



WORKSHEET

There Will Be Light, There Will Be Hope

- To build trust between a child, their parent and their supporter
- To experience shared grieving
- To have a positive way of recognising important dates



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Candles can inspire a sense of wonder and warmth for a child, and remind them of happy and peaceful times. This candle has a memorable fragrance of soothing essential oils. Whenever you use the candle, please be aware of where the child is at all times, and make sure they don't touch or play with it. These boundaries are important, and you want them to feel safe. The inspirational phrase **'There will be light, there will be hope'** was suggested by a young woman in a bunker, during an air raid in Kyiv.



WE SUGGEST THREE WAYS YOU COULD USE THE CANDLE:



STARTING A SESSION

Using candlelight can signal you will be spending special time together, exploring tools from the toolkit. When normal daily life is SO disrupted, children crave routines and boundaries as it helps them to feel safe. Equally they can find the idea of facing their fears overwhelming. Showing your warmth and a slightly firmer approach to boundaries can be very reassuring for the child.

Find a quiet, private space to come together. Setting and sticking to a regular time and place may help build trust and a sense of consistency in the child. PREDICTABILITY matters when your life feels out of control. If they are young and English is not yet easy for them to navigate, they may wish to sit with a parent or older sibling.

- Explain to the child that whenever the candle is lit, it is their time to be with you and/or their family, to sit, think and talk if they want to. They may only be able to manage a few minutes initially, and trust will need to be built before difficult conversations are started – sometimes you may just sit there together quietly, and that is okay. It may feel right to do an activity together when the candle is lit, such as colouring or playing a game.

Reassure the child that they can blow the candle out to show you when they wish to end this time together. When a trusting relationship is established, you may wish to use some of this time to explore the other tools.





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A FAMILY CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY

This is a very special thing to do together and can be quite emotional for all involved.

The shared ritual of lighting a candle and taking turns to remember together can help bond a family unit. Host family members can also join in with this ceremony and remember people in their own lives. We often make assumptions about how people are feeling in a family – ‘Amelia doesn’t seem to be that bothered’; ‘Christopher is just interested in gaming and never speaks about his father’; ‘Mum just tells us off all the time’, and so on. This ceremony can provide a respectful and helpful insight into the collective, and can become a soothing ceremony, either as a one-off, or perhaps a monthly commitment. We do know some families where younger children ask for it every week, but this will be too intense for most at first.

- Sit in a circle on the floor or around a table and encourage one person to light the candle, say who they would like to remember and one thing they miss about them. It may be that someone would like to show others a photo or an item that reminds them of their chosen person. Encourage children to get the photo before the candlelight ceremony begins so as to maintain a calm and special atmosphere once the candle is lit.
- Carefully pass the lit candle on to the next person and encourage them to do the same. It may be that some simply want to say a person’s name, for example, **‘I’m lighting this for my friend Zelda’**. It is important that no one feels under any pressure to talk – they are engaging just by being present in the ceremony.
- After the final person has held the candle, they leave the candle burning in the centre of the circle. This signals a time to listen to a song or piece of music together. It also signals the time to darken the room. As the music is switched on, turn down the lights and let the candlelight give space to any emotions while the music plays. Allow different children to have the responsibility of turning on the music, placing the candle in the centre, closing the curtains and turning off the lights, so that they become a part of carefully staging this ceremony.





- Sometimes as the music plays and the privacy of the darkness allows the connection to sadness over missing people, pets and places, you may hear a gentle sobbing. Have a box of tissues to hand so it is not so difficult to reach for a tissue during the ceremony.
- To signal the end, you could prepare something to enjoy together – a special treat and a film, or if the child wants to let off steam, perhaps a quick walk or play outside.



IMPORTANT DATES

There may be many special moments when the family will want to light their candle – important days when you want to celebrate while being mindful of those missing from around the table.

When the family first arrives, try to make a calendar of dates that may be important to recognise – birthdays and anniversaries, for example – as well as dates when things ‘should’ have happened, like a family wedding or a party. Celebrate those dates with a candle ceremony so they don’t go unmarked.

Also include personal moments of celebration the children would have wanted to share with their family, for example, getting picked for the football team or receiving a good report from school. Lighting the candle can help recognise that their family are – or would have been – proud of their achievements.

