

Walking with Others Through Grief

TABC Institute—July 24, 2023

“If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.”

1 Corinthians 12:26:

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Romans 12:15

1. The ministry of _____.

- Meeting basic needs
- Sitting with the hurting
- Admit limitations

2. Don't sing songs to a _____.

Proverbs 25:20

Ecclesiastes 3:4

John 11:35

Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

Rom 12:15

- Don't "correct" or be afraid of negative emotion.

3. Spiritual support

4. Remembering/sharing

5. Be patient.

- Grief is exhausting

- Don't have a timeline for the grieving.

****You are going to make mistakes. Just keep showing up. ****

Walking with the grieving is a holy act...

“As a caregiver, you bring with you two most high and holy gifts to the one you care for. The correct question about these gifts is not, ‘What are they?’ Rather, it is, ‘Who are they?’ The answer is basic: You bring _____, and you bring _____.”

Let anxious feelings be your signal to bring God into the picture.

Helpful Resources:

- *Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart: How to Relate to Those Who Are Suffering* by Kenneth Haug
- *A Grief Observed* by C. S. Lewis
- *Tear Soup* by Pat Schwiebert & Chuck DeKlyen
- *Journeying through Grief* from Stephen Ministries—series of four booklets available for purchase in the church office
- GriefShare Support Group—Held at TABC Spring 2024 (This would be a helpful place to refer someone walking through grief)

Psychologist J. William Worden provides a framework of four tasks that help us understand how people journey through grief. Healing happens gradually as grievers address these tasks, in no specific order, going back and forth from one to another over time.

Task 1: To Accept the Reality of the Loss

Although you know intellectually that the person has died, you may experience a sense of disbelief. Integrating the reality of their death means “taking it in” with your whole being.

For example, the reality may begin to set in immediately after the death, when you must call the mortuary, attend the memorial or pick up the ashes.

Many weeks, months or years later when an occasion arises that they would have been part of, the reality again hits you as you realize that your dear one has died and they aren't here to share these moments with you.

Task 2: To Process the Pain of Grief

Grief is experienced emotionally, cognitively, physically, and spiritually.

People may be telling you: “Get over it; move on; be strong.” In contrast, one of the aims of grief support groups is to encourage and facilitate the safe expression of all the natural grief reactions.

Task 3: To Adjust to a World Without the Deceased

External adjustments include taking on responsibilities and learning new skills.

Internal adjustments are made as you adapt to your new identity.

Spiritual adjustments occur as you grapple with questions about your belief system and the purpose and meaning of life.

Task 4: To Find an Enduring Connection With the Deceased in the Midst of Embarking on a New Life

Gradually you create a balance between remembering the person who died and living a full and meaningful life.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

Matthew 5:4

“Whoever sings songs to a heavy heart is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, and like vinegar on soda.”

Proverbs 25:20

“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”

Psalms 34:18

Psalms 13, Lament to trust and praise

Psalms 46, God is in control

God's right hand shall hold me

Isaiah 42:6

Psalms 37:24

Psalms 139:10

Psalms 63:8

Psalms 41:10, 13

Psalms 73:23

Matthew 14:31

God's perfect love drives out fear (and anxiety)

1 John 4:18

God is always with me!

Joshua 1:9

Hebrews 13:56

Matthew 28:20b