

The "Set Free" Academy



EXPERIENCE GOD'S AMAZING LOVE &
FREEDOM IN ALL AREAS OF YOUR LIFE



Freedom & Victory in the
Midst of Grief



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In The Set Free Academy™ we learn to live by The Set Free Method™, which is all about partnering with God to come into **Agreement, Alignment and Abidance in Him**. When we have these three things in place in our relationship with the Lord, we can live a life of freedom in Him!

Being in this place with Him means you have entered His rest, and when you are in that place with Him, you can stand against the enemy AND stand in Victory! It's all about entering into that place of Belief in His love, goodness, provision, protection and promises for YOU!

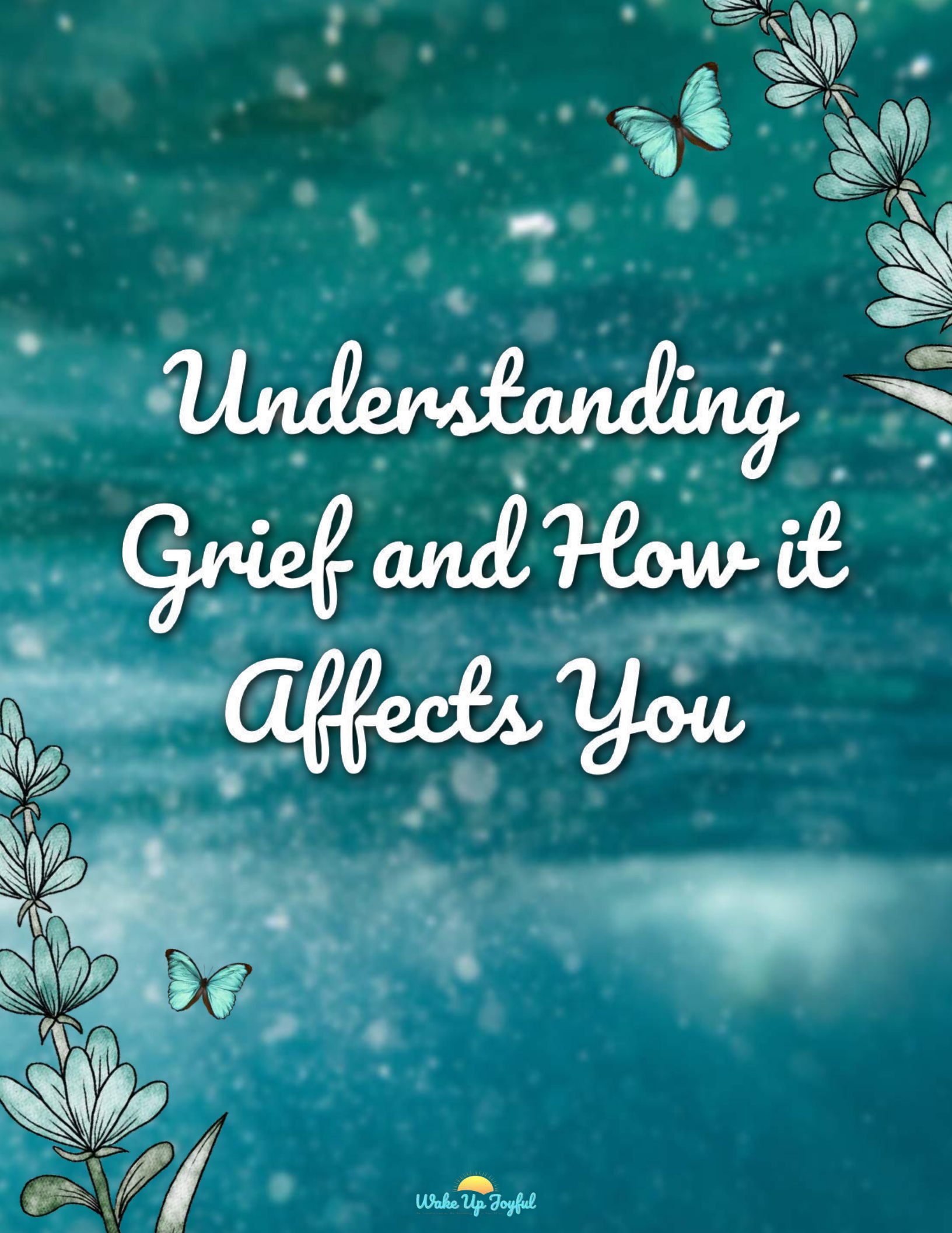
When you are grieving, it can present a whole set of challenges for you to shift into your CLIF and be in alignment and agreement with the Holy Spirit. This guide will support you in moving through grief by aligning with the Victory you have in Him. This place of Victory is where you can stand no matter how awful the grief may be and it can be done regardless of the type of grief you are experiencing (death, divorce, loss of friendship, loss of job, loss of health, etc).

Victory and freedom are 100% possible for you, even in the worst of times. God wants you to experience the full life that the enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy (John 10;10) and unfortunately the enemy doesn't let up when we are grieving - sometimes he lays on the attacks even more, desiring to make you feel discouraged and defeated while you're already down. Learning how to stand against Him through entering God's rest is paramount to living in victory, even while you are sad, down, angry, frustrated and questioning God.

Anything is possible with Him and I hope this guidebook supports you in seeing that freedom and victory are YOURS...because they are HIS, and you are ONE with Him!

The beginning of this guide is full of information about what to expect while grieving and at the end you'll find assignments to help you move through your grief as you feel called.

The important thing is to honor where you're at and don't condemn yourself. We are here to support you with love, encouragement and prayer!

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Understanding Grief and How it Affects You

What is Grief?

Grief is a deep and powerful emotion caused by the loss of someone or something we held dear. Grief is part of loving and engaging with life. Grief is not an emotion to be avoided, but one to acknowledge and walk through.

Grief can feel like something died inside of us. It is a pain so deep that you wonder if your life will ever be the same again.

Catastrophic loss will transform us or destroy us, but it will never leave us the same. There is no going back to the past. It is not therefore true that we become less through loss-unless we allow the loss to make us less, grinding our soul down until there is nothing left.

Loss can make us MORE and can lead us into a deeper place with God. When we can no longer rely on someone or something in this world we are often forced to rely on something Spiritual - for us, that is God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

We will never 'get over' the loss of our loved ones; rather, we will absorb the loss into our life until it becomes part of who we are.

Sorrow can enlarge our capacity to empathize with others in their pain. It can be used by God for a purpose - no pain is ever wasted when we look to Him!

The Victory and Oneness we have with Him allows us to overcome the pain in our soul and shift into the power of His Holy Spirit within us. This is where we can experience the deep pain and sorrow AND also experience the supernatural joy and peace that only comes from Him.

Stages of Grief

Regardless of the type of grief or loss you are experiencing, you will go through these 7 stages. They are NOT linear and they do not happen one after the other and then stop there. You go through them over and over again and sometimes one specific aspect will pop up more than the others.

DENIAL

This can't be happening

ANGER

Why is this happening?

BARGAINING

If Only Thinking, If only I had...

DEPRESSION

What is the point of living?

ACCEPTANCE

It's going to be okay

OBSESSING

Unable to think about anything else

GUILT

For what you did/did not do, etc.

Effects of Grief on Your Body & Soul

Grief is the conflicting feelings caused by the change of, or the end in, a familiar pattern of behavior.

When you're grieving, you experience a flood of neurochemicals and hormones. This disruption in hormones can result in specific symptoms, such as disturbed sleep, loss of appetite, fatigue and anxiety. When those symptoms converge, your brain function takes a hit.

Grief has been found to aggravate physical pain, increase blood pressure and blood clots, and exacerbate appetite loss—possibly because it also caused people to find less pleasure in food.

You may also experience symptoms of PTSD, old trauma from the past can creep up and cause bodily pain, you may experience headaches and you may even go into fight, flight or freeze patterns.

You may feel a number of emotional feelings immediately after a death. Many people feel disorientated - as if they have lost their place and purpose in life or are living in a different world. Feelings of emotional pain and distress following bereavement can be overwhelming and very frightening.

Often, the pain of loss can feel overwhelming. You may experience all kinds of difficult and unexpected emotions, from shock or anger to disbelief. You might feel like a part of yourself dies when you experience a loss.

It's important to keep notes on what you are experiencing physically and emotionally so you can be aware of changes and take any concerns to your primary care physician.

(See assignment 1 to help you keep track of what you are experiencing)

Managing & Expressing Grief in a Healthy Way

One of the first things to do when feeling grief is recognize that it's normal. Almost everyone experiences grief following a loss.

Different cultures and societies grieve differently, but nobody should ever feel pressured to grieve in a manner that isn't comfortable. If a person needs to grieve loudly and openly, that's perfectly normal.

On the other hand, some people may need to go about their day to day activities and grieve internally, and this also ok. It isn't a matter of learning which emotions to suppress or subdue, but rather allowing the grief to come and go naturally.

Pressure to grieve 'a certain way' can prevent a person from ever properly learning to live with the loss. Grief is unavoidable and trying to repress it or ignore it can lead to feeling even worse. Suffocating grief or suppressing grief can lead to depression and end up causing more physical symptoms. Keeping feelings bottled up inside can cause a lot of extra problems.

Many outside influences affect the way we feel we should grieve. Allowing ourselves to mourn openly and outwardly without feeling restrained or restricted can release many of the emotions we may bottle up inside. Some people cry, some people yell, and some people laugh.

You can use some of the assignments in this workbook to help process and move through your grief. When you are feeling overwhelmed, they will help you to process your emotions and thoughts around your grief.

Remember that whatever form your mourning appears in, it's an integral part of reducing the intensity of grief and expressing yourself.

Things to Remember with Any Loss



Whether it happened suddenly, or over time, loss can hurt very badly either way.



Whether you're experiencing the loss of a person, friendship, pet or job, loss of any kind hurts.



Don't hide or pretend you are okay if you aren't. Be authentic about your true feelings. It will get better with time.



Don't Intellectualize grief - your feelings don't need to be justified. Feelings are different than thoughts - you can't 'reason' your way out of it!



Don't replace the loss. And don't listen to people who say you can replace the loss!



Going through the loss of any kind of relationship may feel like a death. Don't minimize your feelings around that.



Focus in and heal your broken heart. Learn how to move forward in Victory so your grief doesn't negatively impact future relationships.

Managing Grief on Special Occasions



Feel free to cancel a holiday if you are feeling overwhelmed and feel you cannot participate



If you feel you want to have a smaller celebration, scale down what your holiday may look like



Have a special Christmas stocking made and place memories of your loved one in the stocking



Visit the burial site, if possible- Write a letter read it out loud



Record a favorite holiday memory with your loved one



Name three favorite qualities of the one you lost



Write a love letter to your loved one



Cook their favorite meal/dessert



Write out some things you want to remember about them (Ex: "I don't ever want to forget..." or "I want to remember...")



Asking for & Receiving Support Through Grief

Grief and Asking for Support

Finding support in coaching/counseling

Because there is no 'one' way to grieve, it can be difficult for many people to discover the best method for them.

The training that professional coaches/counselors receive allows them to help people discover their own healthy ways to grieve.

For some people, this may take the form of exercises or routines. Others may simply need a person with whom they can talk through their feelings.

Coaches/Counselors can also help with other aspects of life that may have become difficult since the loss. Coaches/Counselors who are trained in deeper trauma release methods may be helpful if the current loss is triggering past, unresolved trauma.

Ultimately Jesus is the greatest Counselor you can have. Connect with Him each day and allow Him to counsel and love on you through your pain.

Finding support from others

After a loss, many people begin to withdraw from others, especially individuals they associate with their grief.

However, one of the best methods of learning to live with loss can be confiding in trusted loved ones. They provide a support structure that can help you continue forward.

Even people who have never experienced loss can act as an anchor for those lost in their grief.

The support can come from friends, family, support groups, or communities. Choose someone you trust who genuinely cares about you and feels they can help carry the weight of what you are carrying.

Jesus is also the greatest friend and confidant you can have. Connect with Him each day and allow Him to carry your burdens. There is nothing too big for Him to carry!

Stay Connected to Move Through Loss

When you are grieving, it's important to stay connected to yourself and to others who can love and support you. It might be tempting to isolate, but remember that is exactly what the enemy wants (and we don't want to give him any more of a footing when we are already in the pit - he is relentless and will kick you when you're down so don't isolate!)

Treat yourself as you were your best friend - be kind and loving to yourself and also ask for help from others. Remember mourning is what we do outwardly but grief is inward. We may look okay but our heart is breaking, share with safe people around you. Express how you are feeling.

Be in Community, even when it's hard. Gather people around you. People who will walk this journey with you. Listen to you, people that can go deeper with you.

Involve people in your life who can distract you, take you to a movie, have you over for supper, have coffee with you, send you a text or check in on you. Remember, you might get to ask for this support in those times that you really need it.

Keep a continued connection with others-church groups, friends, and family. Join a grief group at church, or speak with a Coach or Counselor who deeply understands grief.

Do not compare your loss to someone else's experience. Each person's loss is their own, so never compare your loss to others. Social media is really bad for this, someone may look like they have it all together but only they know what is going on in their hearts and their daily lives.

Count your wins - even if it is a small win to begin with. A win could be getting out of bed, reading a book, watching a favorite movie that you and your loved one watched together, walking, spending time outside-gardening. Every win counts! This helps to shift your mind to the good that you can celebrate in the midst of the pain.

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Supporting Your Loved Ones Through Grief

Supporting Others Through Grief

It can be hard to know how to support someone going through grief. Whether it's a divorce, loss of friendship, or death of a loved one, these points will help you support the person you care about as they process their grief.

1. Don't try to give advice
2. Invite him/her to have coffee or a walk or a jog
3. Write him/her a letter of encouragement
4. Assure him/her that confiding in you is okay
5. Don't force them to talk about it
6. Offer something specific to help them
7. Show up & listen
8. Don't compare your loss to theirs, and do not make it about you!
9. Make them part of your get together
10. Be a good listener (and listen more than you talk)
11. Respect the person's way of grieving.
12. Accept mood swings
13. Refrain from trying to explain the loss
14. Help out with practical tasks
15. Stay connected and available

Supporting Others Through Grief...Cont'd

16. Offer words that touch the heart

17. Encourage them with words of affirmation (Ex: "You are wonderful and you are loved")

18. Offer to go with them to appointments to support them

19. Offer to pray for them

20. Help your friend prioritize self-care and soul care

21. You can ask them how they would like to receive support (if they're capable of answering that)

22. Understand that holidays hurt and someone may need an extra dose of support at that time

23. If someone is grieving a divorce or loss of relationship with someone who is still alive, you could support them with a simple and empowering statement such as "You can do this."

NOTE IF YOU ATTEND THE FUNERAL: If you go to the funeral remember that grieving is a process that can stretch for months or years. The funeral isn't your only opportunity to show support for those left behind. You can make a difference by keeping in touch with them and calling to check in. Send a card with encouragement on important occasions, like the birthdate of the deceased. Offer to share a meal or catch a movie. You won't always say the right thing in conversation with someone who is grieving, but if you faithfully show up to listen over time, your caring actions will speak louder than words.

What TO Say at a Funeral

You might be wondering what to say at a funeral to be the most supportive, loving person to the one who is grieving. This is a common question and we will look at what TO say and what NOT to say to help someone feel loved, supported and seen.

- Keep your message simple. “I’m so sorry for your loss” is always acceptable.
- You can share a warm sentiment or memory, such as “Sara was a kind, loving friend to me,” or “I’ll never forget the way your mom’s laugh could brighten up a room.”
- Keep your remarks brief. Others may be waiting to offer their condolences as well, but if the bereaved person engages you in conversation, you can linger a bit longer. Take your cues from the person who has suffered the loss. Be ready to pause and listen, or to move on, if that’s what they need.
- Be compassionate and open, allowing space for the grieving person to share their authentic feelings with you if they choose.
- If you and the deceased were especially close, family members will probably welcome your sincere expression of love for that person, if you feel moved to share it. Even if you shed a few tears, or the person you’re speaking to starts to cry, that’s okay. A funeral is meant to be a place to grieve openly and release emotion. Just remember that your role is to comfort the family of the deceased, not to receive support from them for your own grief. If you need to excuse yourself during the gathering to regain your composure, do so. People will understand.
- If despite your best efforts, you still find yourself nervous and unsure at the funeral, just be honest. There’s nothing wrong with confessing, “I don’t really know what to say right now, but I want you to know I care and I’m here if you need anything.” A hug, a warm handshake, or a pat on the back will also go a long way when words fail.
- Simple expressions of support and a willingness to listen go a long way

What NOT to Say at a Funeral

- Don't fall back on clichés because they can sound very insensitive to someone who has just suffered a loss. Don't say, "Your loved one has gone to a better place."
- Don't say, "This is a blessing. They were in pain and now they're in a better place" or anything else that suggests that the loss of the loved one is a positive thing.
- Also, now is not the time to encourage someone who's in mourning to move on. Comments like "You can have another baby," or "Maybe you'll get married again someday," might be offered with kind intent, but they'll be received as cruelty.
- Don't criticize or joke about that person during the funeral. Statements like, "You must be so relieved" or "At least you have closure now" aren't helpful.
- Don't assume you understand or have insight into the emotional state of the person in mourning by saying "I know exactly what you're going through because _____ happened to me,"
- Don't ask Intrusive personal questions, like "So how did she die?" or "Why didn't he try this new treatment?" These are a few of the worst things you can say at a funeral.
- Don't ask about financial matters at the funeral. Questions about inheritances, wills, life insurance policies, funeral expenses, or any other money-related matters is inappropriate to discuss at the service.
- *NOTE: If you're worried that they might have financial or practical difficulties as a result of their loved one's death, you can offer assistance gently and discreetly in the weeks following the funeral.*

How to Move through Grief in Victory

Joseph's Story of Grief & Forgiveness

Joseph taught us a great deal about breaking through grief. If you want to read the story of Joseph you can look it up in Genesis 37-50. I will give a synopsis here but it is definitely a story that I encourage you to dig into yourself as well.

Joseph had 11 brothers but his dad loved him the most.

Not only did he love him the most, he made it well known that he loved him the most and he made Joseph a special coat of many colors.

His brothers hated him with a refined hatred and the hatred was so great they were always trying to think of a way to get back at him - some way to punish him.

So one day his father told him to go check on his brothers who were tending sheep. When they saw him from a distance they made the decision to kill him

Then one of his brothers pleaded his case, saying let's not kill him let's just put him in this pit, so they placed him in a pit.

Before long a band of traitors came by on camels and they sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites and the Ishmaelites later took Joseph into Egypt. While in Egypt he did all that he was told to do even though he was put in prison for a crime he did not commit.

Through Joseph's ability to interpret dreams he was later exalted to second in command over Egypt. He warned Pharaoh of the coming famine and he saved all of Egypt.

Months into this famine as Joseph was the leader of Egypt his family came to Egypt seeking food because word had gotten out that there was food in Egypt.

Joseph's Story...cont'd

When Joseph's family came before his presence they did not recognize him, but he recognized them.

He didn't reveal who he was at the time - he offered them help instead. When they came back he shared with them that he was Joseph, their brother.

Needless to say they were dumbfounded. His brothers had sold him into slavery and he was in exile in Egypt for 22 years.

What We Can Learn From Joseph

Joseph decided that he would not allow bitterness and resentment to run his life. He could have refused to forgive his brothers (after all they did not deserve it) but he saw that his grief and loss actually served him in helping Egypt and many others. Joseph saw what his brothers meant for evil God meant for good.

This story about Joseph forgiving his brothers and seeing the good in a horrible circumstance is not just a story that Joseph has, it's a story that we see through others in the world.

For example, John Walsh had a son named Adam that was abducted and killed when he was a young boy. What did John do with his loss? He created America's Most Wanted - a TV show committed to bringing criminals to justice. He refused to allow the pain that he suffered to be done so in vain. He wanted his loss to help someone else.

You may know of others who have done similar things with their loss. So how can you turn your loss into something that will be helpful to you or someone else? Your pain can help someone else and it's time to start using it for the good of others and to better the world.

Moving Forward

Moving forward can feel very difficult, and also very freeing when the time is right. Do not feel pressure to 'move forward' and just push through the grief - we all grieved in our own way at our own pace so don't feel that you have to move on before you're ready.

As you feel led, you can choose to complete the assignments at the end of this workbook and move through the grief at your own pace. If they feel 'too soon' for you right now, that is completely okay. There is no timeline for grief. There are here for you to do as you feel ready to do so.

One thing that is so important when going through grief and loss is to remember that you can expect God to work it all together for good. He promises this in Romans 8:28, ***"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."***

Knowing and trusting this truth will help you see the goodness that can come out of the pain. God will use your pain for a greater purpose and you will get to realize it with Him when the timing is right. When you're ready you will know, and then you can begin stepping out to give back by helping others or ministering to people who are going through similar pain. With God, nothing is ever wasted.

How to Begin Moving Forward

1

Accept the reality of the loss

2

Experience the pain of grief

3

Adjust to an environment in which your loved one is missing

4

Invest your emotional energy in healthy, life-giving relationships

How To Enjoy Your Life Again

- Start to focus on other things than your loss, start living again and moving forward one day at a time.
- Write down different ways & ideas that you have on what moving forward could look like for you. Perhaps it is time to reevaluate your life by being intentional and pondering what new goals & changes you can make to help restore your joy again. You can begin writing a list of new goals & adventures, keep a journal and after each goal is accomplished check them off and start new ones.
- Grief can bring up feelings of guilt that you could have done something different or you could have done more. You can begin releasing yourself from that feeling and carrying the weight of that guilt by shifting to your CLIF each time you feel yourself in the depths of guilt. Remember there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1) so don't spend more time than you choose to practicing self-blame. If you need some powerful shifting tools you can look at the "How to Shift form Off the CLIF to CLIF" document found in the Portal.
- Keep your loved ones memory alive in some way. Plant a tree, sponsor something in their name, contribute to a fund for others who have gone through a similar experience.
- Choose Joy for what you had, for the memories and the pain, for the good times and bad, for the laughter and tears. Your life is richer because they were a part of your life and at times it will feel unbearable and with God's strength choose joy!
- Share what you've learned on your journey through grief with others. Comfort others with the comfort God has given you.

How to Experience Victory Through Grief

- Tell your story. You can share in the SFA Facebook group, to a friend or to a professional coach/counselor
- Pray to God
- Ask people to pray for you
- Be patient with yourself
- Read uplifting material
- Listen to inspiring speakers
- Listen to inspiring/worship music
- Focus on Gratitude
- Do something for someone else
- Listen to others and their pain (focus on them for a time)
- Cry when you feel like it
- Exercise
- Get outside in creation
- Deep breathing with instrumental music (vagus nerve, calm place, gives your brain a break)
- Focus on a scripture or inspiring quote for the day
- Diminish or eliminate caffeine (can make emotional times hard because it brings you up and down)
- Attend a worship service/concert
- Commit to using your loss for the good of others
- Stay active (Don't quit, give up or give in)
- Don't give up (even when it's unbearable - do whatever you need to make it through - this will pass)
- Know that He can turn your Pain to Purpose - Mess to Message
- Seek wisdom on how you can make the world a better place for someone else who is feeling sad
- Remember that grief does not have to define you - it is what happened to you and you get to honor yourself and the person you lost, yet you can also slowly move forward at the same time. We never get over a loss of someone and we can take baby steps forward into our healing journey with Him day by day and moment to moment.

Roadblocks to Overcoming Grief

There are some major players that can get in our way when we want to move forward in Victory. These are all from the enemy and you get to notice if they're showing up so you can recognize that the enemy is taunting you...and say NO!

-  **Self-pity** - This is often the victim mindset of 'woe is me, look how bad I have it, etc. If you want help, asking for it works better than pining for pity.
-  **Self destructive behaviors** - If you're hiding it then that's a sign that you are participating in it
-  **Isolation** - The enemy will LIE to you and try to isolate you in your pain
-  **Obsessive Fear** - Of unknown, the process, failure, etc. Focus on something else - a task - and allow your mind to focus on that
-  **Unforgiveness** - This can destroy us - that is why God wants us to do it



Assignments

In this next section you will find assignments to support you in moving through the grief. Complete them as you feel led.

You may want to consider creating a separate journal just for this type of work. It might feel better to keep it all in one place so you can feel organized and have a type of a diary you can use as a communication tool between you and God.



Assignment 1

Keeping a Record of Symptoms

Keeping Record of Symptoms

Make notes each day on the symptoms you have noticed happening with your physical body, your emotions and your thoughts.

This will help you have a greater understanding on what is going on inside you as you move through your grief.

You can use this outline and put it in your own "Grief Notebook" if you prefer.

Date: _____

**Physical
Symptoms**



Blank space for recording Physical Symptoms.

Emotions



Blank space for recording Emotions.

Thoughts



Blank space for recording Thoughts.

Date: _____

**Physical
Symptoms**



Blank space for recording Physical Symptoms.

Emotions



Blank space for recording Emotions.

Thoughts



Blank space for recording Thoughts.

Date: _____

**Physical
Symptoms**



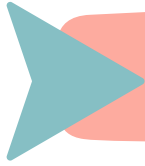
Orange bar for Physical Symptoms

Emotions



Light blue bar for Emotions

Thoughts



Red-orange bar for Thoughts

Date: _____

**Physical
Symptoms**



Orange bar for Physical Symptoms

Emotions



Light blue bar for Emotions

Thoughts



Red-orange bar for Thoughts

Date: _____

**Physical
Symptoms**



Orange bar for Physical Symptoms

Emotions



Light blue bar for Emotions

Thoughts



Red-orange bar for Thoughts

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Assignment

Stages of Grief

Stages of Grief

As you feel led, write how each of these stages have affected/are affecting your life as they apply:

Denial



Anger



Stages of Grief...Cont'd

Bargaining

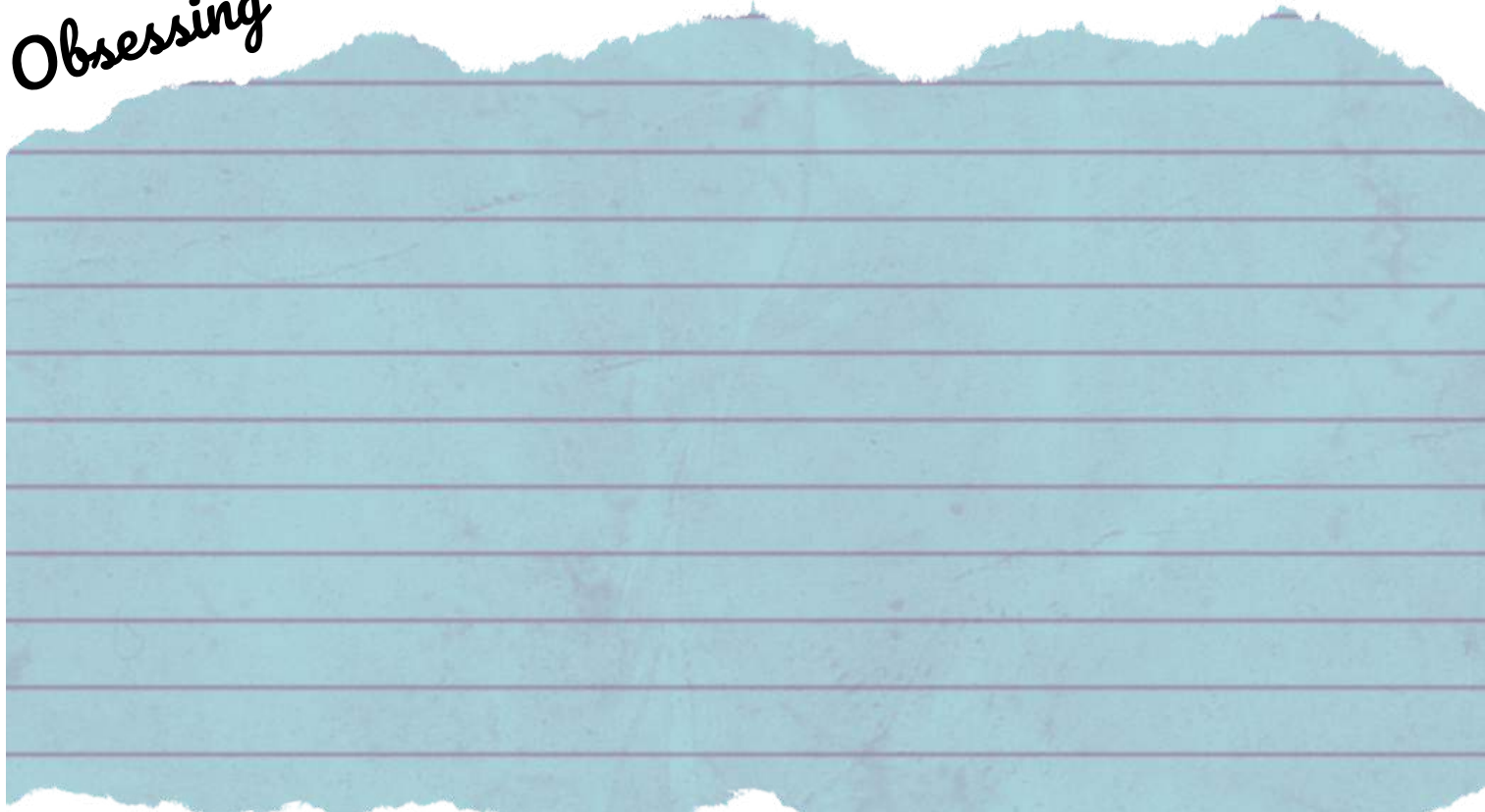
Depression

Stages of Grief...Cont'd

Acceptance



Obsessing



Stages of Grief...Cont'd

Guilt

Notes

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Assignment

Memories & Significant Dates

Significant Dates

Make a list of dates related to your loved one. Write or draw some memories that are associated with each date. The purpose of this also to help your prepare mentally for these dates as they approach each year.

DATE: _____

memories 

Significant Dates...Cont'd

DATE: _____

memories 

Significant Dates...Cont'd

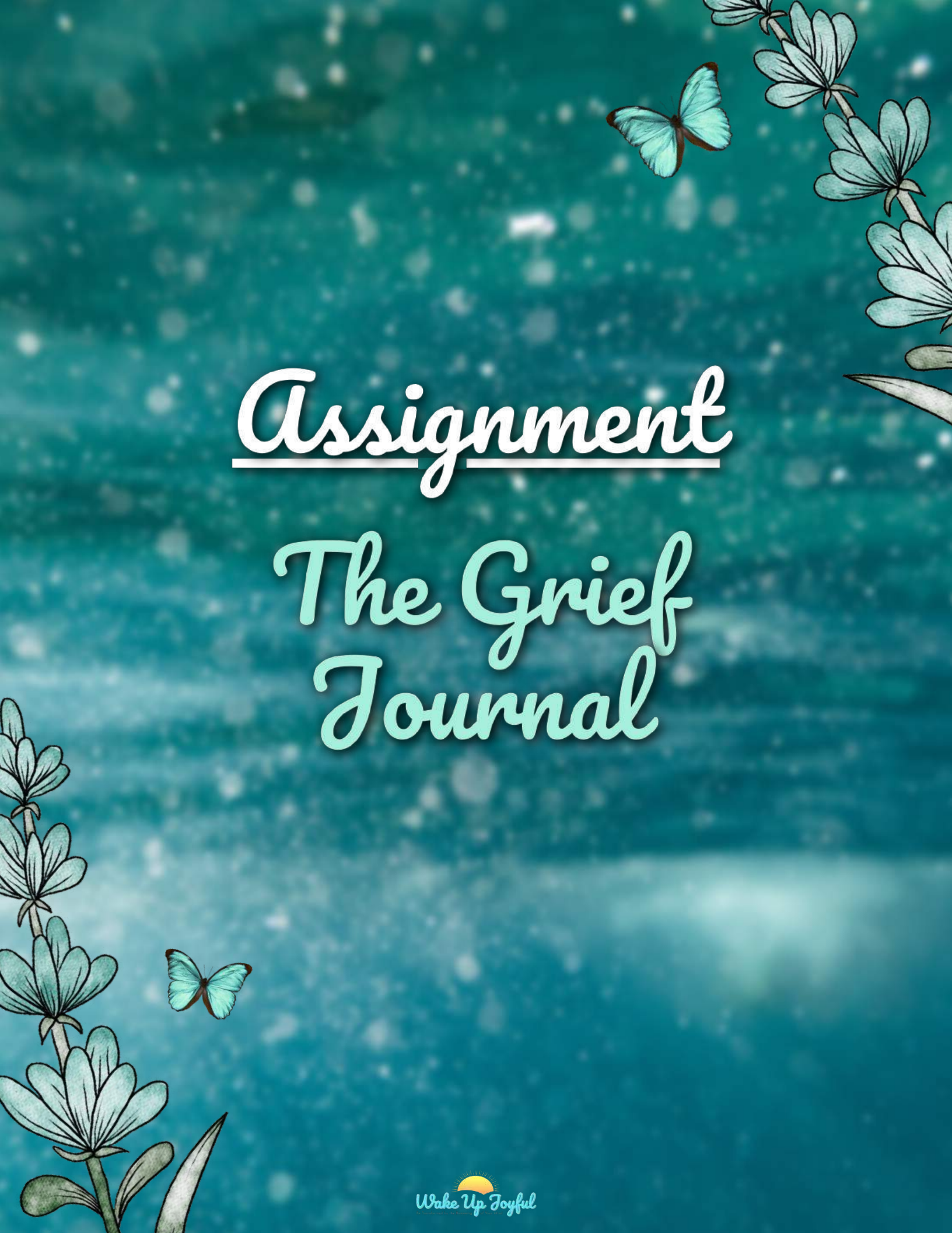
DATE: _____

memories 

Significant Dates...Cont'd

DATE: _____

memories 

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Assignment

The Grief Journal

Assignment: The Grief Journal

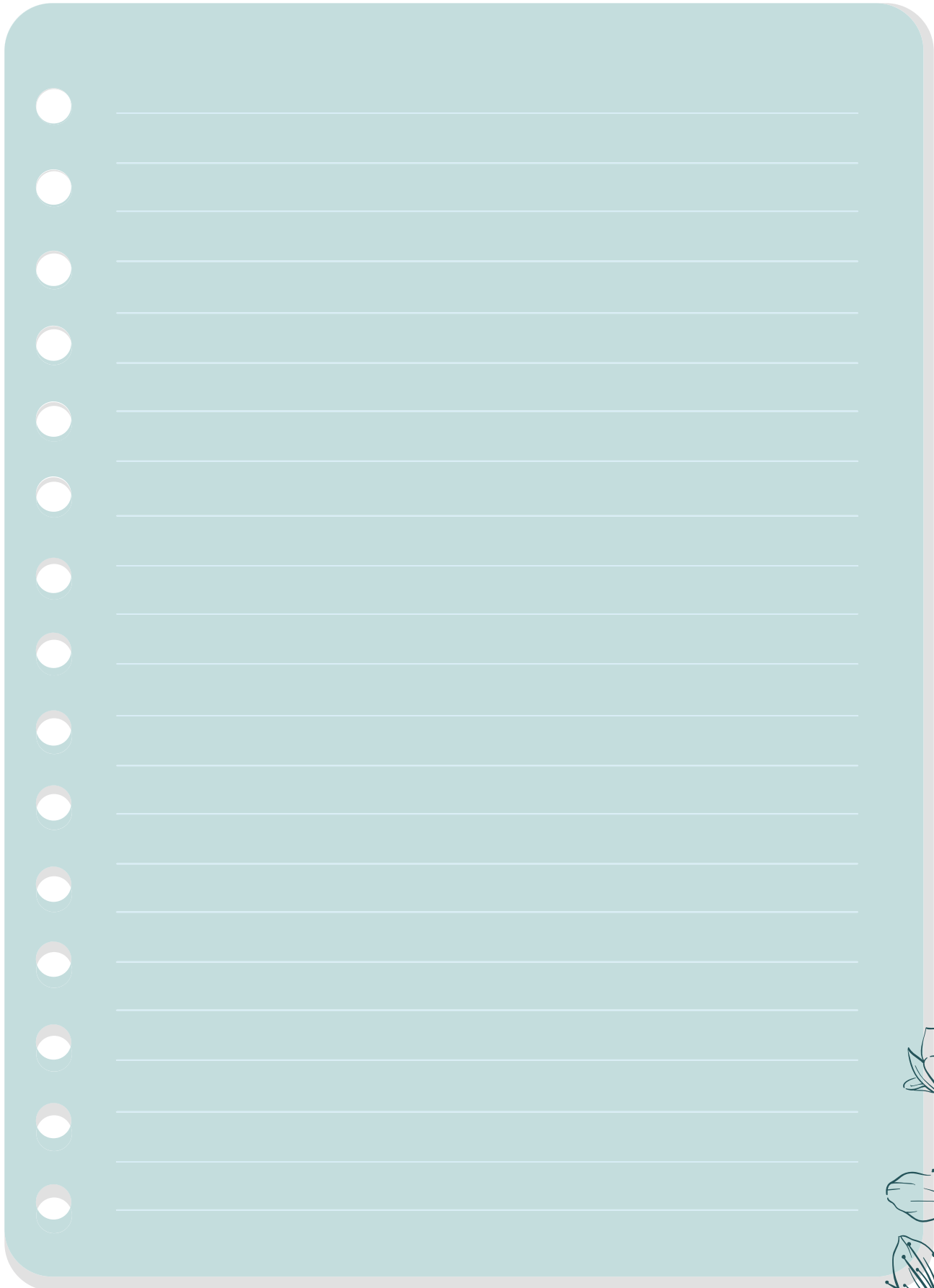
The Grief journal is an opportunity for you to record your thoughts and feelings as you go through the stages of grief. "Why should I do this", you may ask?! There are a few reasons...

- It gives clarity to your thoughts and feelings
- It makes you aware of things that make the process more or less difficult
- It helps you to see patterns in your thoughts and feeling
- It creates a record of your journey so that you can see how far you have come

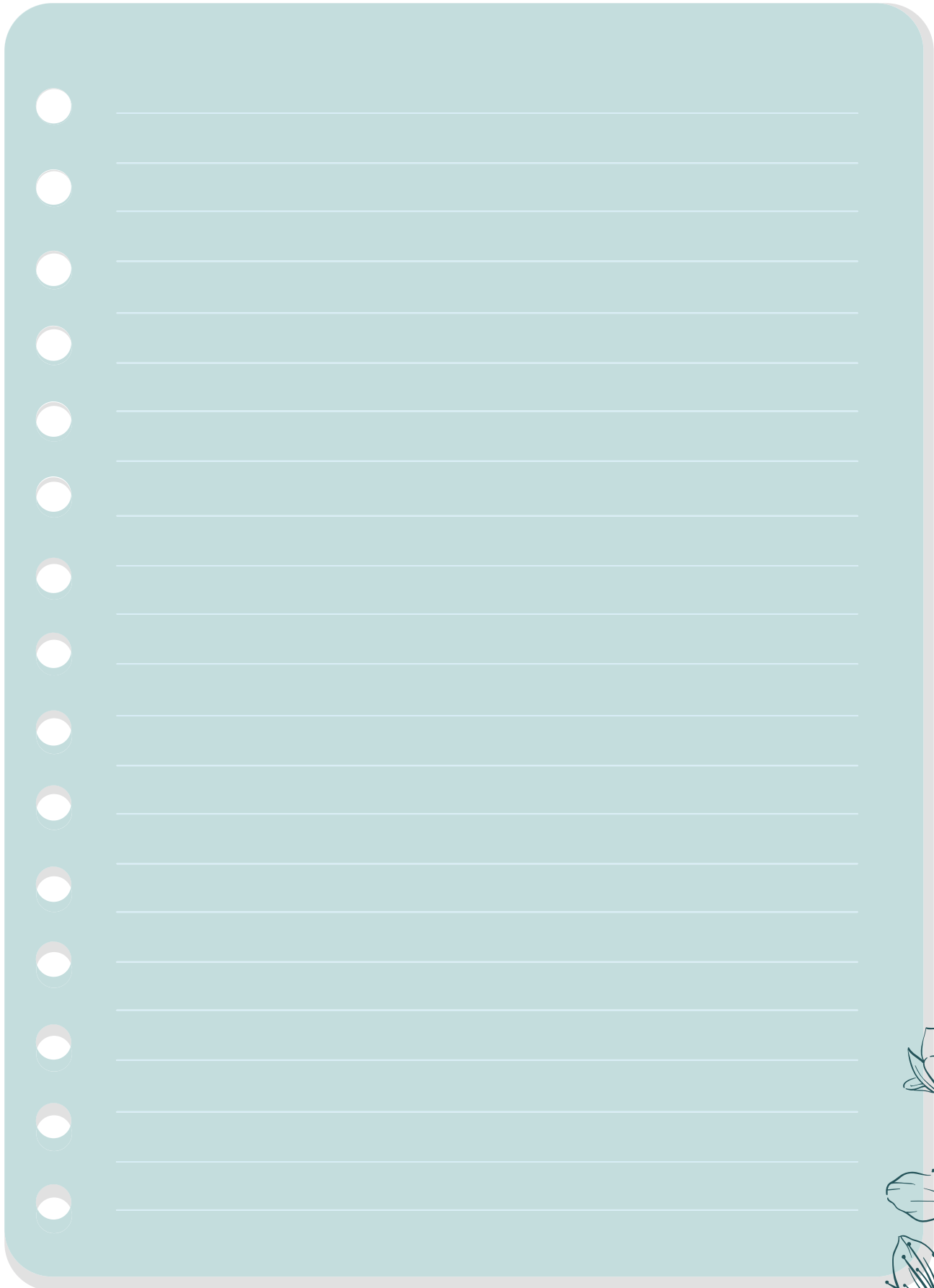
Use the following pages to write out your thoughts and feelings, or grab your own notebook to start keeping a daily journal so you can get out everything that's inside. Here are some sentence starters to begin your journalling. You can use these or choose to write out the date and start with "Today has been..." and then just describe your day.

- The one thing that makes me the most scared is...
- The hardest time of day is...
- If I could talk to my loved one, I would say...
- Since this loss, my loved one have...(describe how they have acted around you)
- My happiest memory with _____ was...
- Something I really want to remember about my loved one is...
- I am grateful for...
- I feel guilty when I think about...
- If I had one more day with my loved one..
- _____ was amazing in so many ways... (describe these ways)
- What well-meaning words have people said to you that have caused heartache and grief

The Grief Journal..Cont'd

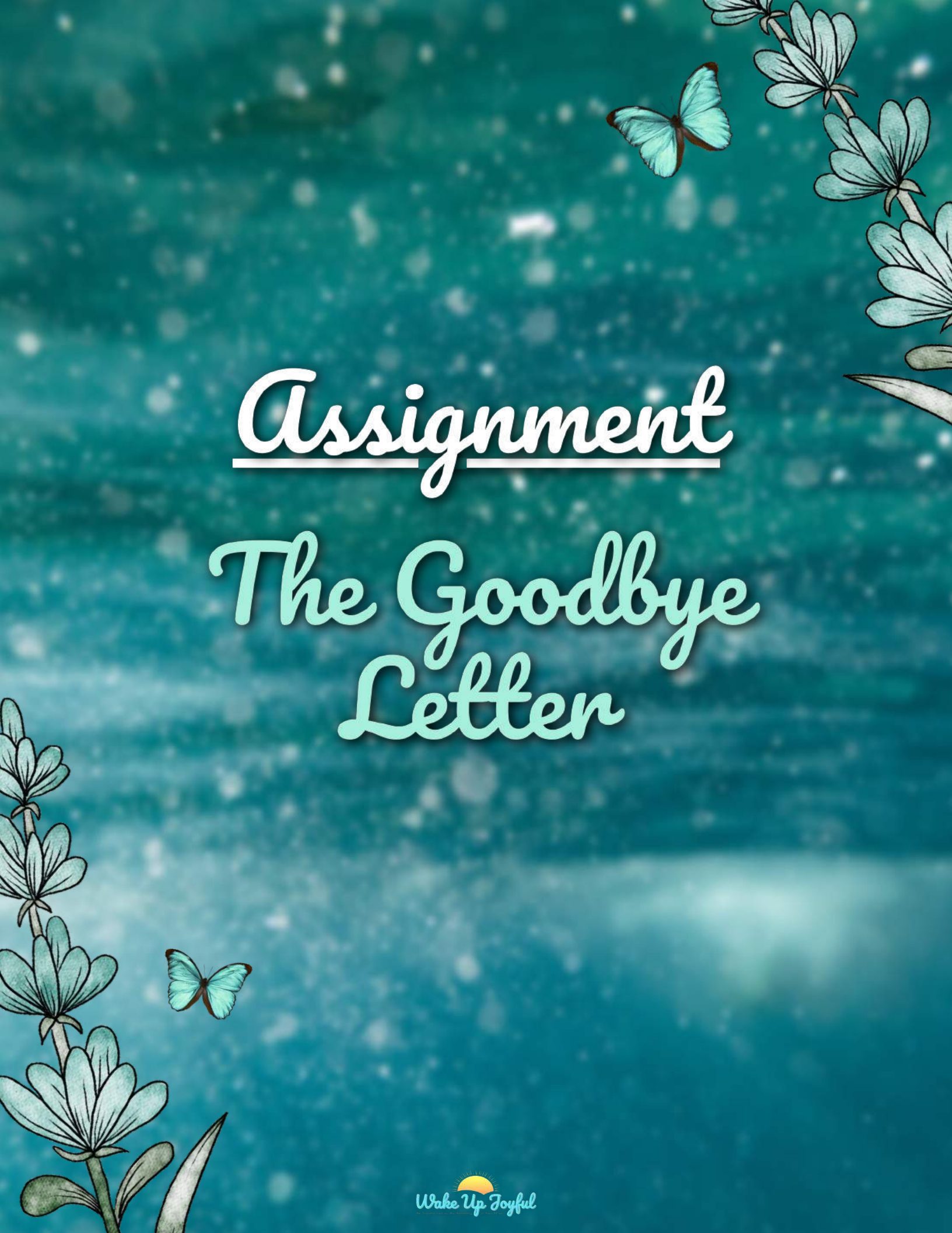


The Grief Journal..Cont'd



A light blue journal page with 20 horizontal lines and 15 circular punch holes on the left side. The page is designed for writing and is part of a grief journal.



The background is a deep teal color with a soft, out-of-focus bokeh effect of white and light blue dots. In the top right corner, there is a branch with several light blue, five-petaled flowers and a single butterfly with light blue wings and dark brown outlines. In the bottom left corner, there is another branch with similar light blue flowers and a single butterfly. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

Assignment

The Goodbye Letter

Assignment: The Goodbye Letter

You will find this assignment in other places within The Set Free Academy because it is a powerful tool to say goodbye to any type of relationship or loss.

STEP 1: Write down all the things you forgive that person for (ex: I forgive you for not getting back to me"). Know that you can feel free to write down as much as you wish.

STEP 2: Write down anything you want to make amends for (ex: I apologize for making a choice that affected both of us and not giving you more of a say).

STEP 3: Write down anything that you wished you could've said or currently want to say (ex: I hope you still respect me and think of our good times fondly). You might choose to include words of prayer, good thoughts, the fact that you are letting go, etc.

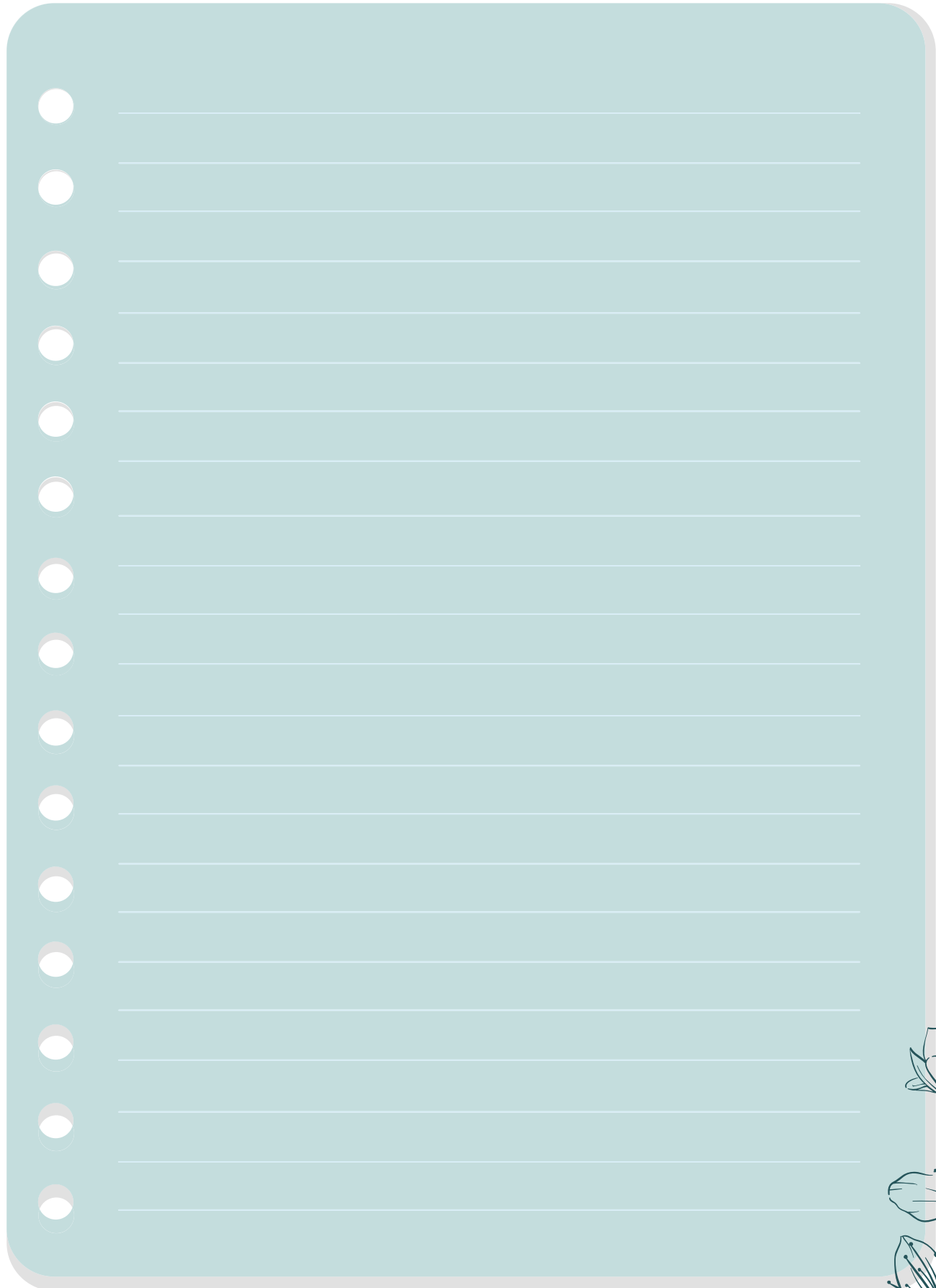
STEP 4: End the letter with "Goodbye" - and mean it. This means goodbye to that relationship as it was, not necessarily to reconciliation in the future, when both parties are healthy and in a different head/heart-space.

STEP 5: Read it out loud, either to yourself, as if you were reading it to the person, or to a trusted friend/confidant.

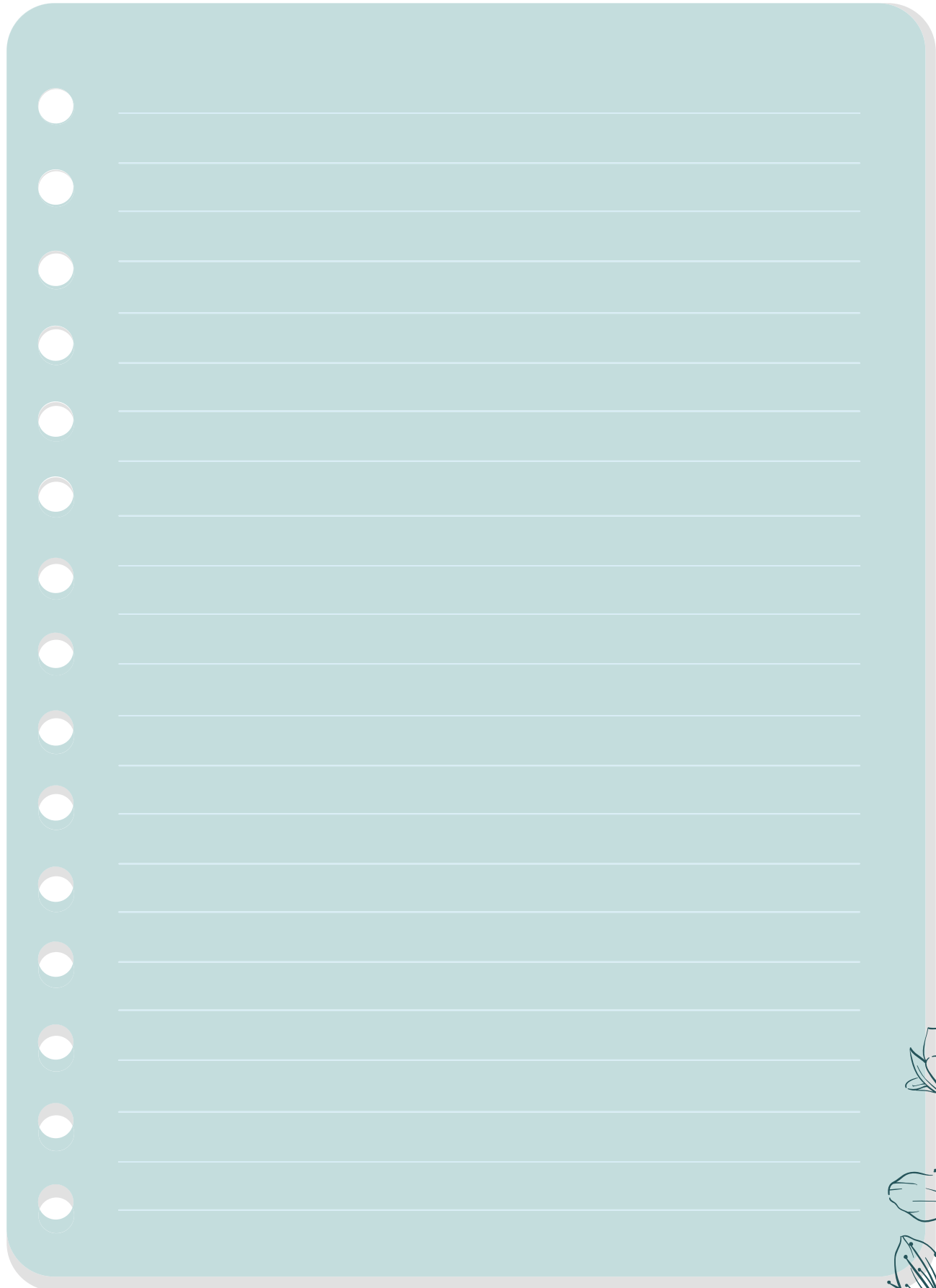
STEP 6: Delete the letter or rip it up as soon as you are done reading it. This will prevent you from going back and reading it over and over, which can be tempting.

NOTE: Once it's written and destroyed, you are better prepared to move forward. It still might be difficult at first, however this will give you a sense of freedom. When you forgive, wish them the best and let go. This honors God and creates freedom within you.

The Goodbye Letter...Cont'd



The Goodbye Letter...Cont'd

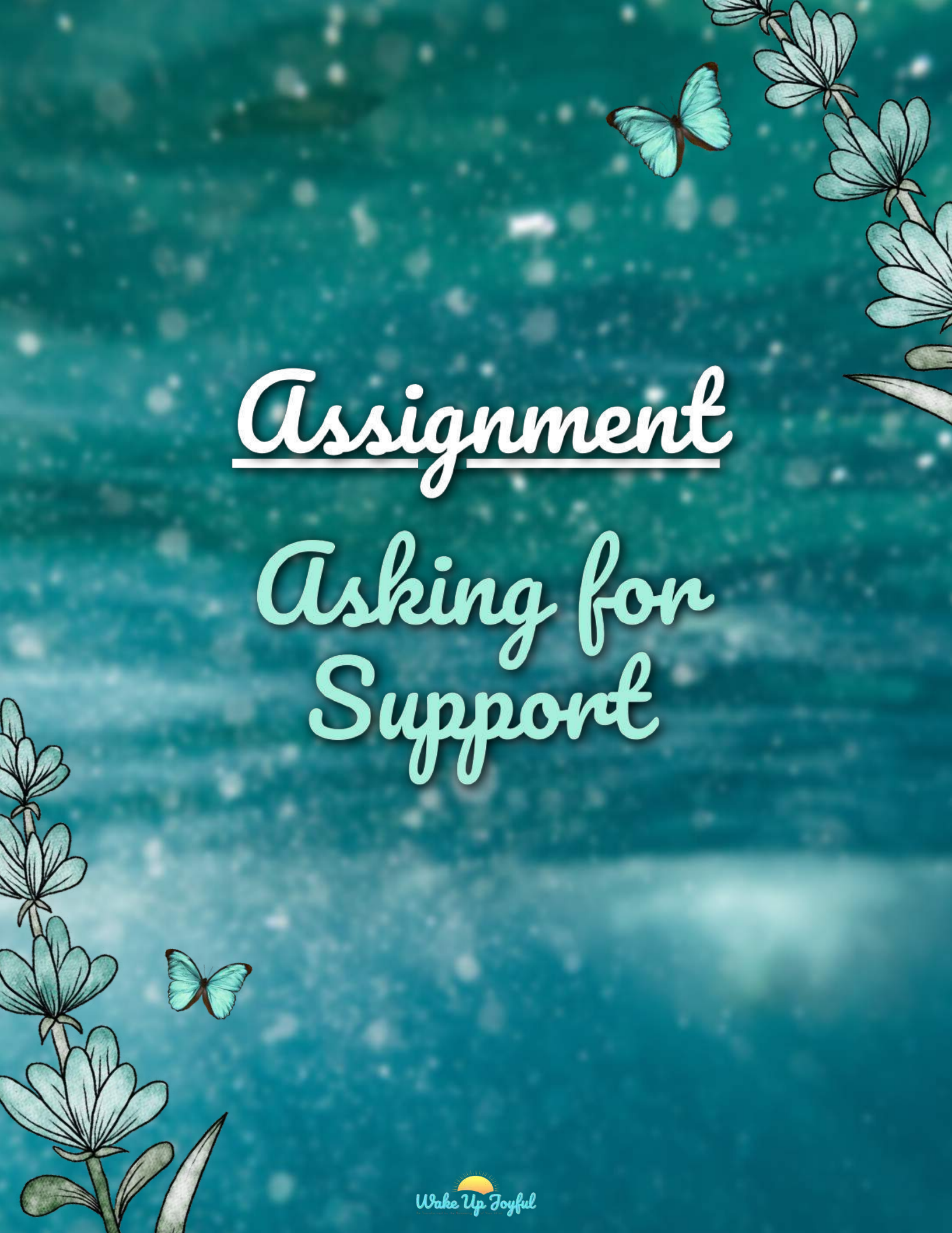


Assignment
A Letter to God

Assignment: A Letter to God

You will write an open, honest letter to God. This letter is to be completely honest with Him and get everything off your chest. He can handle it and wants you to come to Him with humility and vulnerability and questions. He can handle your emotions and thoughts - He knows it's your flesh and He want to help you with this so e honest and authentic as you write to Him.

Dear God,

The background is a deep teal color with a soft, out-of-focus bokeh effect of white and light blue dots. In the top right corner, there is a branch with several light blue, five-petaled flowers and a single butterfly with light blue wings and dark brown outlines. In the bottom left corner, there is another branch with similar light blue flowers and a small butterfly. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

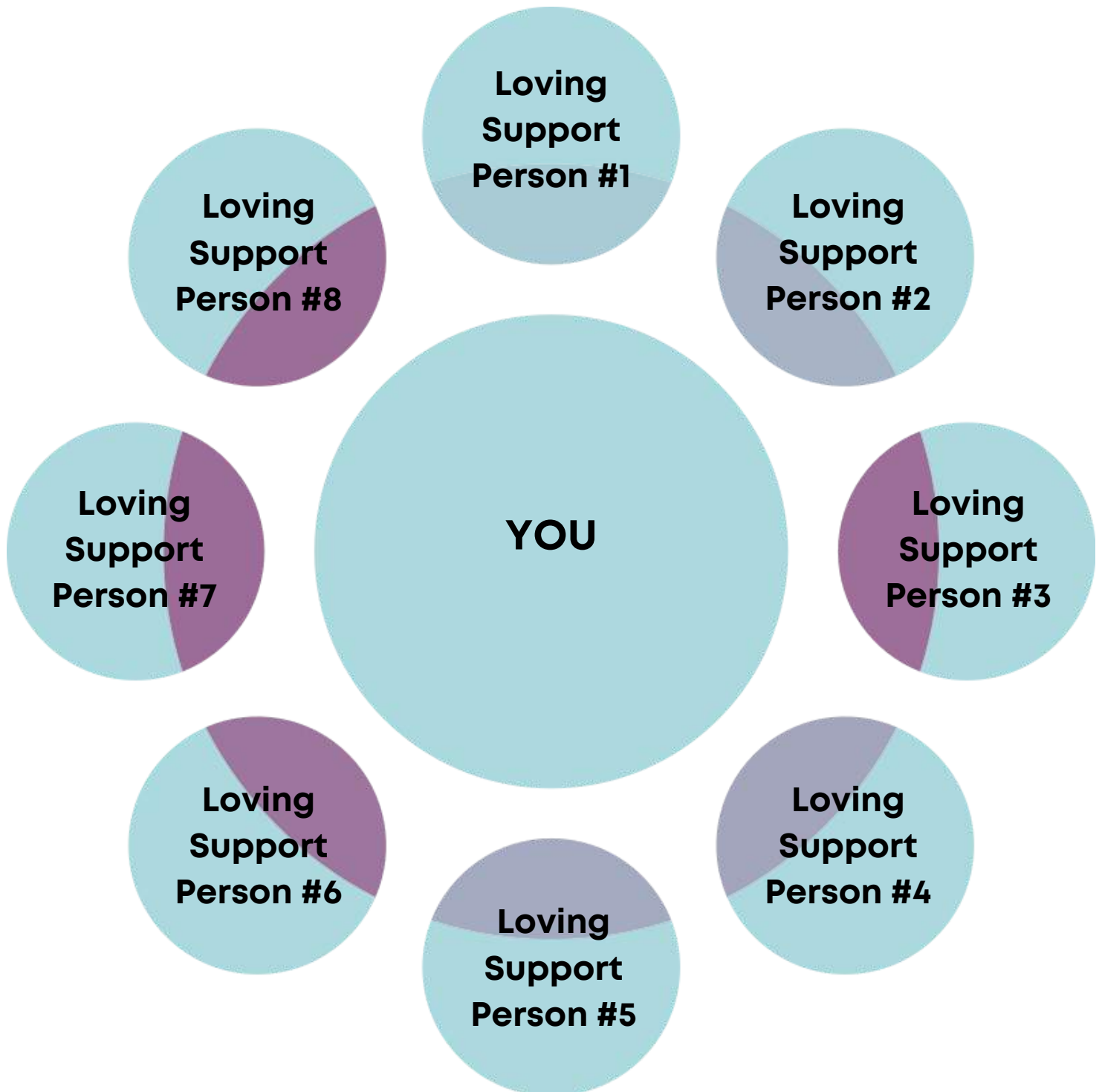
Assignment

Asking for Support

Assignment: Asking for Support

Building a support system is a vital to our healing.

What kind of support system do you have in place to help you navigate through this season of grief? Maybe it's your church, family, friends, a therapist or coach?



Asking for Support...Cont'd

Be intentional about asking for support by writing down the names of at least 3-6 people you can ask and receive support from. It takes courage to ask, but people love knowing how they can specifically support you so be clear and ask if they are willing. Note down what you have asked for below and what they are willing to offer.

1 Name:

Relationship:

What support will I request from this person:

What are they willing to offer?

2 Name:

Relationship:

What support will I request from this person:

What are they willing to offer?

3 Name:

Relationship:

What support will I request from this person:

What are they willing to offer?

Asking for Support...Cont'd

4 Name:

Relationship:

What support will I request from this person:

What are they willing to offer?

5 Name:

Relationship:

What support will I request from this person:

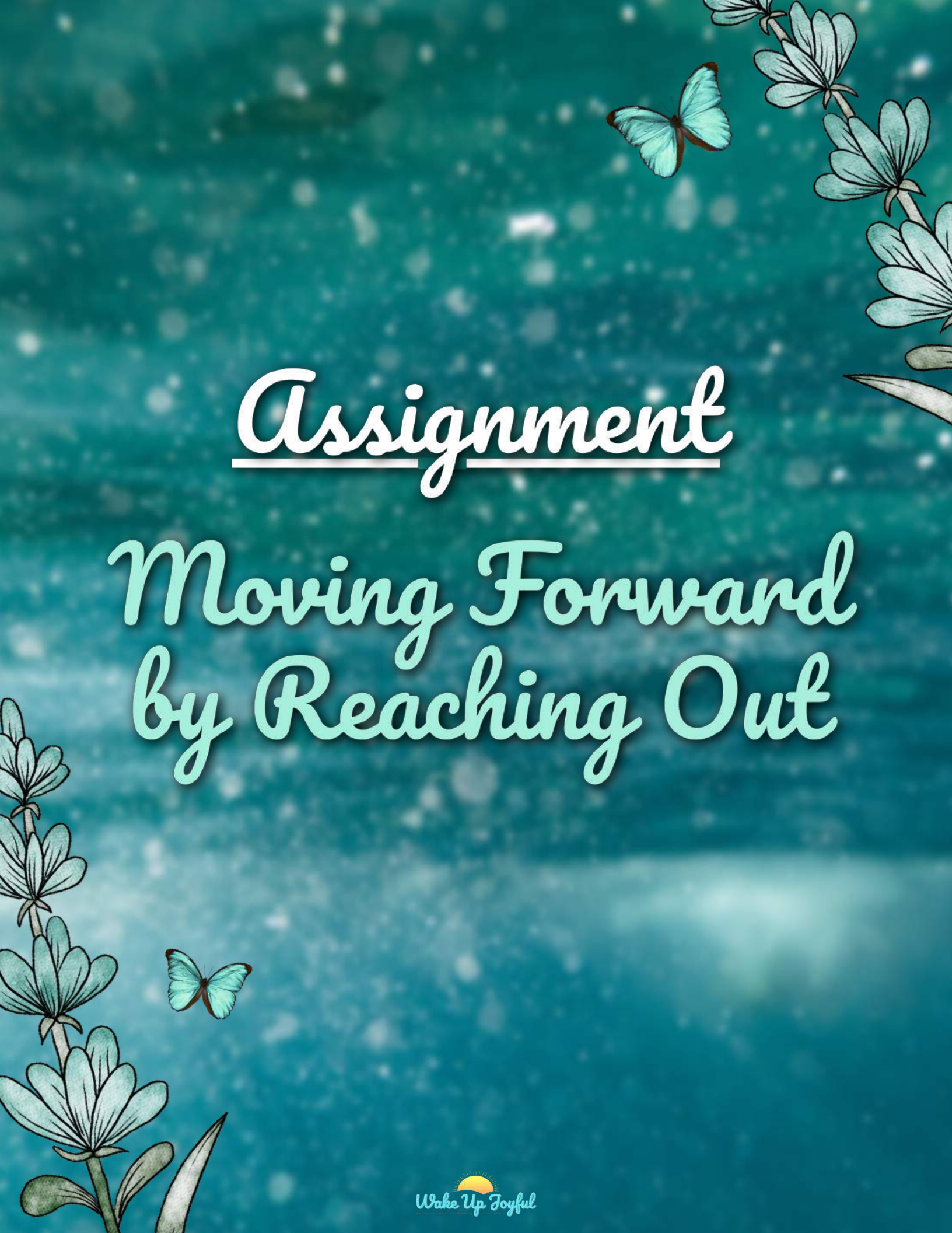
What are they willing to offer?

6 Name:

Relationship:

What support will I request from this person:

What are they willing to offer?

The background is a deep teal color with a bokeh effect of white and light blue dots. In the top right corner, there is a branch with several light blue flowers and a single butterfly. In the bottom left corner, there is another branch with similar flowers and a butterfly. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

Assignment

Moving Forward
by Reaching Out

Reaching Out to Someone

This letter is to reach out & share/encourage someone who is also going through grief.

You can share...

- things that have been helpful to you during your journey through grief
- Some of the difficult aspects of your own grieving process
- a way you would be willing to support them
- insights into yourself and possibly what you learned about God
- anything else that would be helpful to them

Dear _____,

“

"There is nothing that can replace the absence of someone dear to us and one should not even attempt to do so.

One must simply hold out and endure it. At first that sounds very hard but at the same time it is also a great comfort. For to the extent that the emptiness truly remains unfulfilled one remains connected to the other person through it.

It is wrong to say that God fills the emptiness God in no way fills it but much more leaves it precisely unfilled and that helps to preserve even in the pain the authentic relationship.

Furthermore, the more beautiful and the more full the remembrances the more difficult the separation. Gratitude transforms the torment of memory into silent Joy.

One bears what was lovely in the past not as a thorn, but as a precious gift deep within, a hidden treasure which one can always be certain."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

”

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Blank lined paper for writing.