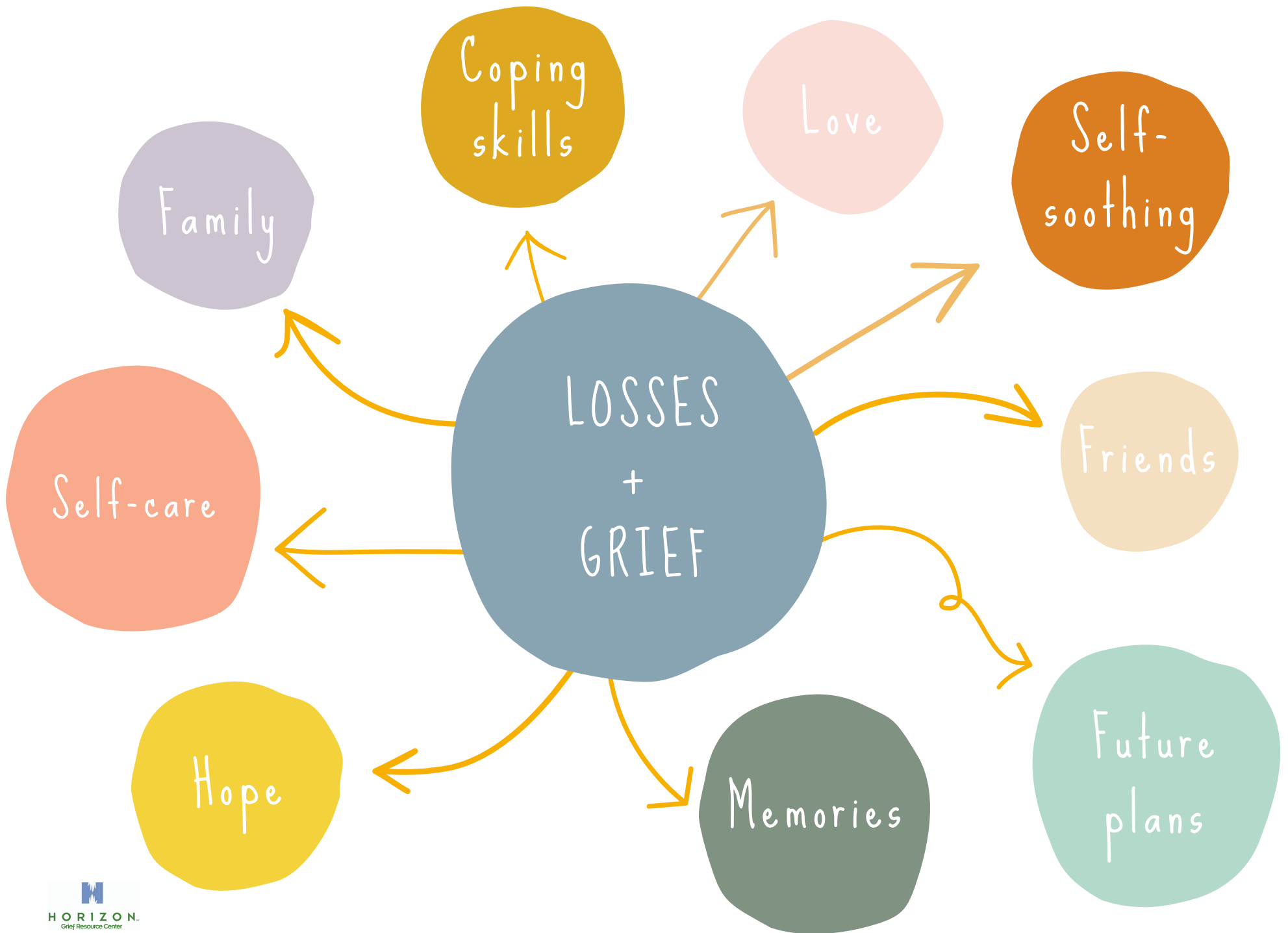


Grief leaves a hole in our hearts that still belongs to our person or people who have died, but can still feel very empty. Many times, we might look for ways to fill that hole through healthy or unhealthy outlets. Some people talk about trying to stay busy so they don't feel the hole, trying to eat as a way to fill the hole, or even diving into grief work to try to make the hole shrink. The tough news is, no matter how hard we try, nothing will fill that hole in the way we want it to. What if we took this time to re-formulate how we think about this hole that has been left by loss and grief. Could we accept the hole just as it is, and work on surrounding it with positive things? Maybe they are coping skills, supportive people, or ways we can honor our person/people, and our grief. Welcome to this practice where we will take a mindful and compassionate look into how we can surround that hole and our grief in ways that honor why that hole is there in the first place. The next page is just a view of what could be surrounding your grief. See something that doesn't fit for your life? Cross it out! Is there something that isn't there that is important to you? Add it in! This is YOUR practice, so you can make this look however YOU are experiencing your grief. On the last page, you will see that these supportive ideas are broken down a bit more. I invite you to take some time to think about what or who you may fall under these categories for your experience. Having these ideas written down in more detail can help us make sense of things for our experience at this moment. It also becomes a wonderful reference sheet for those hard days when we need a gentle reminder of what can help support us in this journey. It can also be helpful to think of this as a living document. You and your grief changes, why shouldn't your supportive outlets change with you? You might have some that are tried and true - great! But allowing ourselves to change in ways that will feel right for us can be an important step in being authentic throughout the journey. You can sit down and complete this all at once or come back to it every time you feel the urge to add some more to your journey. I invite you to be kind with yourself as you are thinking through these things, and remember that they are not a "fix" for grief and this hole we feel. Instead these ideas act as a big hug to acknowledge our grief and send it and ourselves even more love - it helps us cope. When we are surrounded by love, we feel more supported, we are able to know we are not alone in our journey, and we can make strides forward that feel right for us. So in those moments you catch yourself trying to fill/cover up/run away from/close off that hole of grief and loss, take a deep breath, lean into your brain, body and heart and learn what you need to surround it with so you can face another day or moment. Surround your grief with love. Surround yourself with love. Please know that you deserve it.

Surrounding Grief

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Family

Coping skills

Love

Self-soothing

Friends

Future plans

Memories

Hope

Self-care