



TREE OF LIFE ACTIVITY

During this month of April, as we have been challenged to redesign old ways into new rhythms and routines, nature has provided the solid constant – the change into spring. The spring trees provide a gentle reminder that during the hardship of these past weeks transformation is occurring. The same is true with grief.

World-wide, trees have long been a symbol for life, wisdom, and power. In some cultures, trees are considered “observers, witnesses of change and evolution.” In the African Savannah, The Baobab Tree, is known as The Tree of Life as it provides shelter, food and clothing for humans and wildlife alike.

This activity invites you to participate in creating your own Tree of Life. By considering the ways we can relate to trees we may feel more grounded as we proceed through these difficult times.



Directions

Decide whether you would like to draw your own tree or use one of the outlines provided on the following pages. The questions below illustrate how the different components of trees relate to our grief experience. As you draw each part, you may write or otherwise represent the ways in which you experience the components described below. If you choose to use an outline, label or otherwise represent your experience on the outline.

The Roots: What helps you stay grounded/rooted when things feel like they are growing out of control? What is important to you? What do you value?

The Trunk: What has stayed the same since your loss and/or since the pandemic? What helps you feel calm? What helps you feel powerful and strong? What brings you joy and happiness?

The Branches: What frightens you? What causes you worry? When do you feel most worried? When do you feel most frightened? Draw what worried and frightened feels like in your branches? What makes you feel frustrated or angry? Draw any other big feelings that you are experiencing at this time?

The Wind: What triggers (causes) your worries? Fears? Frustrations? Concerns? Name what makes you feel like your branches will break?

The Leaves/Blossoms: What have you noticed helps when you're having a difficult time? Who do you go to for support? What have you learned about yourself during this time that you didn't realize before? What have you learned about your family that you didn't realize before? Name three things that you feel proud of in yourself.



