

RAINBOW CONNECTIONS

ISSUE 11 | ANNIVERSARIES AND GRIEF

There are many times such as holidays when our grief is harder to bear. We miss the person who died more during these special times. One kind of special time is called an anniversary.

"Father's Day we made an altar and put a picture of him on it."

- Gabriel, age 11

Usually we think of someone's wedding anniversary when we hear that word. But anniversary means one, two or however many years since any important event.

For example:

Next Tuesday will be my 2nd anniversary of working at this job – meaning next Tuesday I will have worked two years at this job.

On anniversaries it is important to take some time to share our thoughts and feelings about this day and event with others. If the event was happy, like a wedding, we may have a party. If it was sad, like the death of someone we love, we may do something that helps us share the feelings we have with someone else who is important to us and who can understand.

Some of the ways children have marked the anniversaries of the death of their loved ones include:

- Visiting the grave or location where the ashes are or are scattered.
- Having a picnic at a special park or outside place that reminds them of the person who died.
- Going to a favorite restaurant of the loved one's.

Any of these will help share the feelings and the sharing helps us grow beyond our grief. The anniversaries of the death of someone we love can be difficult. Being with others can make the pain of remembering less intense and the marking of the anniversary more meaningful.

Some things that can be done at these kinds of meetings include:

- Telling stories about the person who died.
- Talking about how each person has been doing since the death,
- Bringing flowers to the grave site, planting a tree, lighting a candle or doing other memorial rituals.
- Sharing memory books or objects from a memory box.

"I was at grandma's, we signed this card that my grandma got for grandpa. It said grandpa's hugs are the best."

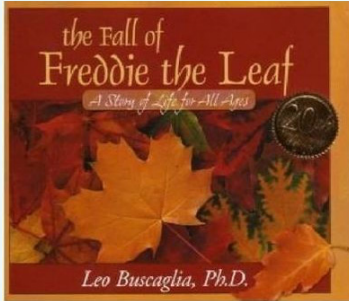
- M.T., age 7

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

The Fall of Freddie the Leaf

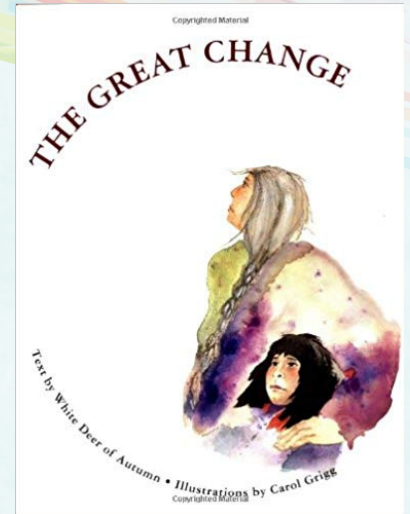
by Leo Buscaglia, PhD

Two leaves talk to each other about life and death and the changing seasons of life.



The Great Change

by White Deer of Autumn
Wansa, a Native American girl, asks her grandmother about death, the great change. A beautifully illustrated exploration of the meanings of death and tradition.



ACTIVITY IDEA

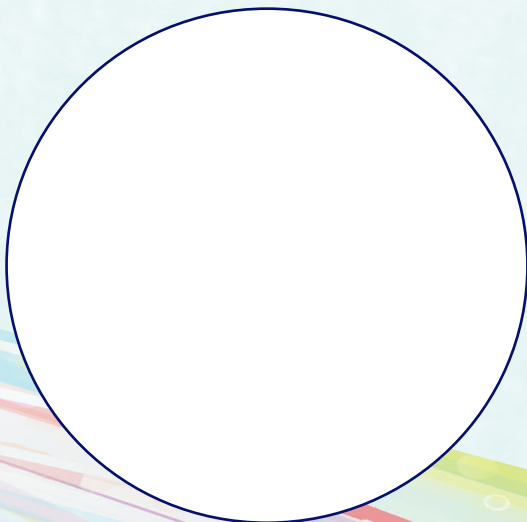
Memory Book

Write or draw about a ritual you have done or would like to do in memory of your loved one who died. You may put this in your memory book and share it with others if you would like.



Draw how you feel

Use this circle to make a face showing how you feel today.



SHARE HOW YOU ARE DOING!

Please call us if you would like to share your experiences with the feelings talked about in Rainbow Connections, or any other problems you might have. Kids are always teaching us about their grief and what helps them.



HopeWest

(970) 241-2212 | HopeWestCO.org