

## PHASE-II Process Group: Healing Grief and Loss

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### SIX GOALS

1. **Acknowledgement:** *Opening the door.* Sharing, in the context of a caring group, the unresolved grief that still affects your life today. Breaking the silence.
  - **Ground rules:** “Norming” the group’s culture. Establishing safety in the group process
  - **Learn** about different models of the human grief process
  - **Assess** where you are in relation to these models
  - **Focus on scripture verses** relevant to grief and healing
  - **Personal truth:** What are some of the things in your “ungrieved griefs” reservoir?
  - **Projects:** Rate unfinished griefs in rank order and decide which can be dealt with now and which should be dealt with another time. Write a “letter” (NOT to be delivered) that gives a voice to your disenfranchised grief
2. **Dialogue:** *Building a microcosm of “healing culture” within the faith community.* Sharing our own stories and personal experiences. Letting the others share your grief. Breaking the isolation.
  - **Revisit** last week’s session for closure if needed
  - **Family of origin:** How does grief get handled in our families and communities?
  - **Discuss letters:** What was the impact of writing them?
  - **Discuss** how your relationship with Jesus relates to your current needs
  - **Learn** grounding techniques
  - **Unpack the feelings:** What are the emotional consequences?
  - **Develop support:** What do you have now that will help you stay with the process?
3. **Collective and personal grieving:** *Finding grace to face emotional pain.* Expressing the feelings that lead to a deeper healing. Grieving within a supportive community.
  - **Suffering and Grace:** The ministry of reconciliation starts vertically and continues horizontally
  - **Faces of grief<sup>1</sup>:** Denial Anger Fear Guilt Depression Denial Anger Fear Guilt Depression Denial Anger Fear Guilt...
  - **Guilt and Grief:** What does the Bible say about Christians and guilt?
  - **Questioning Sins and Losses:** Whose sin is this? What do you do with irreparable losses?
  - **Sharing feelings:** Can we trust each other? Can you hear me and handle my feelings?
  - **Dreaming new dreams:** Healthy grief work in God’s hands—beauty for ashes
4. **Acceptance:** *Making a space for peace.* Grief work that integrates the stories of all the actors. Constructing a different picture of the future. Learning to trust God for what can be changed, and what can’t be changed.
  - **Change:** Finding the courage to let go of destructive coping skills

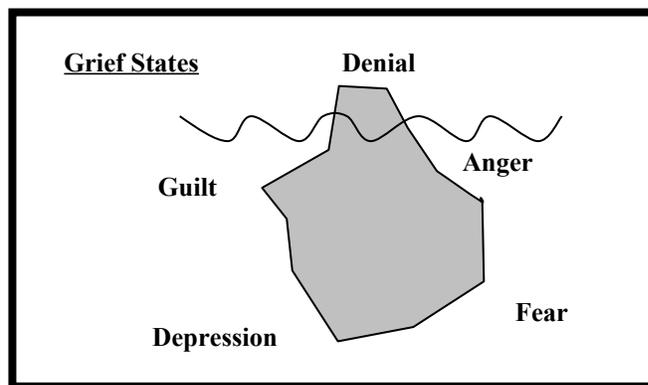
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<sup>1</sup> See Kearney’s “Iceberg Model” diagramed on next page

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- **Looking at the whole picture:** Everyone has a place in the story
  - **A new agenda** in our families and the church. Writing a new ending to the story
  - **The legacy of a new heritage:** Breaking the chains and setting the future free
  - **A new ability to connect:** Attachments to a new dream, and the courage to take action
5. **Forgiveness:** *Trusting God to ultimately right all wrongs.* Letting go of the anger and fear that chains us to the past and leaves the past always unfinished and the wounds always unhealed. Finding a personal inner freedom from wrongs suffered. Personal and collective freedom to move on. A different future.
- **Harbored hurts, harbored sins:** Facing them and trusting God with it all
  - **Letting God in:** Walking through painful compartments of the heart, holding God's hand
  - **Naming specific losses** and turning them over to God's keeping, one by one
  - **Freedom:** No longer carrying a load that never really belonged to you
6. **Community:** *Connection in action.* Ongoing care for those who suffer in isolation. Designing concrete projects to build a healthier culture for emotional healing within the faith community. An open door for all who need it.
- **Fellowship:** How to maintain the ground you've gained
  - **Form a Peace Action Committee (PAC):** Putting everything learned to work via practical means
  - **Working side-by-side** in the church for emotional peace in the lives of others
  - **PAC planning:** Designing your long-range strategy for lasting relationships
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(figure 2)  
Iceberg Model of Active Grief States (Kearney)