

# RAINBOW CONNECTIONS

## ISSUE 5 | ANGER IN GRIEF

When we cannot have something we want, we usually get angry, especially if we were really counting on getting that something. When someone close to us dies, we get angry because we were counting on having that person be with us for a long time.

If that person who dies is someone in our family, we not only have lost that person but we have lost the way our family was when we were all together. This can make us feel very sad and angry. It is normal for there to be much more anger in families in the months after the death.

Anger is a natural feeling that we all have from time to time. Anger is a problem when we do things that hurt others. It is okay to be angry: it is not okay to hit someone or break something that belongs to someone else.

Anger can also be a problem when we do not express it at all and keep the feelings inside. This is called “stuffing” our feelings. When we “stuff” our angry feelings, they can build up until we explode in angry outbursts such as temper tantrums. Sometimes when we have built-up angry feelings, we feel grouchy all the time, or feel different from other people, and lonely. Expressing our anger in a healthy way

and talking about what makes us angry helps us feel less alone and closer to the people who love us.

Each of us needs to find ways to handle our anger so that it does not create problems for us or others. Some of the ways we have found for handling anger include hitting pillows, tearing up old phonebooks, hitting clay or making a clay model of the person or thing we are angry at and smashing it, running, shooting basketball hoops or doing other physical exercise.





## SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Tell your parents how you plan to express your anger so that they understand what you are doing. They may be able to help you get old phonebooks which you can tear up.
- It is important to clean up any messes you make.
- It is a good idea to have a cooling off time or time out away from the person you are angry with.
- It may help to talk with someone you trust after you cool off.
- It is rare that anything gets fixed when we are very angry. Problems between people are easier to solve when we are not in the middle of our very angry feelings.

## ACTIVITY IDEA

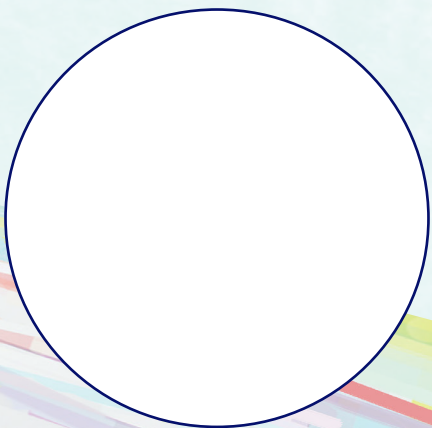
### Journal Writing

Write in your journal about something that made you angry. Draw a picture for your memory book of something that made you angry about the death. Give the picture a title and on the back write a sentence or two about what's going on in the picture.

You may also want to make a list in your journal of ways for dealing with your anger. Pick one of those ways and imagine using it next time you are angry.

### Draw How You Feel

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



## RECOMMENDED BOOKS

### Alexander and the No Good Very Bad Day

by Judith Viorst

*A classic story – a comfort to anyone who has ever had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. It helps to know others have bad days too.*

### The Saddest Time

by Norma Simon  
*Three short stories about death: an uncle, a friend hit by a car, and a grandmother. The stories include the children's memories as well as their experiences of fear, sadness, and anger.*

## 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.



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