

Loss Anger Resentment - and forgiveness

The emotional pain of rejection and sudden loss can live with us all our lives.

It can burn deep within us suddenly arising in times of stress as uncontrolled anger and distress. It can be evident in a state of depression.

How can we manage this? How can we find healing?

Those who have experienced this and found peace, describe it as a journey.

The event may have been recent or many years ago but the impact and pain is real.

So how does this journey start?

It starts with a realisation of what is happening - self-awareness - and then making a choice to change.

If you are able, share your decision with the Lord in prayer. Paul writes Phil 4:4 that his peace will come through sharing our pain and anxieties.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. ⁶ Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

You may need a guide on the beginning of the journey - help from a professional counsellor who will help you to understand how loss affects us. It is a bereavement with all the emotional aspects of numbness, anger, resentment, distress, and guilt revolving around in our minds.

One particular aspect of loss is that feeling of lack of control in our lives - being swept along in a flood of emotions (psalm 32) or stuck in a pit (psalm 40). The psalmist David experienced these emotions and was able to see God as a place of safety - a hiding place in the embrace of the Father.

*at a time of distress,^[b] in the rush of great waters,
they shall not reach him.
⁷ Thou art a hiding place for me,
thou preservest me from trouble;
thou dost encompass me with deliverance.^[c]*

Psalm 32:7

*I waited patiently for the LORD;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.
² He drew me up from the desolate pit,^[a]
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.
³ He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.*

Psalm 40:1-2

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The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

Deut 33:27

As we move forward often a day at a time, there is hope that there will be healing.

The choice to change is often the first time we take control. Why should we allow another person or situation to dominate our lives?

So what is the ideal destination of this journey of healing?

It is forgiveness.

Those who have caused us so much pain are unaffected by our anger and hurt. We only damage ourselves and possibly those around us by holding so much anger and resentment against them.

On this journey we make the choice to move towards forgiveness. We may not be able to do this at the beginning. The choice, the decision, is to forgive; the emotions fight against this. There may be a desire to see an apology, repentance and regret from those who have caused so much pain but this may be impossible. Death may have intervened. A refusal is common.

The journey brings healing: over time the choice, the will, overcomes the emotions.

During this journey we may become increasingly aware of the grace of the father and the overwhelming forgiveness shown to us through the Lord Jesus Christ.

May the Lord be with you on your journey

See leaflet on Bereavement here www.chsn.org.uk/relationship

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