

From “How are you?” to “Where are you?”: Using Pictorial and Word Continuums to Support Students Experiencing Grief

WSCA Annual Conference
February 2020



Why Scales?

Meets Wisconsin SEL Competencies

No.	CASEL DOMAIN	6th-8th (can easily meet all grade levels)
1	Self-Awareness	Recognize and label a variety of complex graded emotions in self and others.
2	Self-Management	Express emotions in an appropriate and respectful manner using a variety of modalities.
3	Self-Management	Identify what triggers a strong emotion and apply an appropriate calming or coping strategy to defuse the emotional trigger.
5	Social Awareness	Provide support and encouragement to others through perspective taking, empathy, and appreciation for diversity.

Scale Use in Grief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides for better support opportunities • Opens avenues to understanding and normalization of grief • Assists one in walking through grief by gaining self-awareness • Facilitates in meaning-making and continuing bonds
---------------------------	--

<p>Why Mindful Scales?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh approach, opens communication, low risk, versatile, shared language • Images more consistent than traditional numerical Likert scale, Leutner, F., Yearsley, A., Codreanu, S., Borenstein, Y., & Ahmetoglu, G. (2017). • Individuals experiencing trauma oftentimes are not able to articulate themselves, Malchiodi, C.A (2015) • Images lessen communication barriers • Allows for rich conversation • Can separate feelings and reactions (Cacciatore, J. (2017) • Allows for “self-anchoring” to personalize placement • Can be tailored to needs of individual
-----------------------------------	--

Using Scales in Grief Support

“Companioning the bereaved is not about assessing, analyzing, fixing or resolving another’s grief. Instead, it is about being totally present to the mourner.” (Wolfelt A, 2012)

<p>Understanding and normalization of grief</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools are not needed to get out of grief, but to withstand it and live inside it as we find ways to lessen the anguish brought on by profound grief. Devine, (2017) • With grief awareness, one can establish strategies to advocate for oneself. Bottomley, Burke, & Neimeyer, (2015) • With understanding, comes acceptance of feelings without self-judgement or fear. Gross, (2018)
<p>Manifestation in the body</p>	<p>headaches, dry mouth, nausea, shortness of breath, chest pain, stomach pain, fatigue, loss of appetite, ect. Hairston, S. (2019)</p>
<p>Normal mental/ emotional reactions</p>	<p>confusion, irritability, anxiety, listlessness, depression, paranoia, shock, bargaining, hallucinations, “searching” behavior, inability to concentrate, pervasive crying, gratitude, relief, fear, guilt, denial, sense of “being lost”, acceptance, anger, frightening dreams, profound sadness, sense of being, memory issues, ect. Cacciatore, J. (2017), Johnson, R., & Brock, D. (2017), Popowitz, C. (2018), vita.com (2019),</p>
<p>Grief theory/Models</p>	<p>Stages:</p> <p><i>Kübler-Ross</i> 5 Stages</p> <p>Denial Anger Bargaining Depression Acceptance</p> <p>+ Meaning Making (<i>Kessler</i>)</p> <p>Tasks</p> <p><i>Worden</i></p> <p>To accept the reality of the loss</p>

	<p>To work through the pain of grief To adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing To find an enduring connection with the deceased while embarking on a new life</p> <p><i>Rando (6 R's)</i></p> <p>Process 1: Recognizing the loss (avoidance) Process 2: Reacting to the separation (confrontation) Process 3: Recollect and re-experience (confrontation) Process 4: Relinquishing old attachments (confrontation) Process 5: Readjusting (accommodation) Process 6: Reinvesting (accommodation)</p> <p>Needs:</p> <p><i>Wolfelt</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledge the reality of the death 2. Embrace the pain of loss 3. Remember the person who died 4. Develop a new self-identity 5. Search for meaning 6. Receive ongoing support from others <p>Reactions/Styles:</p> <p><i>Martin/Doka</i></p> <p>Intuitive Instrumental Blended</p>
--	--

Stage/Task/Need/Reaction	Theoretician	Scales
Denial/Acceptance/ Recognizing and Acknowledging reality	Kübler-Ross, Kessler, Wolfelt, Rando	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moose - Close up... "moose, what moose?!" • Ready to face the day... hiding under my bed
Anger Embracing the Pain	Kübler-Ross, Kessler Wolfelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dormant volcano... "here she blows." • I got this... man, this sucks
Making connections/ Continuing bonds/ Remembering	Worden, Wolfelt, Rando	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memory (Three phases of flying kite with Dad) • Finding comfort in the memories... too painful to go there right now
Meaning Making	Kessler, Worden, Wolfelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding peace (light through the clouds) ... losing hope (storm clouds) • Window wide open... door slammed shut
Adjusting	Worden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swishing down the slopes... stuck in a snowbank • Newly stitched quilt... unraveling at the seams
Intuitive reaction	Martin/Doka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tissues needed... hand me a mop • Smiling contently... full on ugly cry







Instrumental reaction	Martin/Doka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool as a cucumber... about to blow a gasket • Git'er done... what was I doing?
Ongoing support	Wolfelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing up tall... tipping over, need a shoulder • Perfect timing... now is not a good time

Walking through grief by gaining self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows feelings to be present without self-judgement or doubt in order to move through grief. Johnson. R. & Brock, D., (2017) • Can lead to more readiness for healing. Cacciatore, J., (2012) • Builds resilience against intense emotional responses. Thieleman, K., Cacciatore, J., & Hill, P.W., (2014) • The body will not heal if grief is not acknowledged, experienced, and released. Popowitz, (2018)
Self-Awareness/Self-Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notice: Feelings/emotions/thoughts 2. Name: Identify feelings/emotions 3. Nurture: What do you need? What are you going to do?

Meaning making/ Continuing bonds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessens physical and emotional effects of grief. Gillies, J., Neimeyer, (2014) • Lessens the chance of complicated grief after a loss by suicide. Pritchard (2018) • Pursue the meaning of one's changed life and seek to "reconnect to the life narrative of their loved one." Neimeyer (2019) <p>"If art can help us grieve, can help us mourn, then lean on it." Lin-Manuel Miranda, (2016)</p>
Scales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualize • Personal connection • Connect with continuing bonds/meaning making (through the arts, music, memorials, and living their legacy) • Spiritual/faith-based • Furry Connections

Considerations and Applications

Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretations differ (how one "sees" or understands the scale) • Relativity (what's going on in the "big picture") • Receptions differ (what works for one, not for another) • Modify for non-readers (non-linear) • Use manipulatives
-----------------------	--

Applications	Examples																																				
Content-Related	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Discipline</th> <th></th> <th>to</th> <th></th> <th>content</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>English</td> <td>Happy as a lark</td> <td>to</td> <td>Angry as a hornet</td> <td>figurative language</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Science</td> <td>Gold, chromium, zinc</td> <td>to</td> <td>Barium, francium</td> <td>reactive metals</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Music</td> <td>Prestissimo</td> <td>to</td> <td>Grave</td> <td>tempo</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social Studies</td> <td>Full-functioning State</td> <td>to</td> <td>Failed State</td> <td>Peace and Conflict Studies</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Math</td> <td>Positive numbers</td> <td>to</td> <td>Negative numbers</td> <td>Integers</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Art</td> <td></td> <td>to</td> <td></td> <td>Tonality/hues reflecting emotions</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Discipline		to		content	English	Happy as a lark	to	Angry as a hornet	figurative language	Science	Gold, chromium, zinc	to	Barium, francium	reactive metals	Music	Prestissimo	to	Grave	tempo	Social Studies	Full-functioning State	to	Failed State	Peace and Conflict Studies	Math	Positive numbers	to	Negative numbers	Integers	Art		to		Tonality/hues reflecting emotions	
Discipline		to		content																																	
English	Happy as a lark	to	Angry as a hornet	figurative language																																	
Science	Gold, chromium, zinc	to	Barium, francium	reactive metals																																	
Music	Prestissimo	to	Grave	tempo																																	
Social Studies	Full-functioning State	to	Failed State	Peace and Conflict Studies																																	
Math	Positive numbers	to	Negative numbers	Integers																																	
Art		to		Tonality/hues reflecting emotions																																	
Topic-specific	<p>Specific Topics for classroom lessons/small groups/individual</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Concept</th> <th>Where are you? From...</th> <th>to</th> <th>...</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>storming/ Norming: healthy friendships to toxic friendships</td> <td>Peas in a pod...</td> <td>to</td> <td>...Toxic Waste</td> </tr> <tr> <td>digital citizenship</td> <td>Social Butterfly...</td> <td>to</td> <td>...Zombie Apocalypse</td> </tr> <tr> <td>body Image</td> <td>Fancy car...</td> <td>to</td> <td>...Junker</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Concept	Where are you? From...	to	...	storming/ Norming: healthy friendships to toxic friendships	Peas in a pod...	to	...Toxic Waste	digital citizenship	Social Butterfly...	to	...Zombie Apocalypse	body Image	Fancy car...	to	...Junker																				
Concept	Where are you? From...	to	...																																		
storming/ Norming: healthy friendships to toxic friendships	Peas in a pod...	to	...Toxic Waste																																		
digital citizenship	Social Butterfly...	to	...Zombie Apocalypse																																		
body Image	Fancy car...	to	...Junker																																		
Pick-a-stick	On desk in office or classroom, Daily entrance																																				

Lesson Plan Outline	
Lesson 1	Introduction to Scales: Notice/Reflect: Explain scales/mindfulness activity
Lessons 2 - 3	Notice/Name/Reflect: Mindfulness, Plutchik Emotion Wheel, interpret scale by adding emotions
Lessons 4 - 6	Notice/Name/Personalize/Reflect: Create own scale, interpret
Lessons 7 - 8	Notice/Name/Expand/Reflect: Use outside of class
Lessons 9+	Notice/Name/Nurture/Reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do you react to emotions? ● What does that look like? ● What are the results? ● What works/doesn't work?
Evaluation	At some point (sometime around lesson 6) have students evaluate using the scales up to that point, discuss with them, make adjustments as needed



Testimonials:

- “I can clearly see why, **as a professional**, I need to **share this with my clients** as well as seeing that I as a grieving person **can use it as well.**” ~*Barbara Rubel, nationally recognized author, keynote speaker, and trainer*
- “They **really enjoy** the pictures scales. They are **now asking** where they are if I don’t have them out.” ~*Ginny W., School Counselor (middle school boys’ grief group)*
- I think more than anything, ..., it went from a **teacher to student** relationship to a **friend to friend relationship**. It was no longer like, ohhh she’s a teacher, Ms. Cantu does it out of her **kindness that is in her soul.** ~*Jessica H., 10th grader*
- “Sometimes when you are struggling, you **tire of talking and rehashing the pain** time and time again. Using a scale **brings simplicity and with that clarity** -- the ability to express, share, let someone in **without the burden of the explanation.**” ~*Melanie H., Dealing with profound adversity in her personal life*
- I am **learning** so much **about these students** because of the scales. *Ginny W., School Counselor (all-girl 10th grade group of Hmong-American students)*
- “When days do not go as smoothly as one would like, it’s **not always easy to express how you are feeling -- both good and sad.** Having a sliding scale to more accurately give an answer makes it easier -- **and can be fun also.** It has truly helped me.” ~*Dianne N., Grieving Jim, her husband of 64 years*
- “The Scales have **allowed me to acknowledge my feelings** and to know **it is okay to not let the grief consume me.** Some days are **bright and sunny** and I’m thankful for all we have had, and others **I want to cry my eyes out.**” ~*Diane P., Experiencing anticipatory grief for her husband John who is afflicted with dementia*
- “The most beneficial aspect of the daily scales for me is the fact that they really **make me think** about how **I am feeling** at that **very moment.** Knowing I would get new scales each day **gave me something to look forward to** during the dark, gloomy grieving days.” ~*Kari M., Grieving Don, her brother, and grandparents*
- “I lie how it makes me **evaluate** and **think about my emotional state** as well as where I am. ~*High school student in Alternative Educational Program*
- “I like taking a little bit of **time** to see how I am doing, or to **calm myself down** when I am not doing the greatest.” ~*High school student in Alternative Educational Program*
- “I like that I was able to **customize** my own scale, it is easier to reflect if it is something I can **relate to.**” ~*High school student in Alternative Educational Program*
- “I can show emotions **without saying it.**” ~*High school student in Alternative Educational Program*
- “It gives me a **good start** to the day.” ~*High school student in Alternative Educational Program*
- “You can **understand** different parts of your **mental health.**” ~*High school student in Alternative Educational Program*
- “It kinda helps me **realize my emotional state**, and overall its **helped me a lot** so far.” ~*High school student in Alternative Educational Program*
- “I find it very **helpful** to take a **couple breaths** before I do this assessment.” ~*High school student in Alternative Educational Program*

References:

- Bottomley, J. S., Burke, L. A., & Neimeyer, R. A. (2017). Domains of Social Support That Predict Bereavement Distress Following Homicide Loss: Assessing Need and Satisfaction. *OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying*, 75(1), 3–25.
- Cacciatore, J. (2017). *Bearing the unbearable: Love, loss, and the heartbreaking path of grief*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications.
- Caserta, M. S., Lund, D. A., Ulz, R. L., & Tabler, J. L. (2016). "One size doesn't fit all"—Partners in hospice care, an individualized approach to bereavement intervention. *OMEGA—Journal of Death and Dying*, 73, 107–125. (as cited in Worden)
- Devine, Megan. *Its Ok That You're Not Ok: Meeting Grief and Loss in a Culture That Doesn't Understand*. Sounds True, 2017.
- Doka, K. J., Ph.D. (2016, July 4). Taking It Like a Man: Understanding Grieving Styles [Web log post]. Retrieved April 29, 2019, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/good-mourning/201607/taking-it-man-understanding-grieving-styles>
- Gibbs, J. (2001). *Tribes: a new way of learning and being together*. Windsor, CA: Center Source Systems.
- Gross, G. (2018). *The only way out is through: A ten-step journey from grief to wholeness*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Johnson, R., & Brock, D. (2017). *The positive power of sadness: How good grief prevents and cures anxiety, depression, and anger*. Santa Barbara: Praeger.
- The Journey Through Grief: The Six Needs of Mourning. (2016, December 14). Retrieved from <https://www.centerforloss.com/2016/12/journey-grief-six-needs-mourning/>
- Kessler, D. (n.d.). Misconceptions About the Five Stages of Grief. Retrieved from <https://grief.com/>
- Leutner, F., Yearsley, A., Codreanu, S., Borenstein, Y., & Ahmetoglu, G. (2017).
- Malchiodi, C. A. (2015). *Creative Interventions with Traumatized Children*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Miranda, L.-M., & McCarter, J. (2016). *Hamilton: the revolution*. New York, NY: Grand Central Publishing.
- Obama, M. (2019). *Becoming*. London: Viking.
- Popowitz, C. (2018). *Grief recovery for teens: Letting go of painful emotions with body-based practices*. Strawberry Hills, NSW: ReadHowYouWant.
- Rando, T. A. (1993). The Increasing Prevalence of Complicated Mourning: The Onslaught is Just Beginning. *OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying*, 26(1), 43-59. doi:10.2190/7mdl-rjtf-na2d-npqf (as cited by Heath)
- RCN Publishing Company. (2012, September 14). Pinball as a model for dealing with grief. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved February 2, 2019 from www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/09/120914080727.htm
- Rubel, B. (2019, February). *Managing Traumatic Grief in the School System: Helping Students, Parents, and Ourselves*. Green Bay, Wisconsin.
- Wolfelt, A. (2012). *Companioning the Grieving Child: a Soulful Guide for Caregivers*. Place of publication not identified: Companion Press.
- Worden, J. W. (2018). *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy, Fifth Edition: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner*. Springer Publishing Company.
- The Normal Physical and Mental Symptoms of Grief. (n.d.). Retrieved November 29, 2019, from <https://www.vitas.com/family-and-caregiver-support/grief-and-bereavement/coping-with-grief/the-normal-physical-and-mental-symptoms-of-grief/>