

LESSON

35 minutes

Begin the lesson time with the group seated in a circle.

SAY:

The holidays bring a lot of different feelings when we are grieving. Things that used to make us happy might make us sad when we think about our person who died.

Who can tell me what the very first holiday of the season is? (allow responses)

Thanksgiving is the first holiday we celebrate in the "holiday season." A "normal" thanksgiving has feelings of joy, peace, happiness, and of course, thankfulness.

When we are grieving, there is nothing normal about the holidays. Everything has changed. Our feelings might be very different from everyone around us, and our feelings might even feel mixed-up!

Let's play a game to help us to see some of the feelings we might have when we think about Thanksgiving this year.



ACTIVITY: HOT 'APPLE' FEELINGS

Have one apple for the group to play this game. Print and cut-out the Hot Apple Feelings Cards, placing them in a pile in the center of the group. You will need a music source with the ability to pause and play.

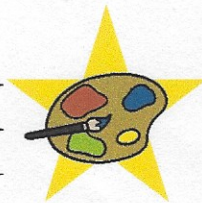
SAY:

Let's all sit in a circle. I will give the first person an apple, and then I will play some music. As soon as the music starts, pass the apple around the circle. When the music stops, whoever is holding the apple will draw a Hot Apple Feelings card from the pile. They will act out the feeling they see on the cards while the rest of the group guesses what feeling they are acting out.

KNOW:

After you've played a few rounds, pick-up the cards and the apple and direct the group's attention back to you as you continue the lesson.

Child



ACTIVITY: THANKFUL CHAINS

Cut strips of construction paper in a variety of autumn colors. You will need tape and pens or markers for the group to use for this activity.

SAY:

We're going to create a Thankful Chain. After we start them, you can take your chain home and add to it each time you think of something you are thankful for.

THANKFUL CHAIN INSTRUCTIONS:

- Choose a strip of paper to be the first color for your chain. Think about one thing that you are thankful for, or something that makes you smile. Write it on the paper strip you chose.
- Tape the strip ends together, so that the writing is on the outside, creating a loop.
- Choose another paper and write one more thing you are thankful for.
- Tape these strip ends together around the first loop.
- Continue for as many things you can think of to give thanks for.

BIBLICAL APPLICATION

10 minutes

Open a Bible to the verse, so the group sees that you are reading from God's Word. Hand out the Light for the Night cards.

SAY:

Our Light for the Night comes from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18:

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

More often than not, we tend to "save-up" our list of things-to-be-thankful-for and open it on one day each year. Scripture told us long before the holiday of Thanksgiving was established that giving thanks was for *every* day, in *every* circumstance.

To give thanks in everything goes against the norm. Our emotions don't always match the actions of rejoicing and Thanksgiving.

Paul writes this verse, convinced that in everything, God is working on behalf of his people. He is not instructing us to thank God **FOR** everything that happens but **IN** everything. Even in grief, sorrow, worry, or fear, we can be thankful for the good that God will accomplish through difficulties. We can be thankful for God's presence and our salvation through His Son, Christ Jesus.

CLOSING PRAYER:

God, seeing thankfulness right now is so hard. Open our eyes to what we can rejoice in. Help us to trust Your will in our grief. Amen.

PREPARING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

UNIT 102: Seasons of Remembering
Adult Support Group 3

PURPOSE	LIGHT FOR THE NIGHT	OBJECTIVE OF HEALING
Thinking ahead to make a plan for how the holidays will happen this year	Proverbs 22:3 <i>"The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty."</i>	Reinforcing our Support

SUMMARY

Grief reinforces how our Creator made us for relationship and community. Pain is something we are not meant to endure alone. Seeking and creating a support network is crucial. This objective explores many different support methods, including people, places, and activities that help on the journey through grief.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- ☐ Holiday Planning Sheet (*attached*)
- ☐ Light for the Night Cards (*attached*)

WE CAN CHOOSE
HOW THE HOLIDAYS
WILL HAPPEN FOR US

Adult