

## **Grief**

### **TWO PERSPECTIVES**

- 1. YOU ARE GRIEVING**
- 2. YOU ARE A COMFORTER / COUNSELOR**

### **YOU ARE GRIEVING...**

- Is this normal?
- Why did this happen to me?
- I'm hurting. Is there hope for me?
- Will I ever worship again?
- How long do I have to feel like this?

Faith doesn't make it hurt less...it gives us hope.

### **YOU ARE A COMFORTER / COUNSELOR**

- I don't know what to say
- Will I do more harm?
- What will make me helpful?
- Does faith actually bring hope?

**2 Corinthians 1:3-7 "to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God."**

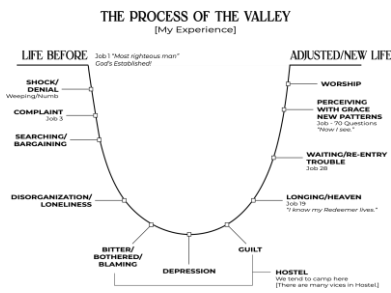
### **LIFE BEFORE... ENDS**

- Grief is not linear.
- No two travelers keep the same itinerary.
- Fear of suffering is normal.
- We tend to race to hope without resting in the mess.
- This path is not a requirement, it is a tool to help you...
- Recognize your surroundings
- Accept help
- Hang on to Jesus until your worship is whole.

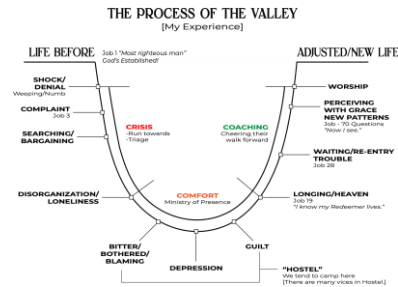
### **FOR COMFORTERS...**

- **CRISIS - TRIAGE**
- **COMFORT - MINISTRY OF PRESENCE**

## COACHING - CHEERING THE WALK



**FORWARD**



## SHOCK/DENIAL

JOB 2:7 - 3:1  
 PSALM 6:2-4  
 PSALM 9:9-10  
 PSALM 34:1-4, 17, 18

- Denial and the refusal to deal with our pain disconnects us from the immediacy of the crisis ...Stoicism is not a virtue.

"When the sorrow is overwhelming, we are sometimes temporarily anesthetized in response to a tragic experience. We are grateful for this temporary anesthesia, for it keeps us from having to face grim reality all at once" (Westberg, G.E. - Good grief p.32 ).

- Grief is necessary.
- The Lord (our Shepherd) does not deny these authentic life responses.

**Hinds feet on high places....**

## COMFORTERS

- Pay close attention to where the grief and loss has happened. (Hambrick , Angry with God,ch. 3)
- Compassion is to suffer with another person.
- As you encounter real grief, do not comfort for your own sake.
- We try to "make someone better" to get rid of the awkwardness that we perceive.

- **Move towards the person.**

## COMPLAINT

JOB 3  
PSALM 6  
PSALM 88

## COMPLAINT

- Complaint takes time.
- Laments were not written in a day.
- Anger demands certainty... lament leaves certainty in Gods hands
- A lament to God leaves a tether for future healing.
- **Important:** A horizontal lament leaves you broken. **"What you vent, you cement."**

## KEY COMPONENTS OF A LAMENT

- **Turn to the Lord = "I need your help."**
- **Complaint = Tell Him what is wrong.**
- **Ask = What would you have God do? (In keeping with His character)**
- **Trust (PSALM 13)**

## COMFORTERS

- Be patient with complaint. It is part of the process.
- Point to Jesus. You don't have to force them. Be gentle.
- Allow the truth about God to emerge.
- God will meet them. His timing, not ours.

## **BARGAINING/ CRYING**

JOHN 11:35  
PSALM 6  
ISAIAH 61:1-3

- The Biblical response to Grief is "crying".
- Our nature is to bargain and try to make a deal with God...or we get angry because we thought a deal was in place.
- Job is devastated, in part, because he believed God would bless him if he did good.

## **COMFORTERS**

- Go to them in this moment. Lean into the pain with presence... not with words.
- When they are crying, they need to feel the presence of a person

## **DISORGANIZATION / LONELINESS**

ROMANS 8:28/ ISAIAH 26:3  
1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7/ GALATIANS 6

- This is where the heart is aching and we begin to search for comforters.
- We long for community.
- It is common to feel like you are burdening others and bothering them with your grief.
- **Grief fog is real**

## **COMFORTERS**

- Comfort comes through community with others and God.
- It is possible to hope in the midst of grief.
- Remind the grieving to receive those who bring Scripture as from the Lord.
- Offer specific help.

"I'm going to the store, can I get you anything?"

"I'm making soup today, can I bring some to you?"

"Can I mow your lawn?"

## **THE HOSTEL - "THE WAITING PLACE"**

ROMANS 8:28/ ISAIAH 26:3/ PSALM 33:16-22  
ISAIAH 40:27-31/ ISAIAH 49: 14-16

- It is easy to get stuck here.
- People grieve differently but we all gather "grief buddies."

- Even misguided counsel moves the story forward (Job). Job wrestles with bad counsel and God meets him in those moments.
- We either resign ourselves to depression or we trust with faith.
- The only way out is with company...we choose the company who is going to carry us forward.
- We either move forward with good company, or we stay here with bad company.
- We have to refuse "self-rescue." We rely on help and we wait on the Lord.
- Biblical acceptance starts here.

### **COMFORTERS**

- Don't obsess about "why?"
- God works all things together for good... but it is dangerous to try to assign or identify "the good" that is coming from any situation.
- Be intentional. Call. Text. Keep showing up.
- They are already sad. You won't make it worse. Don't let the awkward win. Keep moving towards them.

### **LONGING / HEAVEN**

JOB 19:23-27  
 PROVERBS 13:12  
 ROMANS 8:19-25

- The first step out of the valley is belief in the resurrection (Romans 10).
- Look for spiritual benchmarks.
- How are you growing or changing?
- What have you learned about the Lord?

### **COMFORTERS**

- Ask them to consider Heaven and eternity.
- Read Biblical descriptions of Heaven.
- (Revelation 22:1-5)
- Make a thoughtful distinction between Heavenly hope and suicidal ideation.

### **WAITING (FOR WISDOM) / RE-ENTRY**

## **JOB 28:1-13**

- The wisdom for re-entry is found when your perspective begins to shift.
- There is gold in the dirt.
- Up to this point it has been difficult to focus on anything other than what was lost...wisdom allows us to begin to see what we have gained along the way.

### **COMFORTERS**

- Help them accept that hardship and wisdom are tied together.
  - Ask them to reflect on which truths about God are more real to them now.
  - Which talents or aptitudes has God sharpened?
  - Who do they want to bless with what they are learning?
  - Help them make a list of scriptures that stood out in this season.

### **PERCEIVING NEW PATTERNS WITH GRACE**

JOB 38:1 - 41:34  
JOB 42:7-10

- Our identity comes from God...not grief.
- We begin to see how our pain is woven together with the promises of God.

### **COMFORTERS**

- Why does God give Job 70 questions instead of 70 answers?
- How has relationship with God replaced "religion" ?
- How has God used this season to deepen your walk with Him?
- Resting in God's sovereignty is the answer.
- Earlier in the journey, the griever could not hear "God knows" and find comfort.

### **WORSHIP**

- My ears had heard of You...now my eyes have seen You.
- Signs that we are entering the "new normal":
- Repentance comes quickly.
- Forgiveness of others (you are never more like Jesus than when you forgive).
- Hope untainted by fear.
- Your worship is defined as much by prayer as singing.

## **COMFORTERS**

- You are co-worshippers at this point.
- You are no longer the coach. You are worshipping and glorifying God together.

**And our hope for you is firm, because we know that as you share in the sufferings, so you will also share in the comfort.**

**2 CORINTHIANS 1:7**

**A culture of comfort is contagious!**