

Creative Interventions Clearinghouse

My Feelings Book

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Purpose:

The purpose of this creative intervention is to provide a creative outlet for the healthy expression of feelings regarding parental divorce or family disagreements, increasing self-awareness and self-esteem, or coping with grief and loss.

Materials Needed:

Paper bag lunch sacks, glue sticks, scissors, markers/crayons, stapler, decorative scrapbook paper

Procedures:

1. Lay the first paper bag on a flat surface with the top of the bag (the opening) facing right.
2. Lay the second bag on top of this bag, but flipped so that the opening is on the left. Add more bags, alternating the opening, until you have the desired amount of pages.
3. Staple a seam down the center of the bags.
4. Fold the bags in half along the seam, creating a book.
5. The bag openings form pockets, and the bottoms form page flaps that can hide or show information as the client wishes.
6. Index cards, photographs, or small journals can be kept in the pockets formed by bag openings.
7. Allow the child to decorate the cover and inside pages as they wish.

Children can add art activities conducted in group or individual counseling to their scrapbooks, such as the “Feelings In My Heart” activity in which children are given a piece of construction paper with a large heart split into pieces. The children can then assign colors to the different feelings they are experiencing, and color in the pieces of the heart accordingly. Discussion can be held about what others’ hearts may look like, and that although they may be similar, no two people experience the exact same feelings.

Process Questions and Follow-Up:

What are things you can and can’t change? List these in your book!

What are different ways you can cope with difficult circumstances?

What are ways that you sometimes hide your true feelings? What are other options, instead of hiding?

Practice Setting:

Mental Health Agency/Private Practice

For full article and case examples, please see Somody, C., & Hobbs, M. (2008). Paper bag books. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 2(3), 71-87
