

SOMEBODY I LOVE HAS DIED

A BOOK ON MEMORIES AND FEELINGS FOR THE VERY YOUNG CHILD

**Written and illustrated by
HELEN FITZGERALD**

Author of
The Grieving Child,
The Mourning Handbook
and
The Grieving Teen

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MY STORY

Ask for some help with your story.

MY NAME IS _____

I AM _____ YEARS OLD.

MY BIRTHDAY IS _____

MY FAVORITE FOOD IS _____

MY FAVORITE TV PROGRAM IS _____

MY FAVORITE COLOR IS _____

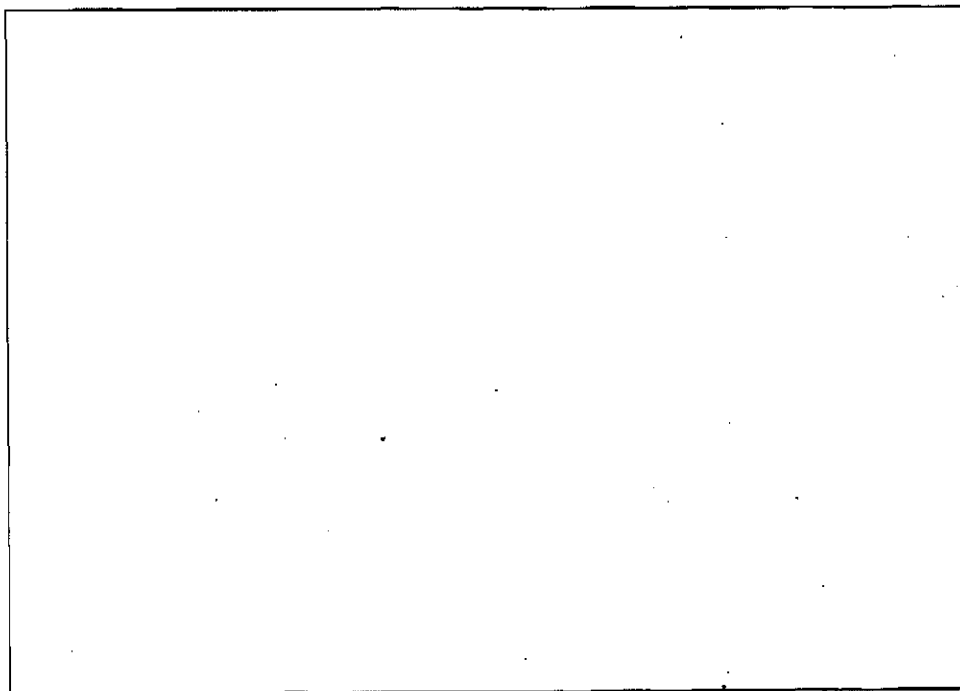
MY _____ DIED IN MY FAMILY.

WHO TOLD ME ABOUT THE DEATH? _____ THIS IS

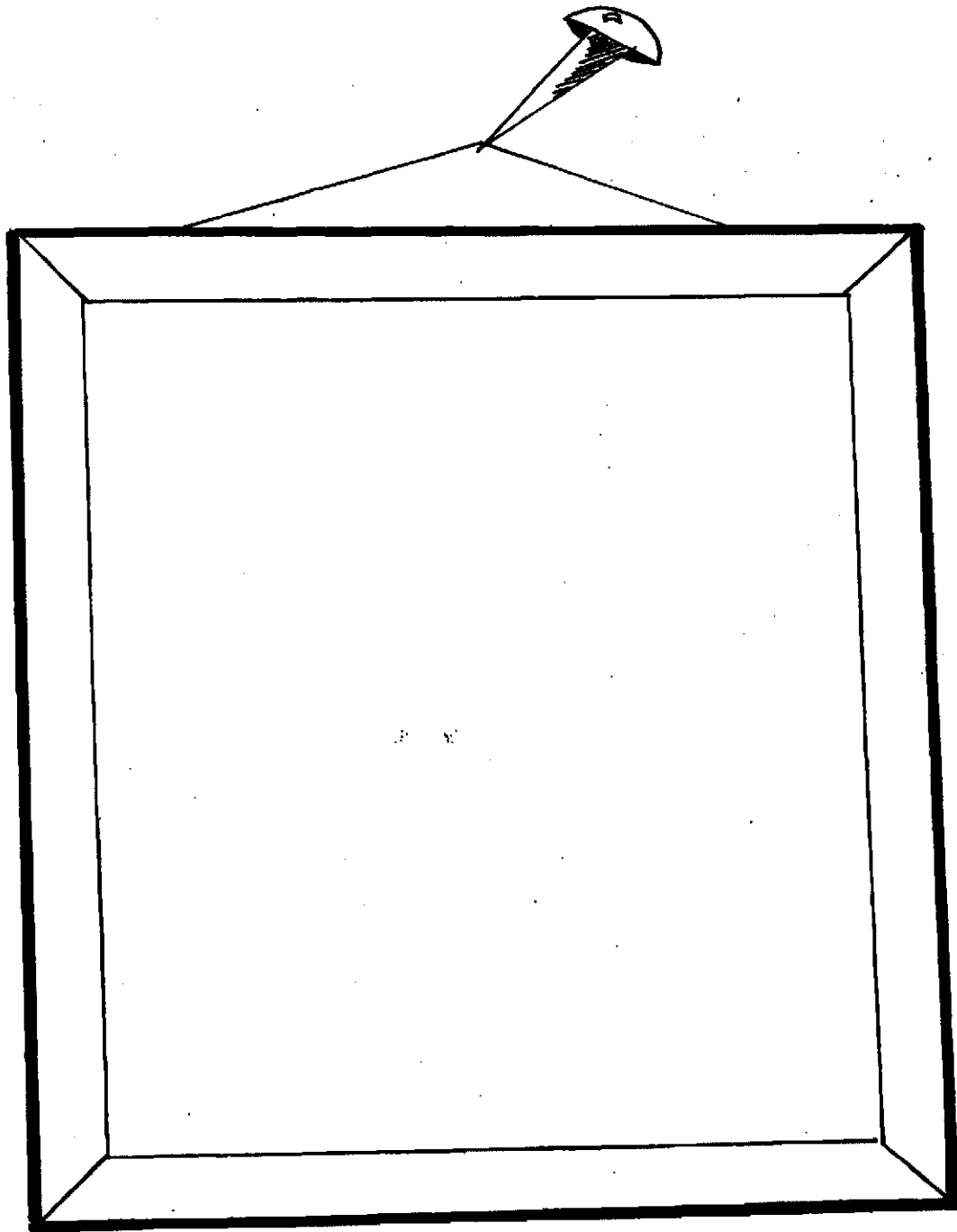
WHAT I WAS TOLD ABOUT THE DEATH:

WHAT I WANT THE WHOLE WORLD TO KNOW ABOUT THE PERSON
WHO DIED _____

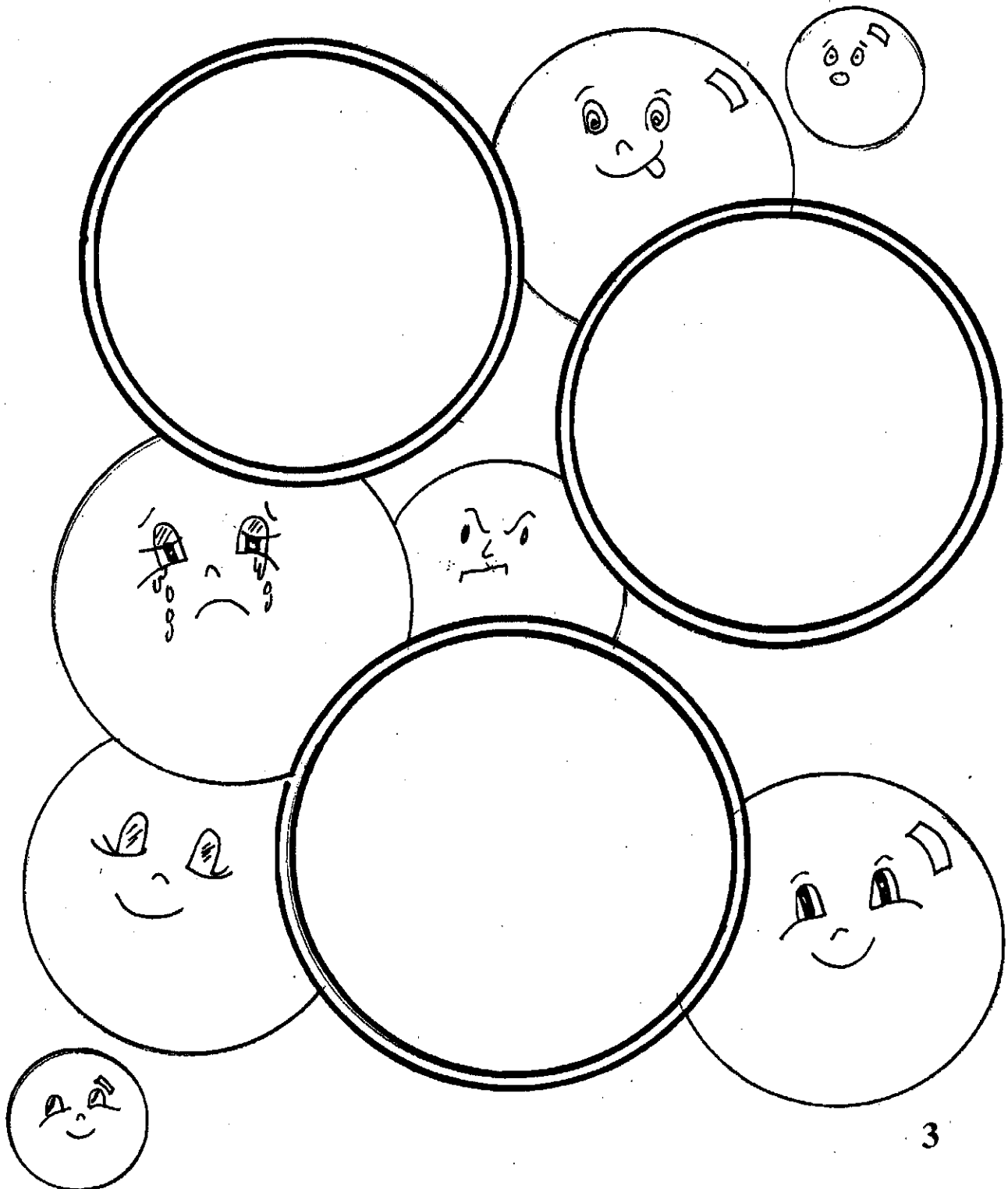
HERE IS A PICTURE OF ME:



**DRAW A PICTURE OF THE PERSON
IN YOUR FAMILY WHO HAS DIED.**

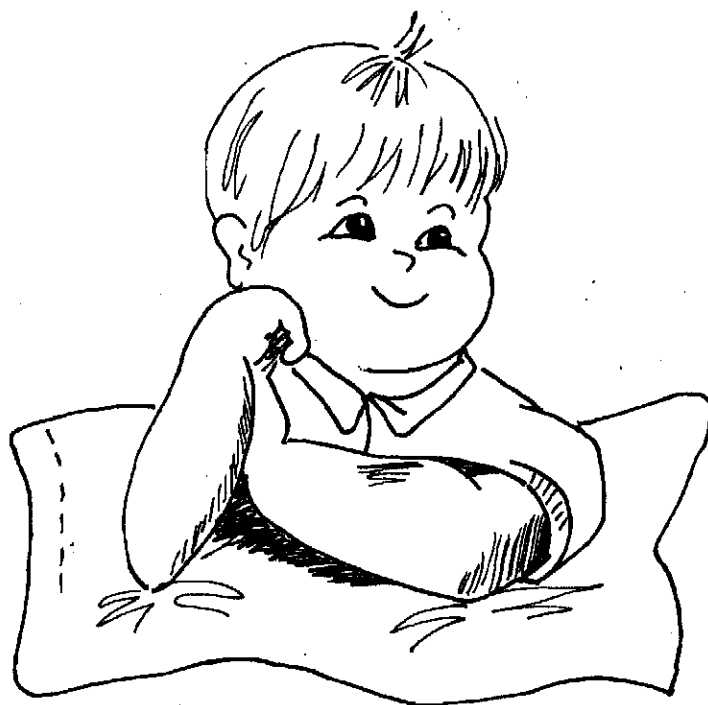


**DRAW SOME OF THE FEELINGS
YOU HAD ON THE BLANK BUBBLES.**



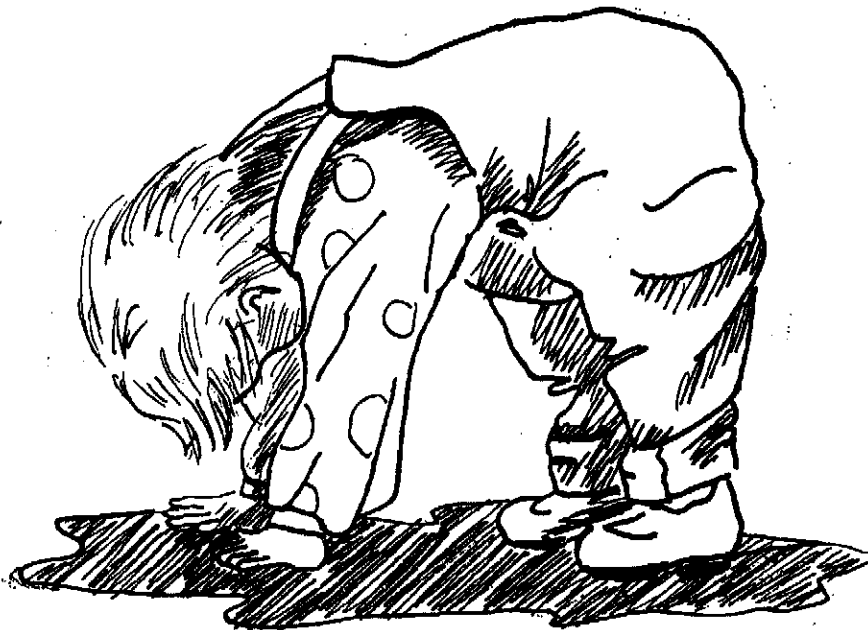
THIS PAGE IS FOR YOUR QUESTIONS, YOUR WORRIES AND YOUR COMMENTS.

(Ask for someone to write down your questions, worries and comments for you)

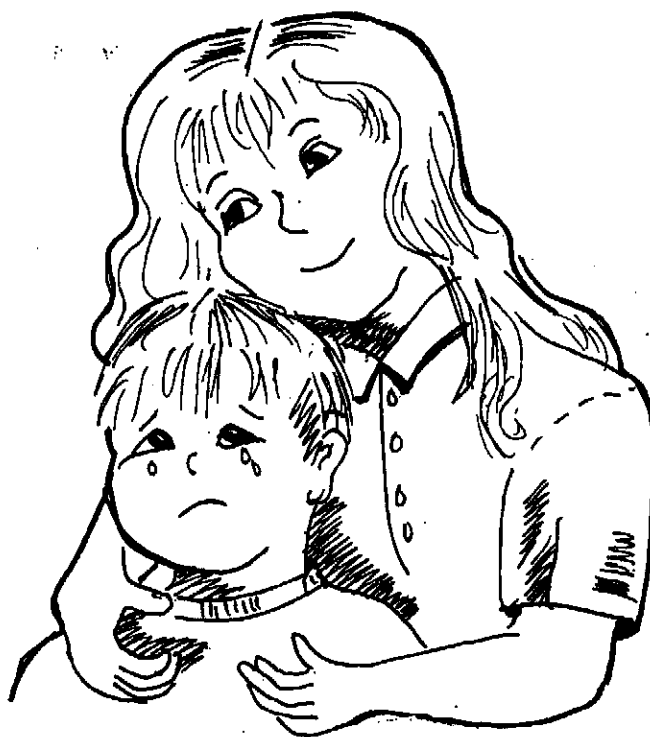


IF YOU ARE FEELING ANGRY, HERE ARE SOME THING TO DO INSTEAD OF HURTING OTHERS.

1. Rip up an old magazine and throw it about. Then play "basketball" clean up.
2. Draw a "mad" picture and then tear it up.
3. Pound a pillow or mattress with your fist.
4. Run around the outside of your house two times.
5. Get a tape recorder and make "mad sounds" into it.
6. Stomp on some packing bubble sheets.
7. Do a "mad" dance.
8. Find a person to give you a hug, or find something "soft" to hug.
9. Tell someone that you feel mad.
10. Do something funny and turn a frown upside down.



**DRAW A PICTURE OF WHAT MAKES
YOU FEEL BETTER WHEN YOU ARE
FEELING SAD OR SCARED**



**WHAT DID YOU TELL YOUR
FRIENDS?
WHAT DID YOUR FRIENDS TELL
YOU?**

(Ask for help in writing in the "balloons".)



**ON THIS PAGE, YOU CAN PASTE
SOME PICTURES OF THE PERSON
WHO DIED.**

(Decide what you want to write for the captions of each picture and ask someone to write them for you. Add more pages if needed.)

SOME GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS TO HELP THEIR CHILD THROUGH GRIEF

Prepared by Helen Fitzgerald, CDE

- As soon as possible after the death, set time aside to talk to your child.
- Give your child the facts in a simple manner - be careful not to go into too much detail. Your child will ask more questions as they come up in his/her mind.
- If you can't answer their questions, it's OK to say, "I don't know how to answer that, but perhaps we can find someone to help us."
- Use the correct language - say the word "dead" etc. Do not use phrases such as: "He's sleeping", or "God took her", or "He went away", etc.
- Ask your child questions to better understand what they may be thinking or feeling. "What are you feeling?" "What have you heard from your friends?" "What do you think happened?" Etc.
- Explain your feelings to your child, especially if you are crying. Give them permission to cry to. We are their role models and it's appropriate for children to see our sadness and to share our feelings with them.
- Use the given name of the deceased when speaking of him or her.
- Understand the age and level of comprehension of your child. Speak to that level.
- Talk about feelings, such as: sad, angry, feeling responsible, scared, fearful, depressed, worried, etc.
- Read a book on childhood grief so you have a better understanding of what your child may be experiencing.
- Read a book on death to your child. Take time to discuss what you have read and tie it into what is happening to you.

- Talk about the viewing and funeral. Explain what happens at these events and find out if your child wants to attend.
- Think about ways your child can say "good-bye" to the person who has died.
- Talk to your child about God, if appropriate, and what happens to people after they die.
- Invite your child to come back to you if he or she has more questions or has heard rumors - that you will help get the correct information.
- Talk about memories, good ones and ones not so good.
- Watch out for "bad dreams". Are they occurring often? Talk about the dreams.
- Watch for behavioral changes in your child both at home or at school.
- Friends, family, school mates, etc, frequently find solace and comfort in doing something in the name of the person who died - a memorial.
- You might see some of the following emotions:
 - a. Tearfulness
 - b. Irritability
 - c. Cling to you
 - d. Whiney moods
 - e. Somatic Complaints
 - f. Unable to concentrate
 - g. Grades may dip temporarily
 - h. More pronounced fears, i.e.: of dying themselves, or you dying, of the dark, etc.
 - i. Regression in behavior
 - j. Aggressive behavior

These are normal emotions, however, if you ever feel they are more extreme or lasting longer than you think they should, never hesitate to consult a professional.

- Offer your child loving, touching support.