

Memory Salt Jar

Group Activity

ACTIVITY AIMS

Memory salt jar's can be made individually, or in groups. They are a creative activity that promotes communication and sharing of memories and feelings.

This activity can be done as a way of remembering a group member who has died, or could be done 1:1 for young people who have been bereaved of a loved one.

Due to it's nature, you will need to be prepared for different reactions from young people and have people ready to be available for anyone who needs some space to talk separately from the group.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Fine table salt
- Coloured chalk pastels
- Multiple small jars if making one each, large jar(s) if making in groups
- Multiple sheets of paper to put salt on
- Plain gift tag





SESSION PLAN

- Start by setting the tone for the activity; explaining that sharing memories of someone who has died can help with healthy grief. It's important to respect each other's reactions and remember we are likely to feel different things to each other and this is ok. Remind the group of what they can do if they need to step away from the activity, or if they feel they need further support afterwards.
- Explain that the jar is a way of remembering different things about their special person. Each colour can remind them of either a specific memory, or a characteristic they liked. Eg. they may choose yellow to remember the happy and bubbly nature of the person, or blue to remind them of a day trip to a lake etc.
- Plan how many colours you want to fill the jar with (be realistic as to how many will fit depending on the size of jar - lots of small layers are more likely to mix)
- Choose what things are going to be remembered and assign a colour to each memory - write them down on the gift tag to attach later. This can be a good opportunity for discussion as a whole or in smaller groups. Allow time for people to share their memories and acknowledge any feelings that come up.
- Evenly split the salt onto the paper - one sheet per memory.
- Use the coloured chalk pastels to rub into the salt until it turns the colour you like
- Gently pour the salt into the jar one at a time, giving the jar a little tap to settle each layer.
- If there is some space left at the top, add some extra salt - the fuller the jar, the less likely the layers will move and mix.
- Screw on the lid tightly and tie on the gift tag as a reminder of each colour's memory
- If the group has made one large jar you will need to discuss where they would like it to be kept.
- End the session by giving time for the group to share how they found the activity and encourage them to share the variety of emotions that may have been experienced.
- Acknowledge the various emotions experienced and normalise these as common feelings when someone has died. Some young people may feel guilty for having felt happy or laughing at particular memories - remind them that it's ok to still feel happy - it doesn't take away from their sadness, or mean they don't still miss them.
- Remind the group of support available if needed
- You may want to end the session on a game, or something lighter before the group leave.