Children and Young People’s Program

Change and loss are part of life, and grief is a normal response to these losses.

"it helps me know that other people have been through what I have been through"  
1 Child participant in Southern Cross University evaluation, 2010.
Overview

*Seasons for Growth* is an innovative grief and loss education program that uses the imagery of the seasons to illustrate the experience of grief. It aims to strengthen the social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people (aged 6-18) who are dealing with major life changes including death, separation and divorce and other significant losses by:

♦ exploring the impact of change and loss on everyday life
♦ learning new ways to respond to these changes.

Trained adult 'Companions' facilitate the small group program, where participants support and learn from each other in age appropriate and engaging activities. Young people learn that they are not alone in dealing with the effects of change, loss and grief, and build their communication, decision making and problem solving skills within a supportive peer group.

The completely revised 3rd edition of *Seasons for Growth* has been released in 2015. It incorporates stunning artwork, a wider choice of music and options for using new technologies within contemporary, user-friendly program Manuals and Journals.

Program structure

*Seasons for Growth* is a small group (4-7 participants) program of 8 sessions, plus a celebration. Each participant receives a Journal to complete throughout the program and keep as a personal resource.

The topics covered in each session of the program include:

♦ seasons and change (autumn)
♦ my story and grief reactions (winter)
♦ feelings and memories (spring)
♦ choices and moving forward (summer)

The Children and Young People's Program has four levels:

**Level 1:** 6-8 years  
**Level 2:** 9-10 years  
**Level 3:** 11-12 years  
**Level 4:** 13-18 years

An Adult Program is also available.

*Seasons for Growth* is an education program. It does not provide counselling or therapy.

Outcomes for young people

*Seasons for Growth* provides the support and space for young people to:

♦ learn about how different people respond to change, loss and grief  
♦ understand that it is normal to experience a range of grief reactions  
♦ explore new approaches to dealing with change and loss in their lives  
♦ build communication, decision making and problem solving skills  
♦ participate in a supportive network of peers and adults  
♦ integrate their new learning into their relationships with family, friends and others.
The seasons and Worden’s tasks

*Seasons for Growth* uses the imagery of the seasons as a framework to explore experiences of change, loss and grief. The contrasts between the four seasons, the changes in seasons from year to year and their cyclical nature are all part of the story of the seasons, and allow participants to learn and reflect on their experiences in a safe and familiar context.

The four seasons are each linked to one of Worden’s four tasks of grief (3rd edition, 2009):

♦ Accept the reality of the loss
♦ Process the pain of grief
♦ Adjust to a changed world after the loss
♦ Find an enduring connection with what has been lost while embarking on a new life.

Worden’s tasks are specifically related to bereavement, but *Seasons for Growth* takes a broader view and believes the tasks have relevance for people managing a range of change and loss experiences.

Companions

Trained adult ‘Companions’ facilitate each *Seasons for Growth* group. Companions may be school/agency staff, endorsed parent volunteers or other suitable adults who undertake a two-day training workshop and receive subsequent accreditation from Good Grief to deliver the program. Good Grief provides Companions with regular opportunities to meet, network and learn throughout the year through Reconnectors, newsletters, conferences and the website.

Evaluation

*Seasons for Growth* has been evaluated extensively over the last 15 years. The most recent evaluation was conducted by Southern Cross University in 2010 and concluded that the *Seasons for Growth* Children and Young People’s Program:

♦ builds understanding and skills
♦ improves participants’ emotional wellbeing
♦ enables participants to express their views, thoughts and feelings
♦ strengthens participants’ social and support networks.

The complete Southern Cross University evaluation is available on the Good Grief website.

What people say about *Seasons for Growth*

“I felt a lot better because I was letting all the pain out. Sometimes in school I’d feel like crying about it, and I nearly cried. Then I just held it in. But when I went to [the group] I could just let it out, and talk about it. I didn’t need to cry because I could talk about it” (Matt, 9).

“Having other people with the same problem to talk to has really helped” (Antonio, 12).

“My life has got worse but what *Seasons for Growth* has done is help me come to terms with it all. I cope a lot better. No matter how bad things get, I now have somebody I trust to talk to” (Emma, 16).

“I’d like to think my son wasn’t affected by the divorce but I know he was. The program has helped him to know that it happens in other families too” (Parent).

“The *Seasons for Growth* training has helped me to realise the impact that change and loss can have on kids’ behaviour at school” (Teacher).

“This program has been a source of great joy for the children who have participated in the program over the past ten years. It has been a source of satisfaction to me and I continue to be amazed at the results of this wonderful program” (Companion).
Good Grief corporate profile

Good Grief Ltd is a not-for-profit company and is a ministry of the Sisters of St Joseph. Good Grief is committed to relieving suffering and bringing hope to those experiencing change, loss and grief through a range of education programs, including:

**Seasons for Growth**

The Seasons for Growth Adult Program is an innovative Australian grief and loss education program that aims to strengthen the social and emotional wellbeing of adults who are dealing with significant life changes.

**Seasons for Growth**

The Seasons for Growth Parent Program, aims to assist parents to understand the experience of death, separation and divorce from a child's perspective, and to learn about the most effective ways to support their child/ren.

**Seasons for Healing**

Seasons for Healing is a small group grief and loss education program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults.

**Stormbirds**

Stormbirds is a small group peer based program for children who have experienced the impacts of a natural disaster.

For more information contact us:

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www.goodgrief.org.au
COMPANION TRAINING
for the
Children and Young People’s Program

*Seasons for Growth* is an innovative education program for children and young people in Primary and Secondary schools which explores the effects of change, loss and grief.

Facilitated by trained Companions within a small ‘peer’ group, the participants explore feelings, memories, loss and grief in a safe and creative way.

*Seasons for Growth* is an education program. It does not provide counselling or therapy.

**DATE:** Fri 17 & Sat 18 March 2017  
**VENUE:** NALAG Centre for Loss and Grief  
Welchman Street, Dubbo  NSW  2830  
**COST:** $550 per person (includes Companion manual, journal, morning tea and lunch)  
**TRAINER:** Trudy Hanson  
**ENQUIRIES:** Karen Muir rsj  
Phone: 0428 620 264  
**REGISTER ONLINE AT:** www.goodgrief.org.au  
**TIMES:** Friday 4.00pm to 9.00pm and Saturday 9.00am to 3.00pm  
**TRAINING CODE (SKU):** YN170310  
**Email:** trudyhanson@nalag.org.au  
**Email:** karen.muir@goodgrief.org.au
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DATE: Fri 24 & Sat 25 March 2017

VENUE: NALAG Centre for Loss and Grief
Welchman Street, Dubbo NSW 2830

COST: $550 per person (includes Companion manual, journal, morning tea and lunch)

TRAINING CODE (SKU): YN170310

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ENQUIRIES: Karen Muir rsj
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**DATE:** Fri 26 & Sat 27 May 2017  
**TIME:** Friday 4.00pm to 9.00pm and Saturday 9.00am to 3.00pm

**VENUE:** NALAG Centre for Loss & Grief  
Welchman Street, Dubbo  NSW  2830

**COST:** $550 **per person** (includes Companion manual, journal, morning tea and lunch)

**TRAINER:** Trudy Hanson  
Email: trudyhanson@nalag.org.au

**ENQUIRIES:** Karen Muir rsj  
Phone: 0428 620 264  
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**REGISTER ONLINE AT:** www.goodgrief.org.au

**TRAINING CODE (SKU):** YN170504