LEARNING GRIEF

wpsu

Youth Activities

Bracelet Strips

Supporting others who are grieving is difficult for everyone. Sometimes we need a reminder of what to do or to reflect on how we responded to our friends. Use these bracelets to plan how to support and be self-compassionate when what we say doesn't go well.

Instructions:

1. Print off the following bracelet strips.
2. Cut them out.
3. Have students pick the one that connects with them.
4. Draw on, color, or just take a moment for quiet creativity with the bracelet.
5. When ready, wrap the bracelet around your wrist and use a small piece of tape to connect the two ends.

Pause, Process, Plan, Proceed

I wonder why I reacted the way I did.

What was going on for me when I reacted like that?

I did the best I could with what I knew at the time.

Pause, Process, Plan, Proceed

I wonder why I reacted the way I did.

What was going on for me when I reacted like that?

I did the best I could with what I knew at the time.

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Chatterbox

Support others who are grieving is difficult for anyone. Sometimes we need to practice things to say in order to be a better friend. Use this chatterbox template to mix-and-match validating phrases and create supportive sentences to use with people who are grieving.

Folding Instructions:

1. Print off the chatterbox template (below) and cut along the dotted lines.
2. After cutting along the dotted lines and keeping the lines on the outside, fold along the two longest middle lines that intersect in the middle.
3. Unfold completely.
4. Fold each corner until they meet in the center on the blank (non-lined) side and place it so the seams are face down on the table.
5. Again, fold each corner in to meet in the center.
6. Fold in half length- or width-wise, not along the diagonal.
7. Press the newly touching corners together into a point and pull out the four sides/flaps to hold with your fingers.

Writing Instructions:

Unfold your chatterbox to see the 8 inside triangles (inside the flaps) and write the following chats to fill up that section.

a. I'm here if you want to talk about it.
b. Nice to see you. How is your day going?
c. I'm sorry you are going through this.
d. It makes sense that this experience has you feeling [emotion].
e. Grief is different for everyone. What has it been like for you?
f. Tell me more.
g. That sounds like it's hard.
h. We're going to [activity]. If you don't feel up to coming, I get it, but I want you to know you're welcome.

2. Fold the corners in to see 8 middle triangles. Write the numbers 1 through 8 on each of those.
3. Flip the chatterbox over to see the 4 flaps and write 4 emotions on those such as joy, happy, sad, angry, confused, calm.

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Chatterbox

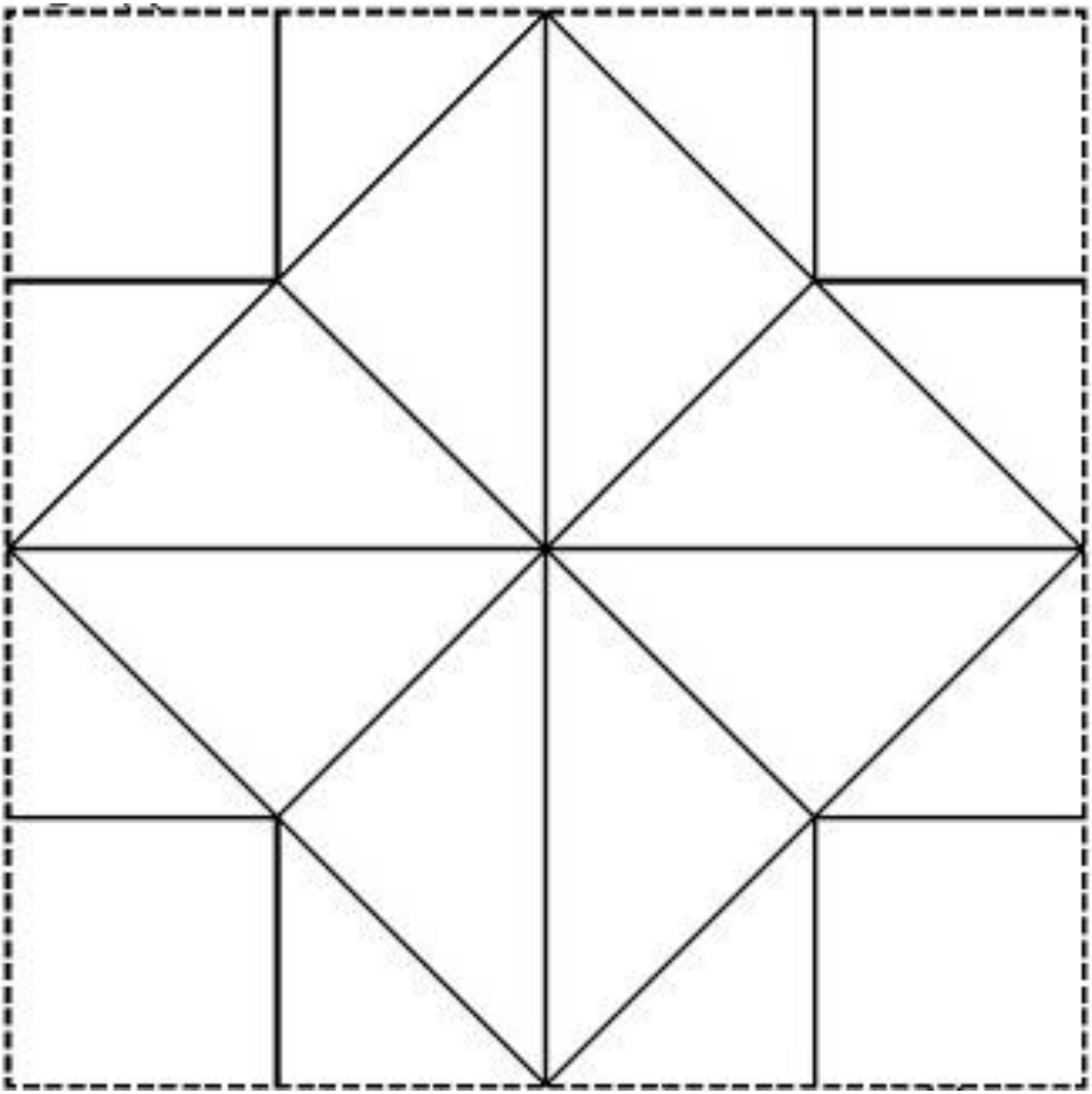
Play Instructions:

a. Partner 1 holds the chatterbox with the points meeting at the top and will be the operator.
b. Partner 2 selects an emotion word on one of the top four squares.
c. Partner 1 spells out the word that was chosen, for example J-O-Y, opening and closing the chatterbox along with the letters (ex. 3 times). Open up and down, and side to side. When Partner 1 has stopped opening and closing, Partner 2 should be looking at the inside of the chatter box with the numbers showing.
d. Partner 2 chooses one of the flaps with a number. Partner 1 opens and closes the chatterbox the right number of times.
e. When done with that, Partner 2 picks another number panel, flip up the chosen panel and read the chat underneath.

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Chatterbox Template



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Response Practice

Supporting others who are grieving is difficult for everyone. Sometimes we need to practice things to say in order to be a better friend. Use these fill-in prompts with the words and phrases in the word bank to create some supportive sentences to use with those who are grieving.

Instructions:

1. Print off the word and phrase bank for students.
2. Have the students put together words and phrases from the word bank to create a supportive response for each prompt.
3. In pairs, have the students practice saying their created responses to each other.
4. If the students wish, have them tweak and adjust their responses to sound more like them.

Supporting Prompts

1. Someone tells you about a situation that's left them feeling upset.

   Choose a Validation Response:

2. Someone is experiencing a loss and is feeling sad.

   Instead of Bright-Siding, offer a response:

3. Someone experienced a loss an extended time ago and is sharing how they are currently feeling.

   Instead of Shaming, offer a response:

4. Someone opens up to you about a difficult situation they're experiencing.

   Instead of Comparison, offer a response based in curiosity:

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Learning Grief Word and Phrase Bank

Validation
This situation is really difficult.
It can be really scary when people leave.
I know it's not the same as what you're going through, but if you ever want to hear about my experience, I'd be willing to share.
You can be grateful and still be sad.
You have the right to feel that way.
I can understand why you feel that way.
I can tell this is really important to you.

Non-Bright-Siding
It makes sense you miss your friends from your old school.
Change can be hard.
No matter how long we have our people, it never seems like long enough.
I know you had a special bond with your pet.
If you ever get another pet, I know it won't replace them.
I'm glad you have nice memories with your person.

Non-Shaming
It's normal to feel more than one thing at once.
You can be proud and sad at the same time.
It can be really hard when friends move away and it's okay to be upset about it.
Take all the time you need.
I'd be happy to come over and sit with you if you want company but don't feel like going out.

Non-Comparison/Curiosity
What are your options?
What is most important to you in this situation?
What do you think is the right thing to do?
How have you been feeling lately?
What has been the hardest part for you?
How can I best support you right now?
What do you wish others understood about what you're going through?
What has this experience been like for you? How are you feeling about it?
Tell me about your person.

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