

CONTINUING CONVERSATIONS FEAR AND CHANGE

LEAN IN AND LEARN AS A FAMILY.

Making space for reflection can be a critical part of healing and growth. Make space to reflect by journaling, asking a different question during family dinner, or during a roadtrip. As always, follow your child's lead on how much they want to discuss.

Grieve the losses

- What are aspects of your original family unit that you miss the most?
- What do you miss most about your spouse/partner who passed away?
- What do you miss the most for your kids? (Or what do your kids say they miss the most?)
- What dreams did you have for your family that now seem impossible?
- Things in your life/marriage/family did not turn out how you imagined and hoped they would - how are you coping with the adjustment to that reality?

Honor the original family units

- What are aspects of your original family that you want to preserve & incorporate into your daily/weekly rhythms?
- What are aspects of your original family that you want to honor and remember well? What would you like that to look like?
- How can/do you mark the days that remind you of the past (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.)?
- How do you communicate about these tender topics with your spouse/significant other?
 - Listen without judgment
 - Empathize
 - Encourage them to share more if they want
 - Support them in what they need to do to cope (healthy coping mechanisms)

Incorporate both families together

- What does it look like to hold space for the past, the losses, and the changes, while creating something new?
- What dreams do you have for your blended family?
- What dreams might your kids have for this new family?
- How can you take steps to build connections within your family?
 - Start small
 - All emotions/feelings are allowed
 - Child-led - don't force anything, but meet them where they are and go at their pace
 - "Nacho kids" (don't expect to have the same relationship with your step-kids as you do with your own kids) <https://nachokids.com/>
- What support system does your family need to make this transition? (OR) What support system helped you make the transition?



Blended family - Successful transition

- How will you continue to communicate with your spouse and children to check in and keep the dialogue open about how the transition is going?
- What will you do if you have hard days when you feel discouraged about your decision to blend your families together?
- What would it look like to have a successful transition?