
SESSION 1

TOPIC: GROUP PROCESS, GRIEF, MOURNING & RECONCILIATION

INTRO

This session focuses on the group process, ground rules, and introduces the concept of grief as a process of reconciliation.

SCRIPT

1. **Thanks for being here**—you are taking care of yourself.
2. **Housekeeping.**
 - ✓ Location of restrooms and garbage cans
 - ✓ Location of tables and chairs when not in use
 - ✓ Any facility rules
3. **Leader introduction.**
 - ✓ Say your name and where you're from
 - ✓ Share personal experience(s) with grief
4. **Group time.** Group time will focus on discussion topics and externalizing feelings in the safety of the group. Some of the workbook handouts will be used during group time, the rest are for home reading.
5. **Home time.** The following tasks are also for home time. If participants have questions or want to share self-care strategies, they'll have time at the next meeting.
 - ✓ Self-care plan
 - ✓ Spiritual journaling
6. **Introduce caring plan.** Explain the importance of self-care, especially when grieving. Encourage participants to create a self-care plan and explore one new addition each week using the Resilience Rx™ strategies in the workbook. The topic of self-care will be covered in more depth in session 4.

REMEMBER

- ✓ Start and end on time.
- ✓ Keep conversation moving and productive.
- ✓ Ensure every participant has an opportunity to share or pass during the discussion.
- ✓ Protect the conversation from being monopolized.
- ✓ Stay supportive yet neutral.

MATERIALS

- Notebook & pen
- Index cards & pens
- Refreshments
- Nametags
- Tissue

HOMEWORK

- ✓ **Spiritual journaling**
- ✓ **You & I**
- ✓ **Common feelings**

DISCUSSION

1. **Discuss ground rules and commitment** to the group as outlined in **Ground Rules** (handout 1).
 - ✓ Advice
 - ✓ Crying
 - ✓ Externalizing emotion
 - ✓ Comfort
 - ✓ Tolerance
 - ✓ Confidentiality
 - ✓ Rescuing
2. **Ask each participant to introduce themselves by answering the following questions.**
 - What's your name?
 - Where are you from?
 - What's the loss you've experienced?
 - When did it happen?
 - What do you expect to get by being a member of this group?
 - What are your feelings at this very moment?
3. **Introduce tonight's topic:** Group process, grief, mourning & reconciliation. Discuss that grief is a process of reconciliation between our head and our heart. Use **Reconciliation of Grief** (handout 2) as a discussion point.
 - Distinction between grief and mourning.
 - What's it like for you?
 - Reconciliation is a process, and part of the grief journey.

ACTIVITY: WEEKLY PHONE CALLS

Discuss how we help one another prevent isolation through phone calls.

- Hand out index cards and pens.
- Ask participants to write down their name and phone number on one index card.
- Instruct them to pass their card two people to the right.
- Each person is then asked to phone the individual whose card they have to check in to see how they're doing and help them feel less isolated.
- This is an important beginning to continued networking. Some of these participants may become lifelong friends.

CONCLUSION

1. **Don't expect to feel better tonight.** Much like starting a new exercise routine, you may go home and feel worse before feeling stronger. By doing griefwork, you **will** eventually feel stronger. We ask that you attend at least 3 sessions before deciding that this group is not helpful for you.
2. **Review this session.** Encourage participants to read handouts, journal their thoughts, create self-care plan, and call the participant on their index card.