

# Self-care spinner activity

## Key Learning

To promote healthy coping strategies and self-care.

## What You Need

Ruler

Scissors

Coloured Pencils

Single Hole Punch

Split-Pins

Cardstock Paper (White and an assortment of colours)

'Self-Care Ideas' Handout

## No. of Youth

1 or more

## Preparation Activities

Prepare the materials in advance.

- Using the white cardstock paper, cut a circle that is approximately 20 cm in diameter for each person
  - Draw lines that divide each circle into six equal segments.
  - Poke a hole in the center of each circle.
- Cut out a number of arrows in various colours.
- Photocopy the Self-Care Ideas handout (See P.77 of the Handbook, copy provided below).

## Instructions

### How to Play

Facilitate a discussion about coping strategies:

- A coping strategy is something that we do to help manage stress and deal with difficult feelings. For example, a person might listen to music for comfort and relaxation. Just as everyone's grief is unique, each person may have their own unique ways of coping with different stressors and situations. In grief, as well as in daily life, it is important to find ways to manage difficult emotions and care for ourselves.
  - What are some healthy ways that a person can cope with difficult feelings?
  - What would be an example of a harmful coping strategy? What makes this activity harmful?
  - What do you think a person might find appealing about \_\_\_\_\_ ? (name a harmful coping strategy)
  - Can you think of any coping strategies that can be both healthy and harmful? In what circumstances would this strategy be helpful? When would it be considered harmful?

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2. Distribute the Self-Care Ideas handout and ask youth if any of the strategies on the list jump out for them.
3. Explain that there are many different ways of coping and caring for ourselves. Different coping strategies can help in different ways:
  - Provide temporary distraction.
  - Provide opportunities to connect with others/community.
  - Help to feel more centered within ourselves.
  - Facilitate self-expression and emotional release.
  - Help to soothe, relax and rejuvenate.
  - Cultivate self-compassion.
4. Explain that we will be engaging in an activity that will encourage us to identify the healthy coping and self-care strategies that we already use, as well as explore new ways of caring for ourselves.
5. Show youth a sample spinner and explain how the tool can be helpful
6. Provide each youth with a circle and invite them to fill each section with words and/or drawings that represent a different self-care strategy.
7. Remind youth that they can refer back to the handout for ideas.
8. Encourage youth to include self-care strategies that they already use and find helpful, as well as some new strategies they might like to try.
9. Invite youth to select an arrow in the colour of their preference.
10. Provide youth with a fastener/split pin to affix the arrow to the centre of their spinner. Be sure that the split pin is not pressed down too flat, as it might affect the arrow's ability to spin freely.
11. Invite youth to share their spinner if they are comfortable doing so.

### Discussion

#### Reflect

What thoughts and feelings came up for you during the activity? Was this activity difficult for you in any way?

#### Connect

What new self-care strategies are you planning to add to your life? Has a friend/family member ever suggested a coping strategy to you? Did you find it helpful? If yes, in what ways?

#### Apply

When do you see yourself using this tool? Can you think of a time when something like this would have been helpful to use? In what ways might this tool be able to help a person replace harmful ways of coping with healthy strategies?

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This activity was provided by Deana Slater, BSW, MEd, RSW for *A Handbook for Supporters: Extending Compassion and Support to Grieving Youth* by The Children and Grief Network and was reproduced here with permission. Deana has a private practice - Deana Slater Counselling Services - where she provides counselling to youth and adults who are struggling with grief, trauma and other life challenges. She also works at Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre helping patients access prescriptions for treatment.

*This activity has been adapted to the Reflect Connect Apply methodology used by **Right to Play**.*

**Right To Play** is an international organization that uses the transformative power of sport and play to educate and empower children and youth living in adversity to overcome the effects of poverty, conflict and disease. Partnering with more than 85 First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities and urban organizations across four provinces, the PLAY program is led by locally-hired Community Mentors who are trained and supported by Right To Play staff to implement regular weekly play-based programs that build and enhance essential life-skills. We would like to thank **Right To Play** for sharing the organization's experiential learning methodology (Reflect – Connect – Apply) for the activities included in this resource to support youth through their grief. To learn more, visit **Right To Play's** website or email [canada@righttoplay.com](mailto:canada@righttoplay.com).

