Karen’s Kounsel

March 2013 Page 1 of 2

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KLynn Counseling

a place for new beginnings

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**Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together! – Job, Job 6:2**

Grief. If you live in this world you have experienced it or you will. The thing about it, though, is that when you do, it feels as if no one else could possibly understand what you are going through. But the truth is, you are not alone. Grief is a process that many have gone through before you, and have experienced the pain you are feeling now. Your thoughts and emotions, while they may seem strange, abnormal, or even wrong, are your mind and your soul’s way of beginning to deal with your loss.



At first you may go through denial. Many people when they first hear the news of a death or loss may say, “I don’t believe it”. The reality is impossible to accept or wrap your mind around. It may manifest as numbness or just the opposite. Everything in you wants to scream “No”. There may be panic that frantically searches for an alternate truth. This can give way to another form of denial which refuses to accept the pain that is there. I have heard so many people say, “No, really, I’m fine”, or “I don’t feel anything”. It’s our way of surviving a loss that seems unsurvivable. This will actually protect you for a time, but eventually that pain needs to be dealt with. Look for support when you get to that place. We are meant to hold each other up. Let those around you do that. When shared, grief is easier to bear. **“Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak whispers the o’er-fraught heart and bids it break. – William Shakespeare**

Denial may give way to anger. It is part of our human nature to blame the unbearable on someone or something in order to understand it. In the loss of your loved one there may actually be someone to blame – if there was a car accident or some purposeful act that caused that loss of life. You may even feel anger at the one you have lost. This is a natural response. It may or may not make logical sense. The emotions are rarely logical, especially when they are hurting. If you are experiencing this, give yourself time to process it and work through it. Talk to someone who will understand your feelings.

Bargaining may also be part of the grieving process. Many people want to make bargains with God at this time. These are most usually in the form of “if You will do this, I will change my ways”. They make promises to do good deeds or serve God. This is especially true when someone has been given a serious diagnosis. Don’t let panic be your guide in times like this. If you have faith in God, lean on Him for strength and comfort. Look to Him in prayer for answers to your need. **“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit”.** [**Psalm 34:18**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+34:18&version=NIV)

During this difficult process you may experience depression. When you come to realize the certainty of the outcome you may have periods of tears. You may want to withdraw, having a need to be alone for awhile. Don’t be afraid of this. It is your way of disconnecting; a way of being able to let go. It is healthy to cry. It is healthy to pull aside and rest your chaotic emotions. It can bring you to a place of acceptance.

When acceptance arrives you are beginning to come to terms with your loss. It is the place where you can start to move on. Don’t feel guilty about being able to eventually move on. If you have allowed yourself to go through the process, if you have taken the time to grieve and mourn your loss, it is also natural to come to the place of taking up your life again.

There are a few suggestions that may help you get through this time. Even though there may be an appropriate time to have some quiet solitude, don’t get stuck in this place. Seek out friends who will share your sorrow with you and listen to what you need to say. Know that what you are feeling is normal, that there are those who have been there and come through. It may be helpful to find a group specifically designed for grief or to seek the help of a counselor. Remembering and talking about your loved one can give you the knowledge that they were important and that those gifts they gave you in this life can remain with you.**” Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal”. – Irish Saying.** Talk with others who knew and loved them and share those gifts and fond memories. When you are ready, look for ways to honor their memory.

If you know someone who is going through a time of mourning or loss, give them your support. Don’t feel that you necessarily have to “cheer them up”. That can be hurtful, as if what they are suffering is trivial. You don’t even always have to come up with the right words. Sometimes there are no right words. It can be more comforting to just sit with them, to listen to them or even to cry with them. Show your concern by doing small acts of kindness that will say you care without words. If you are unsure as to what they need, gently ask them. Don’t be afraid to say something and please don’t avoid them out of discomfort.

And always remember that in faith, the things of this world are temporary, but eternity is waiting so,

**“Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.”** [**1 Thessalonians 4:13 (NIV)**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Thessalonians%204:13&version=NIV)

