

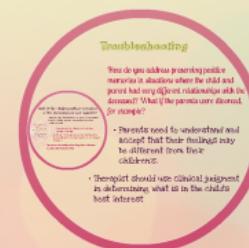
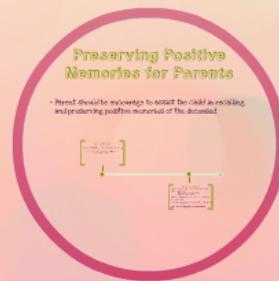
Handout B - Preserving Positive Memories of Deceased

**Adapted from Treating Trauma and Traumatic Grief in Children and Adolescents by
Judith A. Cohen, Anthony P. Mannarino, Esther Deblinger**

Whether the child's loss occurred recently or some time ago, once the child begins grieving the deceased and what has been lost from the future. Preserving memories of their loved ones and addressing unfinished business with the deceased is an important step in their healing journey.

The following presentation provides information on how to help children focus on positive aspects of the relationship shared with their deceased loved one(s).

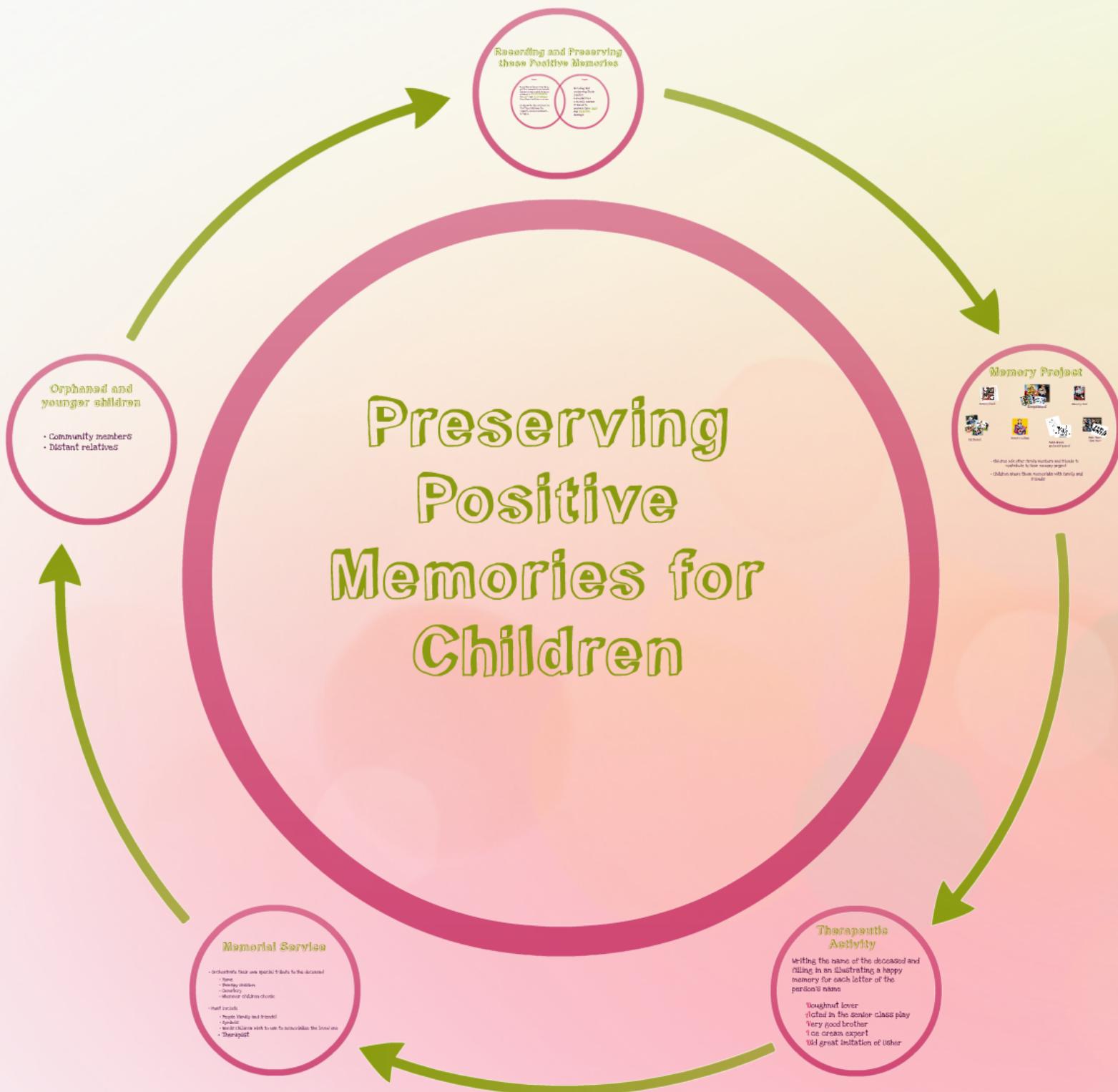
Preserving Positive Memories of the Deceased



Once the child has begun...

- The process of grieving the deceased.
- Understood what has been lost from the future.
- Has addressed unfinished business with the deceased.
- **The next step is to focus on positive aspects of the relationship shared with the love one.**

Preserving Positive Memories for Children



Recording and Preserving these Positive Memories

Positive

- Recording and preserving these positive memories in a concrete manner in many cases it allows children to REEXPERIENCE the JOY and HAPPINESS they shared with the loved one.
- It allows the child realize that they still have the capacity and permission to be happy

Negative

Recording and preserving these positive memories in a concrete manner is bound to produce some SAD and PAINFUL feelings.

Positive

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Memory Project



Memory Book



Keepsakes



Memory Box



Pictures



Memory collage



Hand-drawn
pictures/ poems



Video tape/
Slide Show

- Children ask other family members and friends to contribute to their memory project
- Children Share these memorials with family and friends



Memory Book



Keepsakes



Memory BoX



Pictures



Memory collage



Hand-drawn pictureS/ poemS

Memory collage

Hand-drawn
pictures/ poems

- Children ask other family members and friends to contribute to their memory project
- Children Share these memorials with family and friends

Therapeutic Activity

Writing the name of the deceased and filling in an illustrating a happy memory for each letter of the person's name

Doughnut lover

Acted in the Senior class play

Very good brother

Ice cream expert

Did great imitation of Usher

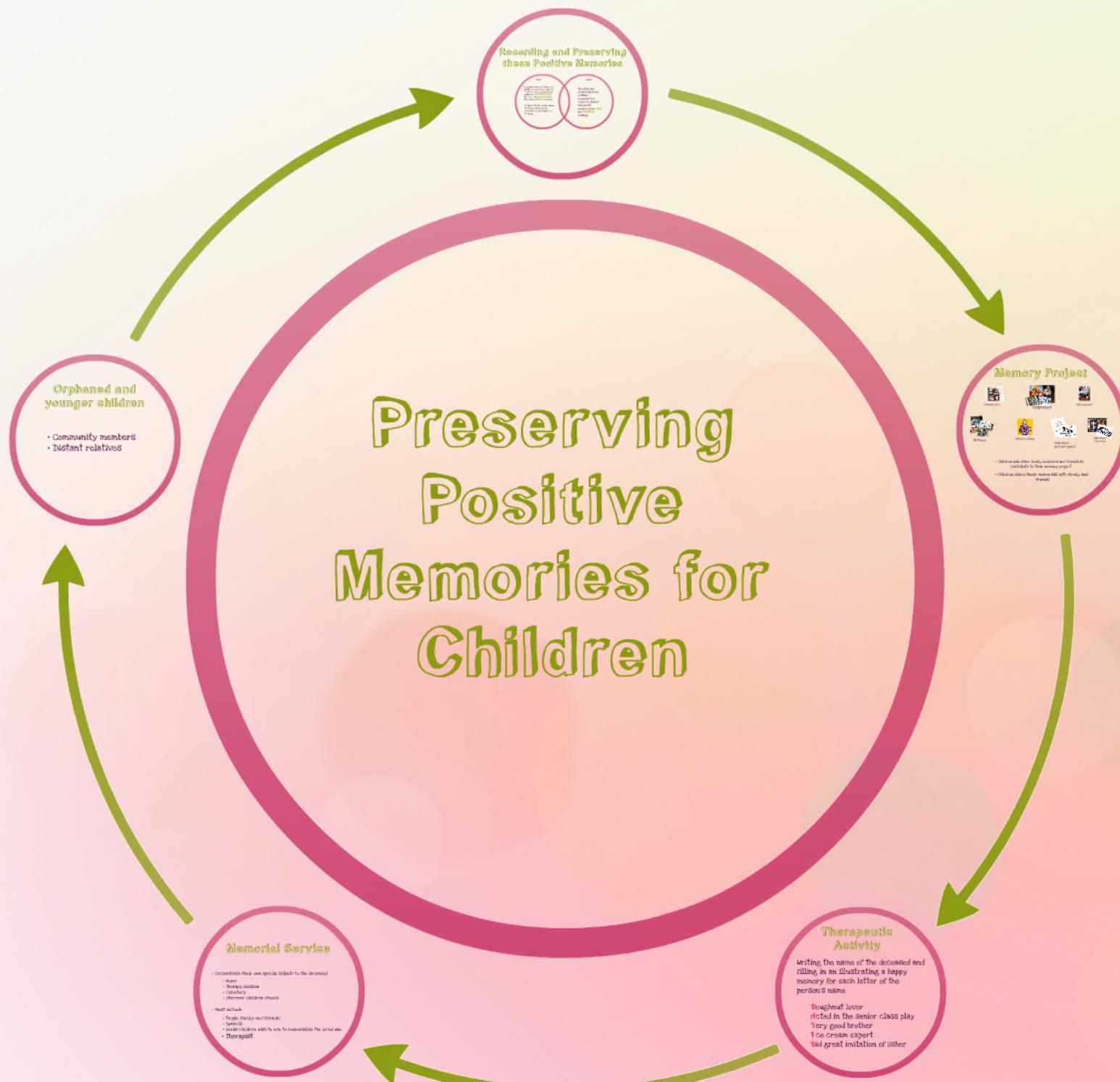
Memorial Service

- Orchestrate their own special tribute to the deceased
 - Home
 - Therapy Session
 - Cemetery
 - Wherever children choose
- Must include
 - People (family and friends)
 - Symbols
 - Words children wish to use to memorialize the loved one
 - Therapist

Orphaned and younger children

- Community members
- Distant relatives

Preserving Positive Memories for Children



Preserving Positive Memories for Parents

- Parent should be encouraged to assist the child in recalling and preserving positive memories of the deceased.



Bad relationship

- Parent's relationship with the deceased was problematic

Help the parent understand the importance of positive memories for the child's healing to proceed

Good relationship

- Add many fond memories of the child's interaction with the deceased
 - things that occurred when the child was baby
 - things that the child has forgotten
- Models the important message that it is good to have happy memories
- OK to have happy and sad feelings about the deceased
- Memories don't always have to cause sadness

Troubleshooting

How do you address preserving positive memories in situations where the child and parent had very different relationships with the deceased? What if the parents were divorced, for example?

What if the child's positive memories of the deceased are not realistic?

Example: The child's sibling or parent was abusive but the child's memories do not reflect this mistreatment.



- Determine why the child might be minimizing or denying such feelings.
- Might be all right, as long as the child's attribution of the abuse and the death are not detrimental to his/her personal development.
- Important to acknowledge those things that the deceased may have done that were wrong

- Parents need to understand and accept that their feelings may be different from their children's.

- Therapist Should use clinical judgment in determining what is in the child's best interest

pure
deceit
for ev

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- Might be all right, as long as the child's attribution of the abuse and the death are not detrimental to his/her personal development.

- Important to acknowledge those things that the deceased may have done that were wrong

What if the child's positive memories are realistic and the surviving parent's are overly idealized; for example, if the deceased was a sibling?

• Live up to the "little angel" or "perfect child" image of the deceased.

Therapist:
• Explore with the parent what the reality of the deceased child's life was like
• Explore what this fantasy of perfection does to the surviving children.

What if the child's positive memories are realistic and the surviving parent's are overly idealized; for example, if the deceased was a sibling?

Reference

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