



Full Circle

Where Behavioral Health and Spirituality Meet

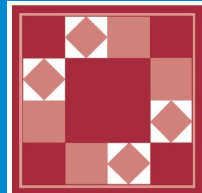
December 2018

Vol. 15, Issue 2

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Full Circle is a publication of Penn Foundation's Pastoral Services Department.



Holiday Recipes

Recipe for Stress

Everything must go perfectly, especially my performance. My home must be perfectly decorated. My meals must be perfectly prepared, preferably from scratch. I must have a card or present for everyone I encounter for the month of December. My entire family must be happy all the time. If everything is not under control, everyone is not happy, and I make even the slightest error or omission, Christmas is a total and utter failure.

Recipe for Joy

I will do the best I can within my ability and capacity of time, money, and energy to make the holidays special for those closest to me. I may or may not be able to do everything I would prefer to do. Other people may or may not approve of my choices or appreciate my efforts. I might burn the rolls or forget to wrap the present for Aunt Sarah or arrive later than I said I would to an event. That's OK. I'm human. The point of the holiday is not to prove how I can rival Martha Stewart. The point is to express and receive love from those who care for me and whom I care for too.

Helping Those We Love and Serve "Get Through the Holidays"

By: Rev. Carl Yusavitz, Director of Pastoral Services

The "holiday season" between Thanksgiving and Christmas often begins early in our department stores and on our TVs. Although many of us are filled with joy and anticipation during this time of year, this season can be especially "hard" for people who have recently lost a loved one. Holidays (and anniversaries) bring back many cherished memories and can rekindle the experience of loss.



Grief is often at the heart of our pastoral care of others. You can never skirt around grief. Rather, we must journey through it, even though this may mean meandering down side roads or getting lost in our emotions - particularly during the holidays or anniversaries we used to share with our deceased loved ones.

Here are three suggestions I discovered to help those you serve cope with the holidays. They come from the collected wisdom of others who have lost loved ones and re-experienced that loss again during the holidays.

- ◆ Be patient with yourself and realistic about what you can do and what you cannot do during the holidays. Things are different now, so adapt your cherished holiday traditions to what you now need in your life.
- ◆ Listen to your heart and acknowledge your limits during this tender time of the year. Talk to a trusted friend about your mixed and conflicted feelings. It's OK to cry and feel sad, even when everyone is happy.

- ◆ Focus on the spiritual dimension of the holidays—God’s promise of everlasting love and life. If going to your home church is too much for you this year, try a new one for the holidays.

The death of a loved one, we all know, changes our lives forever. It is especially important to acknowledge that and be gentle with ourselves all year, but especially during this holiday season.

May the prayer of the late Trappist monk Thomas Merton give us hope to carry on:

My Lord God,

I have no idea where I am going.

I do not see the road ahead of me.

I cannot know for certain where it will end.

Nor do I really know myself,

and the fact that I think

I am following your will

does not mean that I am actually doing so.

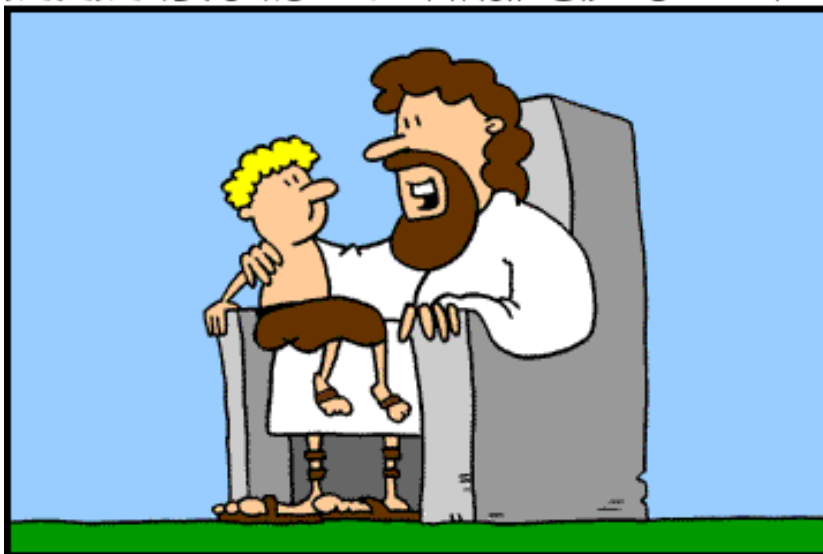
But I believe that the desire to please you

does in fact please you.

And I hope I have that desire

In all that I am doing.

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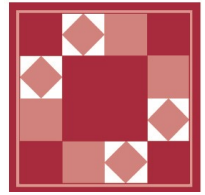
Thanks to Christopher Huffman

12-24-1998

**HOW ABOUT IF INSTEAD OF GIVING YOU
EVERYTHING THAT YOU THINK YOU WANT
FOR CHRISTMAS I GIVE YOU WHAT YOU
NEED?**

6 Ways to Encourage Someone Who is Grieving

By: Lindsey Shumaker, Word of Life Bible Institute student



1. Be specific about how you can help.

"Let me know if you need anything!" I tend to hear this a lot; I mean, even I say this to people. This saying is usually taken so lightly. Every time someone told me this at my father's funeral, I thought to myself, *Yeah, bring my dad back?* I know they were just trying to help and to console me, but it's not exactly what I wanted to hear at the time. So, instead of saying that, just let the person know that you're here to help in any way you're able and actually take action to do it!

2. Be a listener.

Instead of trying to give advice on how to fix it and attempting to put yourself in their shoes, let them pour out their thoughts to you. It's comforting to know that someone wants to listen; you may not be capable of understanding. However, you are capable of being the ear they need to vent to. You may not have the right words to say, but let them know that you care for them.

3. Pray with them.

"I'm praying for you." Christians tend to say this without remembering to actually pray. One of the most heart-warming things that someone did for me was asking, "Can I pray for you right now?" Even just simply saying, "You've been on my heart lately, how can I be praying for you?" Pray for the person right at that moment.



4. Realize that there are good days and bad days.

Everyone has these. Sometimes I will be in the middle of having a good day, and all of a sudden I'll get emotional over something that reminds me of my dad. Dealing with a death in the family involves a lot of changes and adjustments, causing your emotions to go all over the place. Be patient with the person. Know that sometimes they might just need to be alone, and other times, they might want to go out and do something to get their mind off things.

5. Encourage using Scripture.

Try writing the person a letter or card. With this, they can always go back and read your encouraging words in their own time, in case they aren't in the mood to talk in person. Here are a few passages that are good to meditate on in times of heartache:

John 16:22 - "So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you."

Revelations 21:4 - "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

Philippians 4:7 - "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."



6. Be faithful to follow up.

It's only been a year since my dad passed away, but it's been a year of growing, experiencing life as a teenager without a father, and going through first holidays and birthdays without him. This first year has involved making tons of changes and trying to fill the gap that my dad has left. I truly believe that it hasn't been until the beginning of this second year when the grieving kicked in and when I've fully felt the loss of him in my life. This is why I think it's important to remember to check up on those grieving, even after a few months or years pass by.



Save-the-Date!



Wellspring Clubhouse Open House

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

10:00 am - 11:30 am

Please come for tours, coffee, snacks, and recovery stories. Learn how to make a referral and assist your congregations with their mental health needs.

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