

# MY COPING CREW

When a grief wave hits, your Coping Crew can help you guide your boat.



# IMPORTANT NOTES:

## THIS 10-SESSION CURRICULUM:

- Teaches students to cope with grief and loss (death of a loved one)
- Includes differentiated materials for 1<sup>st</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> graders
- Can be used with small groups and individuals
- Is aligned to ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors
- Is data-driven with a provided pretest/posttest

# SAILING THROUGH LOSS GROUP OUTLINE

- **Session 1:** Introductions & Icebreakers
- **Session 2:** Understanding Grief
- **Session 3:** My Grief Journey
- **Session 4:** Farewell at Sea
- **Session 5:** Exploring Feelings
- **Session 6:** Sailing Through the Stages of Grief
- **Session 7:** Grief Comes in Waves
- **Session 8:** Let's Set Sail: Using Coping Skills
- **Session 9:** My Coping Crew
- **Session 10:** Group Closure & Reflection





# IMPORTANT NOTES:

## THIS 10-SESSION CURRICULUM:

- Is super-low prep and ready to go
- Can be customized to fit the needs of your students and the amount of time you have
- Implement all 10 sessions in the order presented. Or change the order, pick and choose certain sessions, or add in materials of your choice!





# A DETAILED PLAN IS INCLUDED FOR EACH SESSION:



**SESSION 2: Understanding Grief**

**SESSION GOALS:**

- Students will learn the definition of grief.
- Students will learn about different types of grief and loss.
- Students will test their knowledge of grief and loss.
- Students will share what grief means to them.

**ASCA ALIGNMENT:**

- M1: Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being
- B-SMS 6: Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- B-SMS 10: Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Group folders
- "Captain's Log" feelings check-in poster
- "What is Grief?" poster
- "Different Types of Grief & Loss" poster
- 1 True/False "Quiz" "Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down" per student
- 1 "Grief Means to Me" worksheet per student
- Pencils
- Crayons or markers

**SESSION 2 DIRECTIONS:**

- Explain that today we will learn the definition of "grief" and about different types of grief.
- You may choose to start each group session with a feelings check-in with the "Captain's Log" poster. Students can point to how they're feeling today on the color poster or color how they're feeling today on the black/white version.
- Ask students to share with the group what they think "grief" means. Then, teach them the definition on the "What is Grief?" poster.
- Explain that there are different types of loss, and many of life's hard or painful experiences can be considered a loss. Ask students to share any types of loss that they know. Then, teach them about the different types of loss on the "Different Types of Loss" poster. Ask students to point to the type of loss they're experiencing on the poster and share a little about it. Please tell students that we'll share our stories in more detail next week.
- Give each student a "Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down" quiz. This activity is meant to test students' knowledge and experience with grief (but is not graded). Please read each question aloud to students and ask them to circle/color the thumbs up (true) or thumbs down (false). After students have filled out the whole "quiz" please review, explain, and discuss each question with them.
- Give each student a "Grief Means to Me" worksheet. Ask them to write and draw about what grief means to them. When they're done, they can share their responses with the group.
- Close by sharing that next week we will focus on sharing our stories with each other.

**SESSION 3: My Grief Journey**

**SESSION GOALS:**

- Students will compare their own experiences with grief to Greg's in the story, "Greg's Goodbye."
- Students will process their own loss story.
- Students will openly share their story with group members.

**ASCA ALIGNMENT:**

- M1: Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being
- M2: Sense of acceptance, respect, support and inclusion for self and others in the school environment.
- B-SMS 6: Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- B-SMS 10: Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- B-SS 3: Positive relationships with adults to support success.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

- Group folders
- "Captain's Log" feelings check-in poster
- 1 copy of the "Greg's Goodbye" story per student
- Printed and cut-out discussion cards
- 1 "My Loved One" page per student
- Choose either of the two "My Grief Journey" worksheets
- Pencils
- Crayons or markers

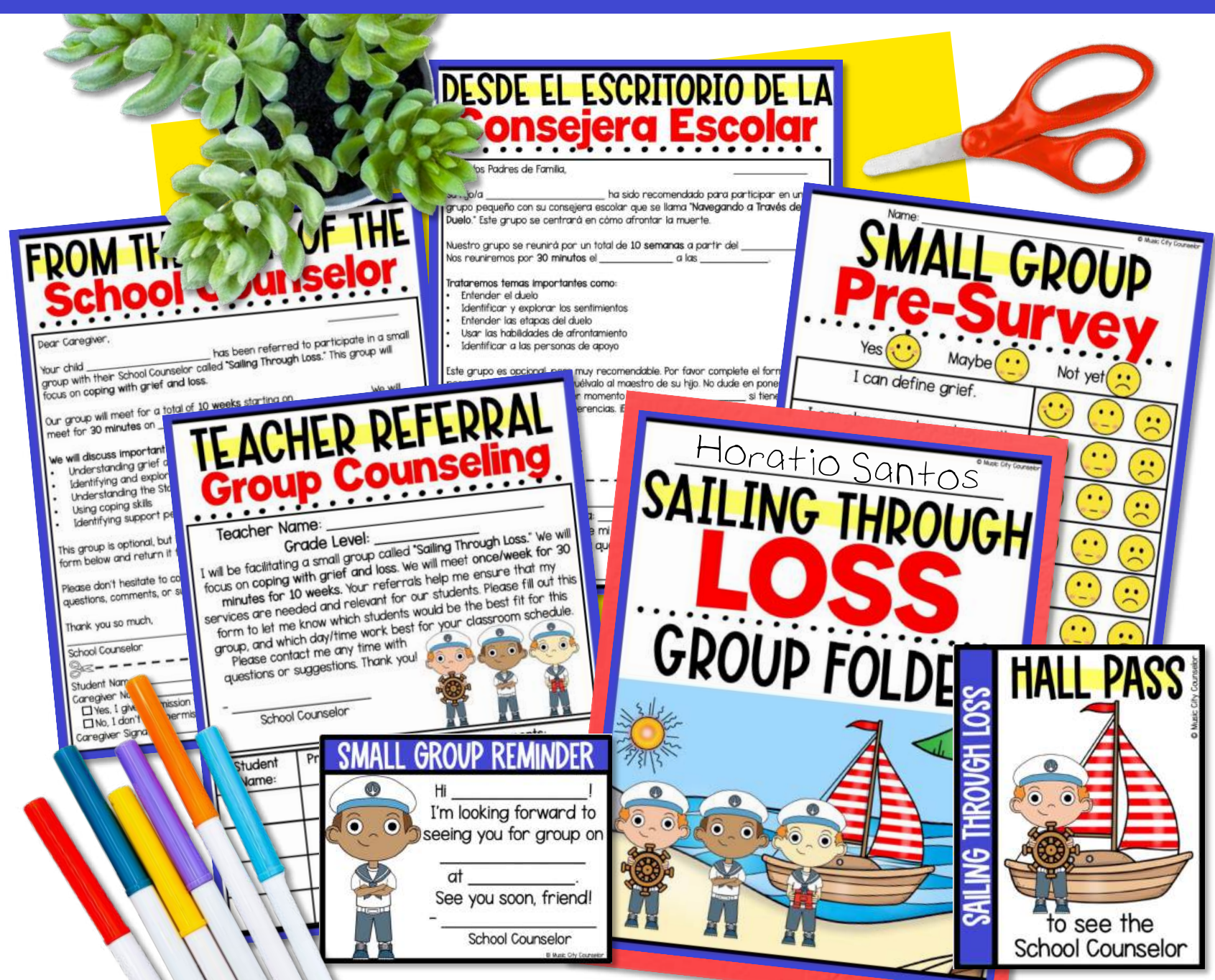
**SESSION 3 DIRECTIONS:**

- Briefly review the material learned last week (definitions of grief and the different types of grief).
- Explain that today we will process and share our experiences with grief and loss.
- You may choose to start each group session with a feelings check-in with the "Captain's Log" poster. Students can point to how they're feeling today on the color poster or color how they're feeling today on the black/white version.
- Give each student a copy of the "Greg's Goodbye" story so they can read along with you. Read the story aloud to students. As they listen, ask students to think about how Greg's story is similar to and different from their experience with grief.
- Place the discussion cards in a pile and ask students to take turns drawing one. These cards help students process the story and start to share their own experiences. They can read the question aloud to the group and then share their responses.
- Give each student a "My Loved One" coloring page. Ask students to write their name and draw a picture of the loved one they lost. Students can share with the group once they finish. Allow students to share details about their loved one, if they'd like to.
- Two versions of the "My Grief Journey" worksheet are included: a "movie reel" and a comic strip. Please choose the page that best meets the needs and abilities of your students, or let students choose. Students can write and draw a movie reel or a comic strip that shares their story about losing a loved one. Once they're done, they can share them with the group.
- Close the lesson by explaining that next week we will be talking and sharing about memorials/funerals.



# GROUP FORMS:

- Teacher Referral Form
- Bilingual Parent Letters
- Pretest
- Posttest
- Alignment to ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors
- Binder cover
- Folder covers
- Hall passes
- Student reminder cards
- Attendance chart
- Group rules
- Confidentiality agreement
- Feelings check-in
- Completion certificates
- EDITABLE versions of all forms
- Versions for all forms for school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists







**CONFIDENTIALITY Agreement**  
 WHAT YOU SAY IN HERE, STAYS IN HERE. UNLESS:

SOMEONE IS HURTING YOU

YOU ARE HURTING SOMEONE ELSE



**CAPTAIN'S LOG**  
 Today I Feel



**IN THIS GROUP We'll Learn:**

Glue Tab

**H O P E**

To identify and understand our feelings.

The 5 Stages of Grief.

To cope with loss.

**GROUP Rules**

We listen and pay attention to each other.

We are respectful.

We are kind.



# SESSION 1:

Introductions & Icebreakers





# CAPTAIN'S LOG

## Today I Feel

Happy

Embarrassed

Sad

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

Circle the if the answer is true.  
Circle the if the answer is false.

- Grief only happens when someone dies.
- Only a few kids go through grief.
- It's okay to feel sad, mad, and confused when I'm grieving.
- Everyone grieves the same way.
- Grief will go away quickly if I just ignore it.
- After a loss, everything in my life will change.



Name: Carla Queen

### GRIEF MEANS TO ME

Write and draw about what grief means to you.

Grief means the big feelings I have when I think about my grandma who died.



### DIFFERENT TYPES of Grief & Loss

Loss of a loved one

Loss of a pet

Loss of a friendship

Moving away

### WHAT IS Grief?

A very strong feeling of sadness that happens when we lose someone we love. It's how our heart feels when we miss them...

# SESSION 2:

## Defining & Understanding Grief & Loss





Name: Hanna Rodriguez  
**MY LOVED ONE**  
 My loved one's name was:  
Abuela Gimelda



Name: Hanna Rodriguez  
**MY GRIEF JOURNEY**  
 Create a comic strip that tells the story of your loss.

My abuela loved me.

I visited her.



**Greg's Goodbye**

Then Greg asked, "Where did grandpa go? Why did he have to leave me?"

Dad explained, "Grandpa's body got too tired. Now he is at peace. Even though we can't see him, we'll always carry him with us in our hearts."

"It's okay to feel sad, Greg," mom said. "We all feel sad because we love grandpa so much."

"Will I ever see grandpa again?" Greg asked.

Name: Hanna Rodriguez  
**MY GRIEF JOURNEY**  
 Pretend you are filming a movie about your loss. Draw and write about the 5 main events from your story.

**A READ-ALoud STORY**  
**Greg's Goodbye**

It was a regular Wednesday afternoon when Greg, a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader, rode his skateboard home from school. In school that day, they had learned about him to tell him all about it.

When Greg walked in the front door, his mom and dad were sitting at the kitchen table. They looked sad. "Come sit with us, Greg," his mom said. "We need to talk."

Greg sat down at the kitchen table and felt his heart start to beat faster. "Something wasn't right," Greg, his dad said with a shaky voice. "I need to tell you about grandpa. He passed away last week, and his body couldn't fight anymore."

"What do you mean?" Greg asked.

"Grandpa, he's not here with us anymore," Mom said through her eyes.

Greg said nothing. His chest felt heavy, and his hands were shaking. "I was just going to call him. I love you," Greg said through tears.

"I'll hold you tightly. It's so hard when someone passes away, and we want to talk to them like they used to be." Dad said.

Dad explained, "But we'll always carry something special you with you."

"Will I ever see grandpa again?" Greg asked.

"I'll talk about grandpa any time you want."

"I hope he'd feel tomorrow, or the day after, knowing he could still talk to you."

"I'll be there for the funeral for grandpa. This is a big day, and say goodbye to him for me."

"Can I go with you?" Greg asked.

"I'll hold you in my mom's arms for a hug. He'll be with you, and his family would be with you."



**Let's Talk!**

**Greg's Goodbye**

What do you think Greg's mom and dad mean?

**Let's Talk!**

**Greg's Goodbye**

What were some of the questions Greg asked?

# SESSION 3:

## My Grief Journey





# WHAT IS a Memorial?

A special ceremony where family and friends come together to say goodbye to someone who has died.



## FAREWELL AT SEA

Here is a picture of me at the memorial.

Here is a picture of my family at the memorial.

## HOW DO MEMORIALS Help Us Cope?

## WHAT TO EXPECT at a Memorial



People who are crying and sad



Special traditions, songs, prayers, or rituals

## FAREWELL at Sea

The crew says goodbye to a special fellow crew member. Their loved one is setting sail on a new journey - sailing beyond the horizon.



Let's Talk!

Let's Talk!

Farewell At Sea

What word does your family use for a memorial?

What does a memorial mean to you?



Farewell Sea

What traditions does your family or culture have?

# SESSION 4: Farewell at Sea





# GRIEF & LOSS CAN Make Us Feel:



Let's  
Talk!  
How do you  
feel when...  
you think about a  
happy memory  
together?

## SESSION 5: Exploring Feelings







# Anger

Like the sea is rough and the waves are crashing in.



## MY BRAIN...

feels very mad. I may feel upset at myself, the person who died, or others. It all feels so unfair.

## MY BODY FEELS...

Hot, tense, and sweaty. My heart is beating fast. My hands are in fists. I yell and scream!

# Sadness

Like the sea is quiet, but I'm lost in the fog.



## MY BRAIN...

feels so, so sad about my loss. I can't stop thinking about my loved one.

# STAGES OF GRIEF

Name: John Martin

Stage of Grief	Looks like...	Feels like...
SHOCK		Breathing fast, gasping, and

# Shock

Like suddenly being caught in a lightning storm at sea.



## MY BRAIN...

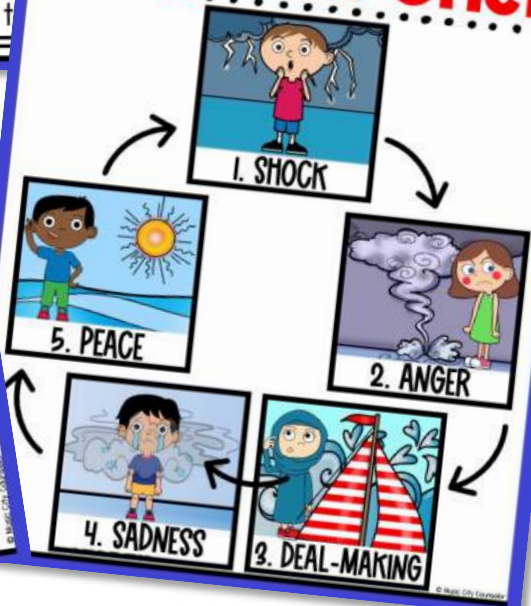
is trying to protect me so I experience the loss slowly. It's too much pain to feel all at once.

## MY BODY FEELS...

I can't move or think. My feelings are turned off. My heartbeat, and nausea.

SAY...  
"It really happen!"  
"They're gone!"  
"It's true!"

# SAILING THROUGH THE Stages of Grief



# SESSION 6: Sailing Through the Stages of Grief







# CHOPPY WATERS

## LOOK LIKE:

- Things aren't calm, but they aren't rough either
- Life feels "bumpy"
- You're okay sometimes, then a wave hits and you're suddenly sad



# SMOOTH SAILING

## LOOKS LIKE:

- Things are going well
- Life feels "easy" again
- Smiling at happy memories
- Enjoying your day
- Laughing, playing, and doing things you love



## FEELS LIKE:

- Light, peaceful, and calm
- You're able to go on with your day without trouble
- Your "old" self
- You still miss your loved one, but it doesn't hurt as much

# THE WAVES OF GRIEF

Grief comes and goes, like waves in the ocean. Sometimes, the ocean is calm and peaceful, and we feel okay. Other times, strong waves crash in and bring BIG feelings. Over time, we learn to sail when a grief wave hits.

## SMOOTH SAILING

Things are going pretty well. The water is calm and you feel okay. You feel strong enough to go on with your day without feeling too sad.

## CHOPPY WATERS

The waves are there, but they're not too big or too small. You feel sad when little waves hit, but your grief is manageable and under control.

## ROUGH WATERS

The waves are BIG and strong. You feel knocked down by sadness, anger, and confusion. Your feelings are overwhelming. You're scared to lose control.



# SESSION 7: Grief Comes in Waves





**LET'S SET SAIL!**  
 Coping skills teach us to "sail" when a grief wave hits. They are like the steering wheel of our boat that steers us through when the water feels rough.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
**LET'S SET SAIL!**  
 Write a coping skill on each part of the sailboat.



**STEERING WHEEL of Coping Skills**

**COPING SKILLS**

Take a breath	Write a letter	Remember happy memories
Go for a walk	Draw or paint	Do a balloon send-off
U.S.S. COPING SKILLS	Listen to music	Ask for a hug
Recall happy memories	Make a Memory Box	Talk it out

**STEERING WHEEL of Coping Skills**

Steering Wheel: Draw, Write a letter, Talk it out, Draw or paint

Sail (from top to bottom): Listen to music, Write a letter, Recall happy memories, Take deep breaths, Talk it out

Boat Hull: Make a Memory Box, U.S.S. COPING SKILLS, Do a balloon send-off



# SESSION 8:

## Let's Set Sail: Using Coping Skills





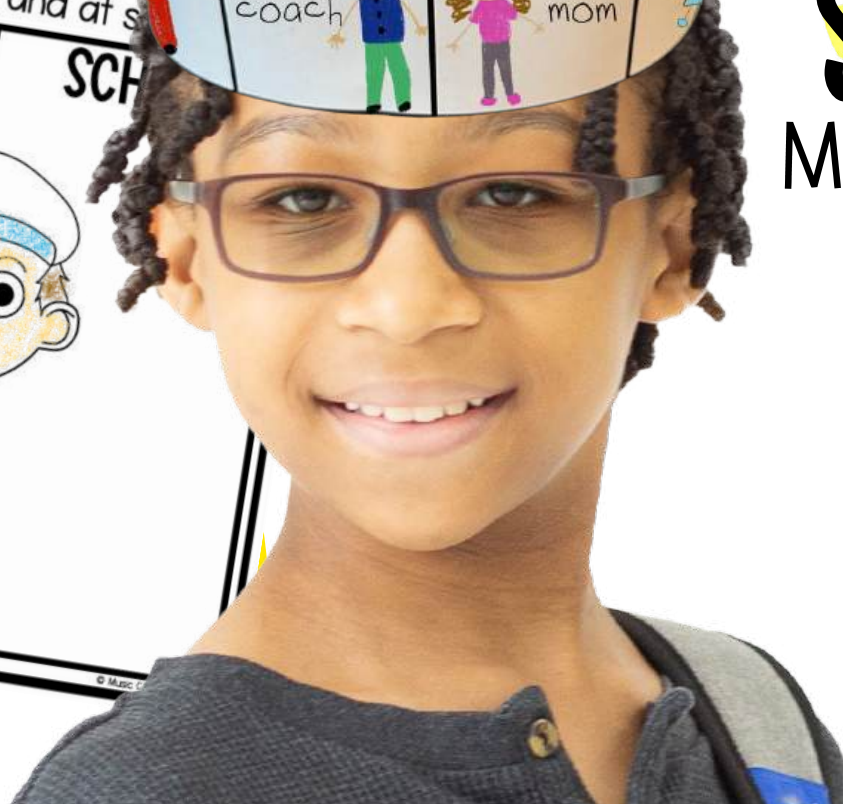
**MY COPING CREW**  
When a grief wave hits, my Coping Crew can help me guide my boat.

Family Friends School Counselors Teacher neighbors

Name: Carl Ramos

**MY COPING CREW**  
Write and draw about your Coping Crew at home and at school.

<b>HOME</b> My mom My grandma My dog My nice neighbor	<b>SCHOOL</b> My coach My mom
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# SESSION 9: My Coping Crew







Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# MY TIME IN GROUP

Write and draw about your experience in group.

IN GROUP I LEARNED:

MY FAVORITE MEMORY IN GROUP

I WILL KEEP PRACTICING:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# SMALL GROUP Post-Survey

Yes 😊 Maybe 😐 Not yet 😞

I can define grief.	😊	😊	😊	😊	😊
I can share my loss story with others.	😊	😊	😊	😊	😊
I understand what a memorial is and what to expect at one.	😊	😊	😊	😊	😊
I can identify my feelings about my loss.	😊	😊	😊	😊	😊

IF I COULD CHANGE ONE THING...

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# MY TIME IN GROUP

Write and draw about what you learned in group.

# CONGRATULATIONS,

Horatio Santos

I have successfully completed the "Sailing Through Loss" small group! We are so proud of you!

*\_\_\_\_\_*  
Counselor

3-4-24  
Date

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# IT'S TIME TO Set Sail!



Let's Talk!

**Goodbye, Group**

What was your favorite memory from group?

# SESSION 10:

## Group Closure & Reflection