

The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing... not healing, not curing... that is a friend who cares.

Henri Nouwen



fall 2017

CHRISTIANS
ENCOURAGING
CHRISTIANS

it's all about

EXPANDING
the culture of
ENCOURAGEMENT

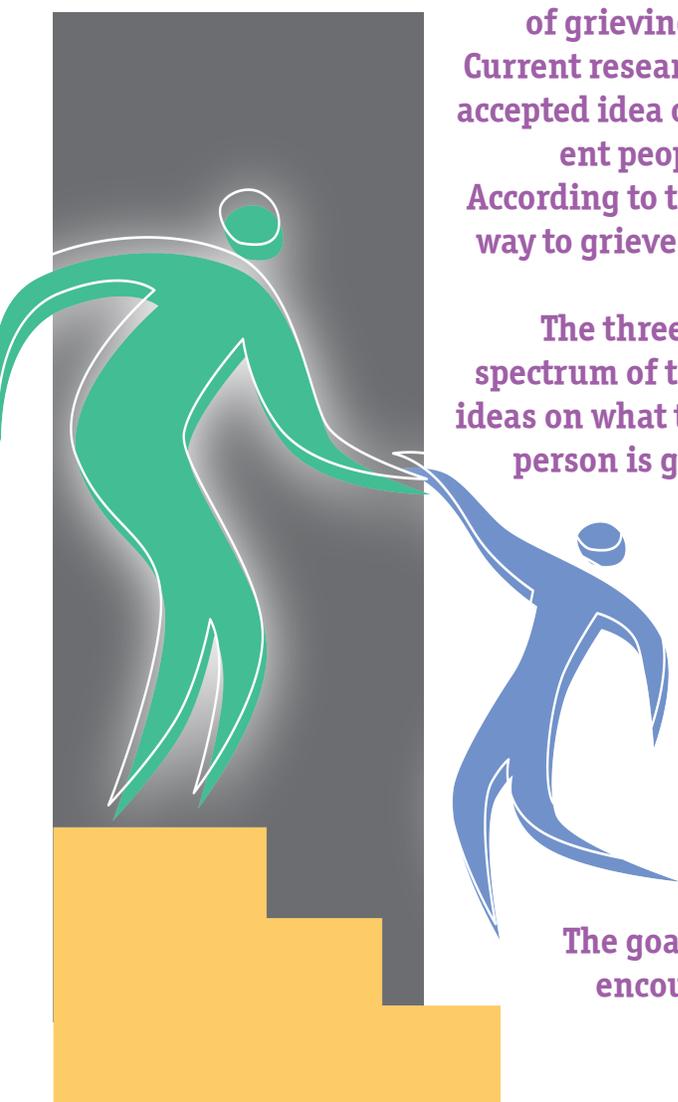
ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THOSE WHO ARE GRIEVING

While sorting through all the information on the topic of grieving for this newsletter, it was fascinating to discover that over the past few years there have been new ideas developed not only about the different areas of grieving but also about the different methods of grieving as well. Current research on the methods of grieving have challenged the widely accepted idea of the five stages of grief. It became very clear that different people grieve in different ways and "one size does not fit all." According to the author of Resilient Grieving, there is actually a healthy way to grieve that can result in what she calls "post-traumatic growth."

The three books selected for review in this newsletter cover a broad spectrum of thought on the subject. Each of the authors offer their own ideas on what to do or what to say. What became clear was that whether a person is grieving the loss of a loved one, the loss of a pet, the loss of an important relationship or the loss of a job, there are things one can say or do to support them through this difficult time. Following are a few examples:

- Acknowledge their loss
- Say "I'm Sorry"
- Be Quietly Present
- Listen - Listen - Listen
- Offer a safe place for them to "feel the pain"

The goal in exploring the subject of grieving is that each reader is encouraged in their own journey of grieving and can be a more informed friend who can effectively stand beside others through their journey of grief.



WWW.CHRISTIANS**ENCOURAGING**CHRISTIANS.ORG



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Since incorporating in May of 2002, the Board and Directors of CEC has focused on its mission of “Providing practical resources to encourage one another.” CEC is now well into its 16th year and has developed several avenues through which to accomplish this mission. They are as follows:

Website Resources—by looking at the website www.christiansencouragingchristians.org you will see that there are numerous resources available. To name a few, there are:

Ideas for encouragement covering wide range of topics & situations

Links to other relevant and helpful websites

Suggestions of books to assist with encouragement.

A listing of all the programs through which encouragement is implemented

Ongoing connections between people who want to help/encourage and those in need.

This is done through the following CEC programs:

Visions of Vision -

<http://www.christiansencouragingchristians.org/visions-of-vision> - the connection between people needing glasses and not able to afford them with an optician wanting to donate eye glass frames, an optician willing to make the lenses & fit glasses at cost, as well as donors who are willing to cover any costs associated with this process. This program has provided 59 people with glasses since its inception in 2013.

Wear It or Share It-

<http://www.christiansencouragingchristians.org/wear-it-or-share> - the connection between people needing clothing and those wanting to provide them. This has been accomplished in numerous ways including shipments of clothing to Honduras over the past several years as well as for individuals in local communities through personal contact or the Homeless Shelters /Alliances.

Heart to Help -

the connection between people needing assistance and those willing to provide donations or services. This can take the form of a roof needing repaired in order to keep insurance on the home to needing food to feed their families.

Pitch or Pass On-

<http://www.christiansencouragingchristians.org/pitch-or-pass-on> - the connection between people needing household and personal items with people who have them to donate. This can be things such as appliances like a washer, dryer, refrigerator, toaster, beds, bedding, linens, microwave, couch, dining table & chairs, etc. CEC matches specific items with people with specific needs.

Tow or Bestow -

<http://www.christiansencouragingchristians.org/tow-or-bestow> - the connection between people needing to dispose of a vehicle, motor-home, boat, etc., with people who either need these items or CEC sells the item to create a funding source for its other programs.

As the end of the year approaches, the Board of Directors and volunteers of CEC encourage you to consider joining us in our endeavor to “Provide practical resources to encourage one another,” by making a tax-deductible donation by 12/31/17.

**Have a blessed Holiday season,
Phil Bray
CEC President**

**It is the province
of knowledge
to speak,
and it is the
privilege of
wisdom to listen.**

**Oliver
Wendell
Holmes, Sr.**

48-hour GRIEF

By John T. Schwiebert, MDiv @ griefwatch.com

The personal grief that gets the most attention is usually connected to the most profound losses that human beings can experience: the death of one's child or one's spouse, for example. Grief in such cases takes a great deal of emotional energy especially in the early weeks and months. It also takes forever, it seems, to get through it. For one "making tear soup" in such cases the largest pot is required, the one labelled "More the I Can Bear."

As I have learned more and more about grief in my own experience, I have become interested in the smallest of the tear soup containers—the little sauce pans marked "Not Fair" and "Bad News" and the smallest cooking pot labelled "Big Disappointment." I am reminded that even our little losses—minor set-backs and letdowns—can be occasions for grief as well, even though we may not automatically think of them as "grief worthy."

I first began to think about the reality of short-term grief when we were preparing the first edition of Tear Soup back in 1999. As we moved closer to the date when we would send the completed text and art work to the printer we fretted and fussed about getting everything just right. Several of us carefully checked the spelling of every word and made sure that there were no typographical errors. When we were satisfied that all was perfect we hit the print button on the computer and rushed the pages to the printer.

But when the first supply of books came from the printer we discovered that in each copy the last line of text was missing from one of the pages. All the words had been entered correctly into the computer but, due to a last minute formatting glitch that we did not catch, that last line did not make it into the original, so that every printed copy was flawed. Pat immediately recognized that what we were experiencing, when we discovered the glitch, was loss. Something had happened that could not be undone—until the next printing, of course. So our only recourse was grief. All we could do in the midst of that big disappointment was "make tear soup!"

Since then I have personally found it helpful to identify and name little setbacks and disappointments in my life as occasions for grief. In the larger scheme of life such setbacks and disappointments are minor. But the day they happen, and perhaps the next day as well, they are a big deal. Like the time I accidentally left my new hand-crafted wool newsboy cap, a gift from a friend, on the seat of the city bus. When I realized that I had lost something precious to me that I would never be able to retrieve, the sense of loss was profound. I literally felt sick for several hours until the symptoms began to dissipate. By the next day the worst had passed, though I still experience regret now and then when I remember that day.

Other minor losses that have prompted me to "make tear soup" have included last minute cancellation of vacation plans, letting a friend down who was counting on me, being let down by a friend on whom I was counting, and failing to get approval from my church council for a proposal that meant a lot to me.

Now, whenever such disappointments occur, I can simply say to myself, "This is a loss; I can't pretend otherwise. I am feeling the pain of loss, and I can't avoid this pain. But grief is a familiar companion and I know how to deal with it. I already know, for instance, that I will get through it—probably sooner than later in this case.

I can even think of this short-term grief as another drill to help me keep in shape for the larger grief challenges that I may eventually have to face!

**Have you experienced
48-hour grief also?
Tell me about your
experience by writing me.
john@tearsoup.com**

Please visit
www.griefwatch.com
to view more ways
to offer support to
those who are grieving.



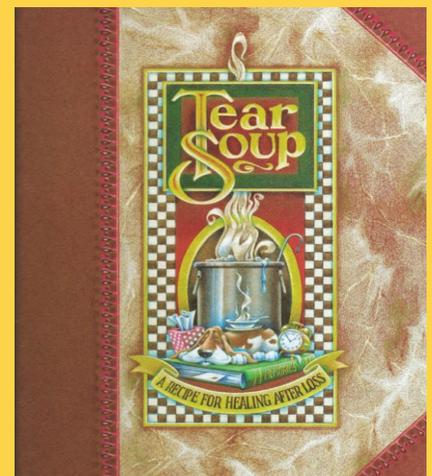
**Of the grieving –
we want to help,
to comfort,
to say the "right thing,"
but there are times
when silence is wisdom.
Sometimes silence utters,
in its own language,
what we likely
could not adequately
express in words.**

Anonymous

Tear Soup by Pat Schwiebert & Chuck DeKlyen Illustrated by Taylor Bills

This book takes a fascinating view of grieving through the idea of making tear soup. "What's true about soup making, is also true about grieving" the authors state. At first glance, one might think this is a children's book; but, upon closer observation they will see that it is a thought-provoking, deep book on the subject of grieving. It might take a person reading it several times to really comprehend the depth of this wonderful book.

According to the authors, "Some cooking requires that you measure ingredients exactly. But making soup is different. Soup making is an art, and you are the artist. Improvising as you go, your only goal is that the blended creation will both satisfy your hunger and soothe what hurts you." Check it out from your local library or purchase it online at AmazonSmile.

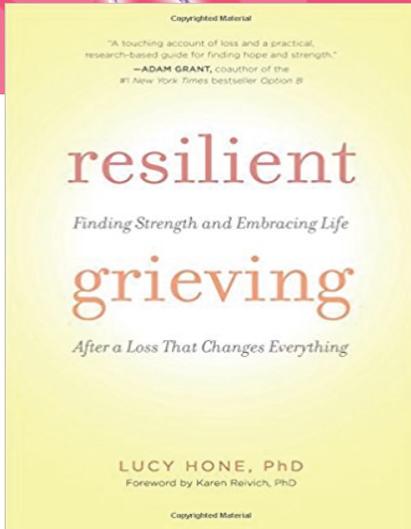




from the bookshelf

IT'S OKAY TO CRY

by H. Norman Wright



amazonsmile
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This book could be used as an effective tool to help one understand the feelings that they might have experienced at nine years old; however, they are just now realizing that those were feelings which are commonly experienced by others. The author states that "by the time a child is fifteen he has received more than 20,000 reinforcements that it's not acceptable to show or talk about sad feelings." Unfortunately, this idea is still prevalent in today's society. Additionally, according to this author, "From their earliest days children sense and absorb the emotions of those around them. If you are happy, they pick this up. If you're sad they pick this up...children actually absorb emotions. They watch how you express and process your emotions." "As you learn to handle your own emotions, you can guide

With the holidays upon us, and shopping on our minds, please remember that by shopping with Amazon Smile, 0.5% of your purchase amount will be donated to your designated charity.

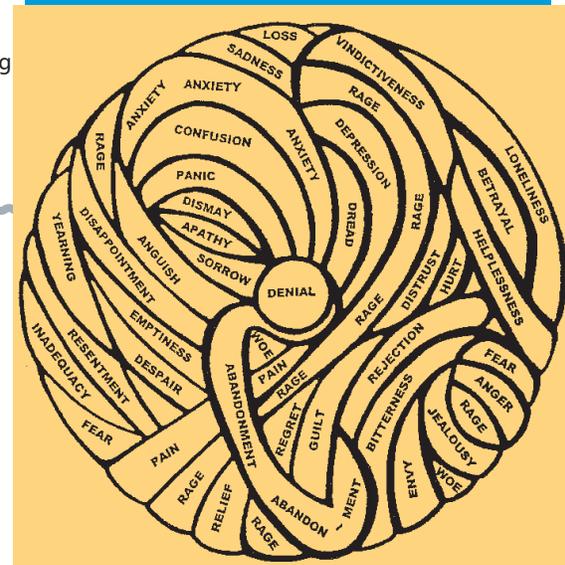
If you choose to avoid the crowds and do your shopping online through Amazon, it's simple to perform a good deed at the same time! When you go to Amazon, instead of logging in at the main URL, just go to smile.amazon.com instead and use your usual login information. Once you've designated Christians Encouraging Christians, Inc. as your charity of choice, you can begin shopping and your purchase percentage will be processed and sent to us automatically. It's as easy as that!

Do all your shopping and donate to Christians Encouraging Christians, Inc. all from the comfort of your couch!

resilient grieving by Lucy Hone, PhD

FINDING STRENGTH AND EMBRACING LIFE
AFTER A LOSS THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

Lucy Hone, PhD, describes in her book resilient grieving, a new way of thinking about the process of grieving. She explains that there is a healthy way to grieve losses and move on with your life. Hone states "despite distressing experiences, people often report positive transformations, what we call post-traumatic growth." "This could include a new appreciation for life, an enhanced sense of gratitude, a deepened spiritual life and so on. It can also cause a heightened sense of compassion. The traumatic event sets in motion attempts to cope and that the struggle in the aftermath of the trauma, not the trauma itself, produce the post-traumatic growth."



your children in handling theirs." The "Ball of Grief" pictured above is a method described in "It's Okay to Cry" that can be used to encourage children to share their feelings. Ask them to identify the words that apply to them.

PLEASE VISIT WWW.CHRISTIANSENCOURAGINGCHRISTIANS.ORG TO SEE MORE "from the bookshelf"



No one can tell you what to expect
or can offer a guide to grief.
Because every relationship is so unique,
no two people grieve the same way.
And you have no idea how you are
going to grieve till you are grieving.
Alysia Reine

MATCHING GRANT 2017

Christians Encouraging Christians, Inc. has been offered a fundraising tool by anonymous donors. The donors have agreed to match dollar for dollar any funds, up to \$2500.00, raised by CEC before December 28, 2017. The funds must be received by December 28th, 2017, to qualify. We encourage you to consider a donation to CEC this year realizing that, with the matching funds grant, your donation will have double the impact.

CEC has a variety of programs that the donation will help to accomplish. If you would like to know more about what programs your donation would support please visit the CEC website at www.christiansencouragingchristians.org.

Mail donations to Christians Encouraging Christians, 123 N. Mustang Road, Mustang, OK 73064.

MATCHING GRANT DEADLINE - DECEMBER 28, 2017

WHO WE ARE

2017-2018
Board of Directors

President - Phil Bray
Vice President - Sarah Modgling
Secretary/Treasurer - Leota Smith
Director - Beverly Crouch
Director - Laurie Fried



CHRISTIANS ENCOURAGING CHRISTIANS, INC.

123 N. Mustang Rd
Mustang, OK 73064

Phone : (405) 204-4570
Email : kvsprad@gmail.com

www.christiansencouragingchristians.org

Everyone wants to be there for their grieving friends and family, but they aren't sure how. Research suggests a major reason why people don't receive helpful support after the death of a loved one is because people simply don't know how to provide it.

No one wants to be the cause of another person's horror story or awkward moment. In the absence of certainty, many people either panic and stick their foot in their mouth or they say nothing at all. No two people grieve the same way. What is offered in this article is a framework to help you in your role as a supportive friend and/or family member. Before you attempt to console or care for someone who is grieving, you must first repeat the following phrase to yourself in the mirror ten times.

"I do not want to provide comfort.
I want to provide support." What's the difference?



SUPPORT vs. COMFORT

STEP 1

Repeat: "I do not want to provide Comfort. I want to provide support."

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STEP 2

Ask Yourself: * What type of support is appropriate considering the closeness and/or tone of my relationship with the person grieving? *What does my friend or family member seem to need? Emotional support? Logistical support? Both? * What am I good at? * What am I capable of providing? What unique strengths do I have that could be helpful?

STEP 3

When all else fails: * Show genuine caring and compassion; Ask how the person is doing and then actually listen to what they have to say. * Provide concrete assistance: Consider a list of things you can do and then just go ahead and offer – they can always say no. * Actively Listen: You may feel you need to provide answers, but often just having the opportunity to talk things out can help someone organize their thoughts and feelings. * Be Present: Without hovering, be available by letting them know they can call at any time and then casually check in once in awhile. Follow their cues. If they don't want to talk or if they don't take you up on your offer, that's okay. * Remember: Grief lasts forever and people often continue to struggle for months and years. Continue to check in sporadically, especially on days that might be hard like birthdays, anniversaries, milestones and special events. Don't be afraid to remember the person who has died by saying their name and sharing memories of them.

AN EXCERPT FROM WWW.WHATSYOURGRIEF.COM
to read the complete article and more please visit [www.christiansencouragingchristians.org](http://WWW.CHRIStIANSEncOURAGINGCHRISTIANS.ORG)

Comfort implies a desire to free someone from their pain and make them feel less unhappy. Support implies a desire to provide assistance and help. Instead of attempting to comfort the person who is grieving, we recommend focusing on what you can do to help support them in moving forward through the pain.