

Family Permission Slips

FAMILY ACTIVITY

When there is a lot going on in our grief journey, we may feel scared, anxious, sad, angry, or we might not even know how we feel. We all respond in different ways and have unique needs. It is important to know what you need when you are having big feelings and to share with people who can support you.

Materials

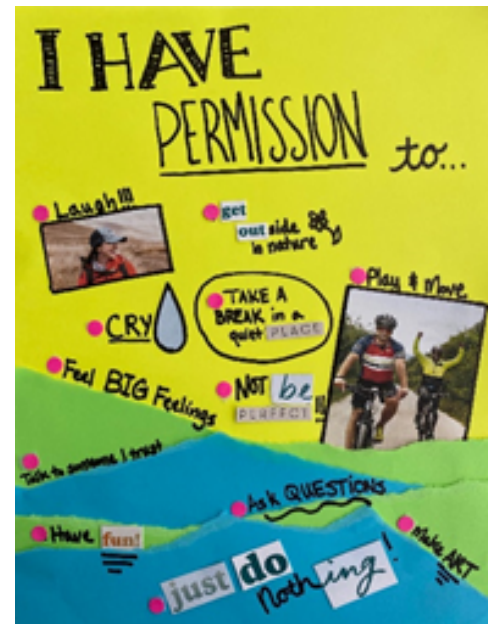
- Paper
- Writing utensil (pen, pencil, markers, etc.)
- Old magazines (optional)
- Glue (optional)
- Scissors (optional)

Instructions

1. Have each family member create a personal permission slip of things they are allowed to do for themselves when they are holding onto big feelings. Examples include:

"I have permission to..."

- a. "...have big feelings."
 - b. "...ask questions."
 - c. "...take a break."
 - d. "...laugh."
 - e. "...punch my pillow."
2. You can use markers, crayons, magazine cutouts, etc.
 3. Take some time to talk about your permission slips together and ways you can support each other.
 4. Find a safe, central location to store your family permission slips (on the fridge, in a bowl on the table, etc.).



Using Your Family Permission Slips

Anytime you feel stressed, read your permission slip and pick two or three things to do (or all of them!). If you notice someone else in your family is stressed, you can remind them to read their permission slip. Remember that each person is unique. What you need when you are stressed or scared might be different than your other family members and that is OK!

Family Questions

- Is anything the same on everyone's list?
- Which things are unique on each person's list?
- Does anyone need help coming up with ideas for their permission slip?
- What is one thing someone in your family can do to support you when you feel stressed or anxious?
- What is one thing you can do to support someone else?
- Is there anything you would like to add to your list?
- Is there anything unsafe on your list? Can you think of a safe option instead? Ask your family for ideas.
- How can we help remind each other to read our permission slips?
- Do you have any questions?

"The greatest gift you can give your children is not protection from change, loss, pain, or stress, but the confidence and tools to cope and grow with all that life has to offer them."

—Wendy Schlessel Harpham