

MOURNINGSTAR

Grief Curriculum for Small Groups



UNIT PURPOSE:

Identifying various means and methods of support and the value they provide while grieving

	Title	Topic	Objective of Healing	Light for the Night
Group 1	Value in Peer Support	Understanding the benefits of group support while grieving	Reinforcing our Support	1 Thessalonians 5:11 <i>Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.</i>
Group 2	Sharing my Grief Story with Others	Learning to share the grief story with supportive individuals	Recognizing the Truth	Galatians 6:2 <i>Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.</i>
Group 3	The Many Methods of Support	Identifying social and emotional support networks and means of support beyond relationships	Reaffirming our Identity	Isaiah 41:10 <i>So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.</i>
Group 4	Sharing Memories with Others	Encouraging the value of memories and the importance of sharing them	Remembering the Person	Philippians 1:3 <i>I thank my God every time I remember you.</i>
Group 5	When Support Fails	Uncovering secondary losses in the lack of support from others	Releasing the Pain	Psalm 118:6, 8: <i>The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in humans.</i>
Group 6	The Support of Hope in God's Promises	Introducing the concept of hope as found in scripture	Reasoning the Purpose	Hebrews 10:23 <i>Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.</i>

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Unit 102

Seasons of Remembering

UNIT PURPOSE:

Discovering how the holidays effects grief and understanding how to best manage throughout the season while grieving

	Title	Topic	Objective of Healing	Light for the Night
Group 1	Grief and Thanksgiving	Managing the conflicting emotions of thankfulness and pain.	Releasing the Pain	1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 <i>Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.</i>
Group 2	Grief Through the Seasons	Recalling grief stories through the lens of the four seasons	Recognizing the Truth	Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 <i>There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,</i>
Group 3	Preparing for the Holidays	Thinking ahead to make a plan for how the holidays will happen this year	Reinforcing our Support	Proverbs 22:3 <i>The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty.</i>
Group 4	Christmas Treasures	Identifying and honoring the gifts of the person who died	Remembering the Person	James 1:17 <i>Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.</i>
Group 5	Reflecting on the Year	Looking back to celebrate resilience in the face of both up's and down's	Reaffirming our Identity	Psalm 147:3 <i>He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.</i>
Group 6	Hope for the New Year	Looking to the future and establishing goals	Reasoning the Purpose	Jeremiah 29:11 <i>"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."</i>

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Unit 103

The Act of Lament

UNIT PURPOSE:

An introduction to the expression of biblical lament and how it can help guide us in grieving

	Title	Topic	Objective of Healing	Light for the Night
Group 1	What is Lament?	Understanding lament as a mean to express grief	Reinforcing our Support	Psalm 13:2a <i>How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?</i>
Group 2	My Cry to God	Bringing our personal story to God through lament	Recognizing the Truth	Jonah 2:2 <i>He said: "In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry.</i>
Group 3	The Prayer of Pain & Petition	Expressing pain through lament	Releasing the Pain	Psalm 142:1-2 <i>I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy. I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble.</i>
Group 4	The Prayer of Anger	Expressing anger through lament	Releasing the Pain	Ephesians 4:26-27 <i>"In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.</i>
Group 5	The Prayer of Questioning	Expressing the questions of grief through lament	Reasoning the Purpose	Isaiah 55:8-9 <i>"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."</i>
Group 6	The Prayer of Hope	Worshipping God in the "yet" circumstances	Reaffirming our Identity	Micah 7:7 <i>But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me.</i>

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UNIT PURPOSE:

Discovering areas of self-care for overall health and well being and understanding the importance of caring for each area while grieving

	Title	Topic	Objective of Healing	Light for the Night
Group 1	The Parts of the Whole	An overview of caring For ourselves in grief	Reinforcing our Support	Isaiah 58:11 <i>The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.</i>
Group 2	The Parts of the Whole: Mind	Telling funeral stories through the therapeutic method of writing	Recognizing the Truth	2 Timothy 1:7 (KJV) <i>For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.</i>
Group 3	The Parts of the Whole: Body	Maintaining complete physical wellness	Reaffirming our Identity	1 Kings 19:5-7 <i>All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you."</i>
Group 4	The Parts of the Whole: Spirit	Continuing a meaningful connection through memories	Remembering the Person	Deuteronomy 4:9 <i>Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.</i>
Group 5	The Parts of the Whole: Soul	How connecting with God brings comfort	Reasoning the Purpose	Psalm 8:3-4 <i>When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?</i>
Group 6	The Parts of the Whole: Laughter	Finding hope through laughter	Reinforcing our Support	Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4 <i>There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance...</i>

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Unit 201

Pearls of Grief

UNIT PURPOSE:

Learning to trust God with the process of grief

	Title	Topic	Objective of Healing	Light for the Night
Group 1	Trusting God with our Pain	Exploring how God shapes us through grief	Reasoning the Purpose	Proverbs 3:5 <i>Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding</i>
Group 2	Cracking Open Your Shell	Bravely opening-up our grief stories	Recognizing the Truth	John 11:35 <i>Jesus wept.</i>
Group 3	Irritants to Grief	Untangling guilt and regret to cope and learn	Releasing the Pain	Isaiah 43:18-19 <i>Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.</i>
Group 4	The Intentional Work of Grieving	Ways of caring for oneself in grief through movement, breath, and reflection	Reaffirming our Identity	Mark 6:31 <i>Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."</i>
Group 5	Creating a Dive Team	The importance of developing a support system	Reinforcing our Support	Proverbs 17:17 <i>A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.</i>
Group 6	Hope in the Struggle of Grief	Celebrating the beauty that comes from pain	Reasoning the Purpose	Job 23:10 <i>But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.</i>

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Unit 202

Grief and the Holidays

UNIT PURPOSE:

Understanding and preparing for the effect grief has on us during the holidays

	Title	Topic	Objective of Healing	Light for the Night
Group 1	An Active Approach to the Holidays	Identifying how the weight of the holiday's impacts grief	Reinforcing our Support	Matthew 11:28 <i>"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."</i>
Group 2	Unloading Grief Stories	Narrating our grief stories to lighten our holiday load	Recognizing the Truth	Psalm 55:22 <i>Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken.</i>
Group 3	Cherishing Memories	Honoring through the intentional gathering of memories	Remembering the Person	Luke 2:19 <i>But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.</i>
Group 4	Bah-Humbug Days	When our feelings are at odds with the holiday spirit	Releasing the Pain	Ecclesiastes 7:14 <i>When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, no one can discover anything about their future.</i>
Group 5	Anticipating The New Year	Honoring through the Creation of new rituals	Reasoning the Purpose	Lamentations 3:22-23 <i>Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.</i>
Group 6	Holding on to Hope	Finding a path to hope in the new year	Reaffirming our Identity	Romans 8:24-25 <i>For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.</i>

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Unit 203

Individualized Grief

UNIT PURPOSE:

Understanding how our uniquely created personalities affect the way we grieve

	Title	Topic	Objective of Healing	Light for the Night
Group 1	My Grief is Unique	Acknowledging how personality traits influence grief	Reinforcing our Support	Psalm 139:1-4 <i>You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.</i>
Group 2	My Story is Unique	Replaying the funeral or memorial service	Recognizing the Truth	Psalm 139:15-16 <i>My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.</i>
Group 3	My Person was Unique	Reminiscing on the special traits of the person who died	Remembering the Person	Psalm 139:13-14 <i>For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.</i>
Group 4	The Masks I Wear	Uncovering the masks that hide our feelings	Releasing the Pain	Psalm 139:2 <i>Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.</i>
Group 5	What I Tell Myself	Exploring Self-Talk and the power of positive thinking	Reaffirming our Identity	Psalm 139:17-18 <i>How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you.</i>
Group 6	Growing Closer to Hope	Discovering the possibility of growing through the experience of grief	Reasoning the Purpose	Psalm 139:5-6 <i>You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.</i>

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Unit 204

Mourning is Messy

UNIT PURPOSE:

Discovering the many ways grief affects our minds and emotions and finding ways to cope

	Title	Topic	Objective of Healing	Light for the Night
Group 1	Grief Reactions	Normalizing grief responses and their unpredictable nature	Reinforcing our Support	Isaiah 43:2 <i>When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.</i>
Group 2	Shock and Numbness	Telling grief stories with a focus on aspects that are still hard to believe	Recognizing the Truth	Psalm 23:4 <i>Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.</i>
Group 3	Anger Outlets	Accepting anger and providing steps to resolving it	Releasing the Pain	Proverbs 14:29 <i>Whoever is patient has great understanding, but one who is quick-tempered displays folly.</i>
Group 4	Worries and Fears	Discussing worries and fears and finding positive ways to cope	Reaffirming our Identity	Philippians 4:6-7 <i>Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.</i>
Group 5	Depression from Grief	Gaining a greater understanding of the depression that comes with grief	Releasing the Pain	Psalm 34:18-19 <i>"The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all".</i>
Group 6	Hope through Reminiscing	Recalling the past to make hope for the future possible	Remembering the Person	Isaiah 40:30-31 <i>"Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."</i>

Year 2