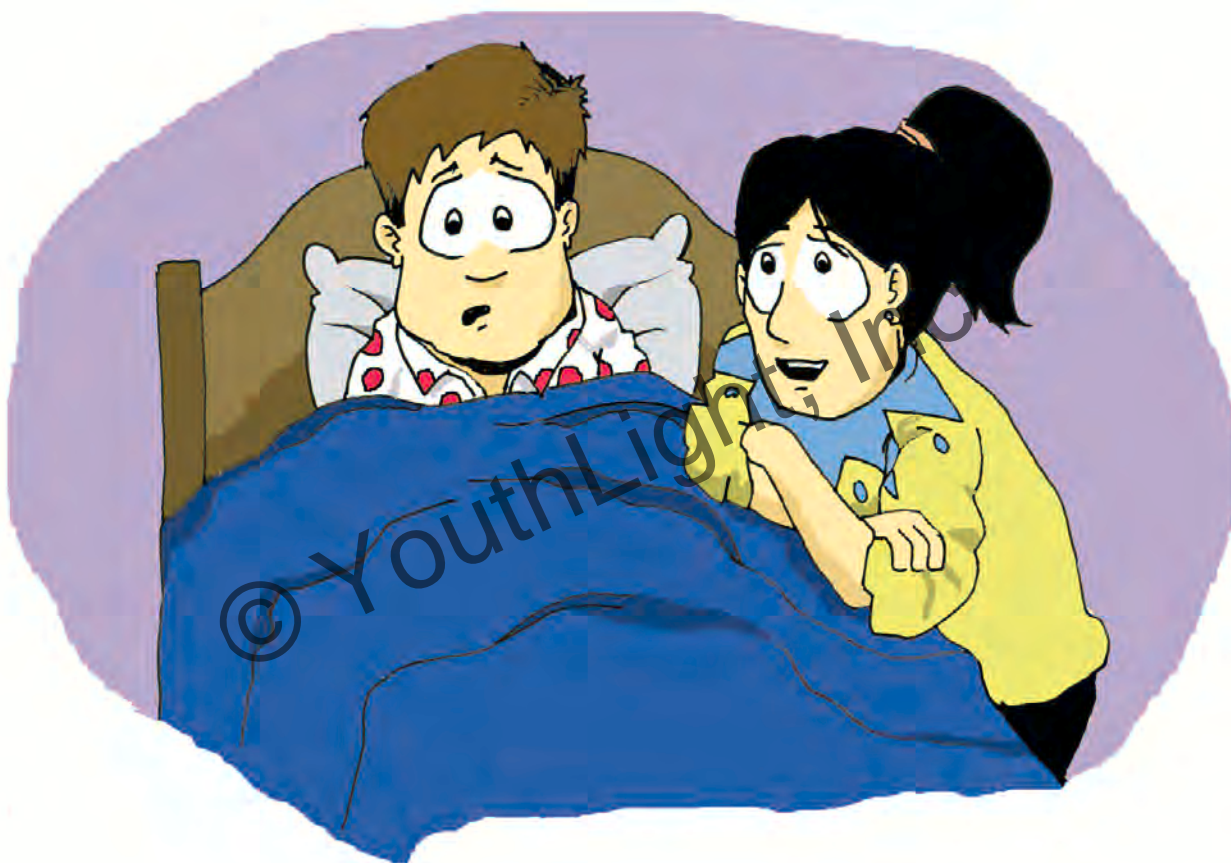
Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	4
Introduction	5-6
Activities for Grieving Children	46-52
Story Extensions	53-60
Belief Variations	61-79
References	80



The telephone rang. Mommy answered it and said, "Hello." It was Grandma. She had called to tell Mommy some sad news about Grandpa. When Mommy got off the phone she told Little Dave, "I have to go to see Grandma."

Mommy explained, "You know that Grandpa has been very sick a very long time. Most of the time when people get sick, they get well. But sometimes people have a sickness that doesn't get well, even when doctors and nurses try their best to make them get better. Grandpa's sickness is like that. Grandma needs me to come to be with her because Grandpa is probably going to die soon. You and Daddy will come to Grandma's house in a day or two to be with us."



Discussion QUESTIONS:

1. Why is Mommy going to see Grandma?
2. How long had Grandpa been sick?
3. What did Mommy say usually happens when people get sick?

Activities for Grieving Children

Memory-Making Activities

1. MAKE A MEMORY BOX

Purpose:

The child will make a box in which to keep special things that remind him/her of the person who died and the relationship they had together.

Materials needed:

- Cardboard box with a removable lid
- Colored paper
- Spray paint
- Glue stick/tape
- Colored markers
- Scissors
- Magazines
- “Stick-on” items to use for decorations (e.g., buttons, ribbon, stickers, etc.)
- Optional: a picture of the person who died

Directions for younger children (4-6 years):

Preparation: Adult should pre-cut different shapes from colored paper and spray-paint the box ahead of time, allowing time for the paint to dry

Implementation: The child can decorate the box with markers or with shapes and “stick-on” items using a glue stick.

Directions for older children (7-9 years):

Preparation: Assist the child to either spray-paint or cover the box with paper. The child can cut out pictures and/or words from magazines. The pictures and words should have some significance to the child concerning his/her relationship with the person who died.

Implementation: The child will glue words and pictures from magazines on the box to give it meaning. A picture of the person who died may be glued on the box or placed inside it after the box is completed. Allow the child to use markers and “stick-on” items to further decorate the box.

Appendix B: Belief Variations

Questions about Religious and Cultural Differences Concerning Death and Mourning

Because there are so many cultures and religions represented in the United States, there is no way to address all of them in one book. The author has attempted to provide information related to many of the more prevalent religions. Information concerning each religious group was obtained by interviews with clergy or religious leaders. Matlins (2000) has been used to supplement the information in each section. In some cases it was used as a primary source, and in those cases it will appear as a reference citation. Matlins is an excellent source for additional information concerning different religions and their grieving practices.

Protestant (Protestants or Christians):

It is important to be aware that there are numerous Protestant church denominations. Customs, rituals, and emotional expression related to death will vary, sometimes greatly, depending on the denomination and cultural heritage. See Matlins (2000) for denominational differences.

1. What happens to the body after death?

It is either buried or cremated. Burial is generally favored over cremation, though cremation is becoming more acceptable among Protestants. The body is transported to the funeral home where embalming is usually done. Caskets may be buried or placed in a mausoleum. Cremated remains are generally placed in an urn or other container and may be kept, buried, or interred in a crypt. Families may choose to scatter the ashes on the ground or in a body of water.

2. What kinds of special customs and rituals occur after a death?

“Wakes,” “visitations,” or “viewings” are customary. During these times, the body lies in state either in the funeral home, the church, or sometimes in the home of the person who died. Those who attend the wake or visitation do so because they wish to convey their sympathy for the family and pay respects to the one who died. During these times, a wide range of emotions may be expressed. Solemn quietness, sadness, expressive tears, wailing, or even laughter and joking may be evident as people talk about various aspects of the events leading up to the death and remember things about the person who died. The casket is usually open so that the body can be viewed. However, sometimes the family elects to have a “closed casket”, and may choose to display a picture of the person who died.

Funeral services or memorial services are held, usually in the church, but sometimes at the funeral home. If a funeral service is held, the family usually has private time to view the body once more prior to the service. Family members may choose to place special items or written messages in the casket prior to its being closed. The casket, if open prior to the service, will be closed before the funeral begins. Most often the closed casket or the urn containing cremated remains is present during the service. Music, prayers, liturgy, spoken remembrances eulogizing or celebrating the life of the person who died, and often a short sermon or homily are typical parts of the service, depending on the denomination.

Burial or interment occurs following the service and may be private or public, depending upon the family’s wishes. A short graveside service is usually done just prior to the burial. Sometimes family members may choose to touch the casket one last time and be present for the lowering of the casket into the ground. They may choose to place flowers or dirt on top of it after it has been lowered. Flowers given in memory of the deceased person are usually placed on top of and around the grave.

If a memorial service is held, the casket or urn is not present, and the burial of the casket or interment of cremated remains has usually already occurred. Otherwise, the service is very much the same as a funeral service.