

SURVIVING MAJOR FAMILY LOSS: Death of a Spouse and Death of a Child – AACC World Conference 2019

Kathy Roden Floyd, M.A, LPC

WHAT I WANT GRIEVING PEOPLE TO KNOW

- It's okay to not be okay. And to say so.
- It is possible to have utter heartbreak and unexplainable joy at the same time (although it causes the worst ADD ever).
- Grief is absolutely exhausting for body, mind, emotions and spirit. It's like having a bad sunburn and everything that touches you is extra painful (things that wouldn't be at all painful without the sunburn). Sometimes we can't stand anymore "touch" and need to withdraw to rest and heal, so we may say "no" to an invitation or request and we need others to understand.....
- But we hope those others won't give up and quit checking on us and inviting us.
- The Lord is SO near. You're His favorite child when you're grieving.

WHAT HAS HELPED ME

- Singing worship music really loud.
- Hearing people mention my loved one and tell me their memories.
- Memorial objects/actions . . . looking at the cards and tributes received, reading all the Facebook comments people made at the time (and still make), listening to the audio recording of the funeral service, giving a scholarship in our son's name.

Pam Luschei, M.A., LMFT

WHAT I WANT GRIEVING PEOPLE TO KNOW

- Grief is a reflection of the attachment you had. Your tears represent the love and the loss you are experiencing.
- Grief is a journey through; a process that you move in; not something you get over.
- Rather than looking for a "new normal", your life is being recalibrated, and you are creating a "different landscape" of what your life looks like after experiencing loss.
- Grief can create a sense of helplessness in those around you as they watch you grieve. They want to fix you, and you can't be fixed. As a comforter, it's helpful to do something tangible; bring a meal, send a note, be present to listen and pray.
- Gratitude and grief can coexist together. In the midst of the deepest sorrow, a sense of gratefulness comes alongside.

WHAT HAS HELPED ME

- Being in the Word every morning. Scripture became my oxygen tank that I had to breath in daily in order to function.
- Writing and journaling my thoughts, feelings and prayers. In addition, I took pictures when words didn't come. I used Instagram as a tool to share my journey with others.
- Walking and working out (exercise) became a way of moving, allowing my body to release my grief.
- Having scheduled times to talk with friends, meet for coffee and be listened to, was an additional tool I needed.

Abbigail Kalaf, M.S., LPC, BCPCC

WHAT I WANT GRIEVING PEOPLE TO KNOW

- Find scriptures and other resources on grief/loss that best fit.
- Learn to intentionally grieve and practice what you preach/teach.
- Recognized losses in lives and learn to grieve these losses in a healthy way to prevent experience an avalanche of grief in the future.
- Denial is at the center of the tangled ball of emotions related to grief.
- Life is hard; intentionally develop healthy supports.

WHAT HAS HELPED ME

- Reaching out to God through Scripture, reading, meditation, memorization, worship music, journaling.
- Journaling in several different ways (bedtime, dream, letters, memories).
- Staying connected to others and not isolating.

**"I WILL TURN THEIR
MOURNING INTO
GLADNESS: I WILL GIVE
THEM COMFORT AND JOY
INSTEAD OF SORROW."**

Jeremiah 31:13 (NIV)


SCRIPTURES FOR GRIEF

- “Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship.” Job 1:20 (NLT)
- “Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning.” Psalm 30:5b (NLT)
- “The king was overcome with emotion. He went up to the room over the gateway and burst into tears. And as he went, he cried, ‘O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you! O Absalom, my son, my son.’” 2 Samuel 18:33 (NLT)
- “You have turned my mourning into joyful dancing. You have taken away my clothes of mourning and clothed me with joy, that I might sing praises to you and not be silent. Psalm 30:11 (NLT)
- “And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope.” 1 Thessalonians 4:13 (NLT)

RESOURCES FOR GRIEF

(because not all resources are books)

- “It Is Well” by Bethel Music
- “Even If” by Mercy Me
- “Home” by Chris Tomlin
- “Bow the Knee” by Chris Machen
- “Go Rest High on That Mountain” by Vince Gill
- “I Can Only Imagine” by Mercy Me
- “Sweet Beulah Land” – old hymn
- “When We All Get to Heaven” – old hymn



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SCRIPTURES FOR GRIEF

- “You yourself have recorded my wanderings. Put my tears in your bottle, Are they not in your book?” Psalm 56:8 (CSB)
- “This is my comfort in my affliction, Your promise has given me life.” Psalm 119:50 (CSB)
- “God is our refuge and strength, a helper who is always found in times of trouble. Therefore we will not be afraid, though the earth trembles, and the mountains topple, in the depths of the seas. though its waters roars and foams and the mountains quake with its turmoil.” Psalm 46:1-3 (CSB)
- “I am the one who comforts you.” Isaiah 51:12 (CSB)
- “He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted.” Isaiah 61:1 (CSB)

RESOURCES FOR GRIEF

- *A Grief Disguised* by Jerry Sittser
- *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering* by Tim Keller
- *Getting Grief Right* by Patrick O'Malley and Tim Madigan
- *A Sacred Sorrow* by Michael Card
- *Suffering is Never for Nothing* by Elisabeth Elliot
- Sermon Series by Pastor Rick Warren on grief after the loss of his son, Matthew



Grateful, Yet Grieving
finding hope in the journey



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SCRIPTURES FOR GRIEF

- “Praise be to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ; the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our trouble, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.” 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV)
- “I will turn their mourning into gladness: I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow.” Jeremiah 31:13 (NIV)
- “I am feeble and utterly crushed; I groan in anguish of heart.” Psalm 38:8 (NIV)
- “My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.” Psalm 63:8 (NIV)
- “My ears have heard of you but now my eyes have seen you.” Job 42:5 (NIV)

RESOURCES FOR GRIEF

- *Experiencing Grief* by H. Norman Wright
 - *It's Okay to Cry* by H. Norman Wright
 - *The Empty Chair: Handling Grief on Holidays and Special Occasions* by Susan J. Zonnerbelt-Smeenge, R. N., Ed.D and Robert C. DeVries, D.Min., Ph.D.
 - *Grieving the Loss of a Loved One* by H. Norman Wright
 - *Grieving Forward* by Susan Duke
- **Many of the above books, as well as other helpful books, can be obtain at www.hnormanwright.com or 800-875-7560*

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