

Thoughts on Grief

Since it's harder to get out and about this time of year, we're going to bring the Grief Group Discussion questions to you. Find a friend or relative to talk with or even review them on your own.

Session 1 – Permission to Mourn

Can you relate to the following quote?

When a person is born, we rejoice. When they're married, we jubilate. When they die, we try to pretend nothing happened. (Margaret Mead)

How have you or others responded? Do you tend to hide your grief? Do others try to change the subject?

There is a difference between grief and mourning. Grief is what is going on inside such as feeling sad. Mourning is an outward express of that grief such as crying. How do you feel about letting the inside come out?

The people in the Old Testament were not afraid to show their distress. Let's look at some examples:

Jacob at the loss of his son Joseph:

And he identified it and said, "It is my son's robe. A fierce animal has devoured him. Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces." Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but refused to be comforted and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning." Thus his father wept for him. (Genesis 37:33-35)

David at the death of his son Absalom:

And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!" It was told Joab, "Behold, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom." So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the people, for the people heard that day, "The king is grieving for his son."...The king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (2 Samuel 18:33-19:2,4)

After a law had decreed to kill the Jews:

When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry. He went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one was allowed to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth. And in every province, wherever the king's command and his decree reached. There was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes. (Esther 4:1-3)

What are some examples of their mourning? They seemed to put their whole bodies and voices into it. Their pain was visible to others. What healthy outlets can you find for your mourning?